Political "Frenemies"

van der Velden, M.A.C.G.

2017

document version
Publisher's PDF, also known as Version of record

Political “Frenemies”

Party Strategies, Electoral Competition & Coalition Cooperation

Mariken A.C.G. van der Velden

Reading Committee

Prof.dr. Ben J.J. Crum

Prof.dr. Heike Klüver

Prof.dr. Sarah L. de Lange

Prof.dr. Sven-Oliver Proksch

Prof.dr. Catherine E. de Vries

dr. Wouter van Atteveldt

This thesis is funded by the VIDI grant 'High Risk Politics' from the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research (NWO, grant nr. 452-11-005).

Printed by: ALL IN ONE (AIO)

VRIJE UNIVERSITEIT

Political “Frenemies”

Party Strategies, Electoral Competition & Coalition Cooperation

ACADEMISCH PROEFSCHRIFT

ter verkrijging van de graad Doctor aan
de Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam,
op gezag van de rector magnificus
prof.dr. V. Subramaniam,
in het openbaar te verdedigen
ten overstaan van de promotiecommissie
van de Faculteit der Sociale Wetenschappen
op Woensdag 20 december 2017 om 11.45 uur
in de aula van de universiteit,
De Boelelaan 1105

door

Mariken Anna Catharina Geertruida van der Velden
geboren te Veldhoven, Nederland

promotor: Prof.dr. Barbara Vis

co-promotor: dr. Gijs Schumacher

Voor Papa en Mama,
zonder wiens steun ik nooit zover was gekomen.

Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Acknowledgements

A little over four years ago, I started as a PhD candidate at the *Vrije Universiteit* Amsterdam. I quickly learned that Lewis Carroll's words "*if you don't know where you are going, any road can take you there*" are not only true for Alice, they are also particularly apt to describe the writing of a dissertation. On my way to the completion of my dissertation, many people have not only contributed hereto, but made the proverbial journey an extremely pleasant one. I would like to take the opportunity to thank them.

I am indebted gratitude to my supervisors Barbara Vis and Gijs Schumacher. I will try to do justice to the appreciation I feel for both of you. *Barbara*, next to tons of advice and feedback on any part of my dissertation and possible career choices, I am tremendously grateful for the trust you displayed in me. Over the four years, you have always let me discover my own paths without losing track of where I was or being absence at any of the crossroads. Moreover, your rigorous analytical skills coupled with your extreme kindness make you a great role model, I am very happy that I could learn from you, and hope to continue to collaborate! *Gijs*, I think I can only summarize my thankfulness by saying that you have become my academic big brother. You are not only too close in age to be my *Doktorvater*, the concept of a big brother – although very unfamiliar to me being the oldest of four kids – suits you much better. You could challenge (or nag) me up until the point that you just pushed me over a border with one hand, while holding my hand with the other, ensuring that I would not actually fall. Next to numerous conversations about political science, party competition, text analysis, coding stuff in R and my dissertation, we have shared probably even more beers (sometimes with food) at the Friday drinks in Amsterdam, or at conferences and workshops anywhere else. I am sure that this will not change after the 20th of December!

Next, I want to thank my longstanding mentor Catherine de Vries. *Catherine*, since I have been an undergrad in your stats class in the spring of 2010, you have given me ample opportunities and endless support to develop as a scholar. I am very happy to have you on my side! I'm particularly grateful that you've helped me writing a research proposal for the *NWO* talent grant – and when we got that grant, you always thought from my perspective whether this would be the way to go forward – hosted me in Oxford during the Spring of 2015, and opened up your network for me.

Since you do not start as a PhD candidate in a vacuum, there have been many people that I owe gratitude and appreciation. Lots of people at the University of Amsterdam have helped or advised me since I was a bachelor student there. I will thank them in a chronological order. First, as a first year undergrad, *Marcel Maussen* inspired me during the research project month in January 2009 to think critically about research. While developing a survey, he kept on asking me how people would interpret this question and whether this would be a uniform interpretation. Stimulated by this, study adviser *Grace Koert* recommended to to the research track in the bachelor and to apply for the research master (RMSS) afterwards. Once accepted at the RMSS, even more people came on board: *Armèn Hakhverdian* (*Armie*), who recommended course in the RMSS, talked about the PhD-life after the masters, kept me calm in times of stress, and most importantly, joined the 'sushi babes'; *Sarah de Lange*, who was so kind to do a reading course on the classics with us and developed into our *Doktermutti* in the RMSS, she gave me a complementary perspective on political science and, later on, as another member of the 'sushi babes' gave me multiple perspectives into academic life; and *Tom van der Meer*, who helped me navigate the bureaucracy at the UvA as director of the RMSS, prepared me for the interview for the position with Barbara and Gijs, and inspired me throughout my favorite course of the RMSS. Next to the lecturers, the UvA's political science department had a very engaged group of PhD students. Whether or not located at the 'original' *feestkamer*, my gratitude goes out to *Benno Netelenbos, Daphne van der Pas, Eefje Steenvoorden, Eelco Harteveldt, Emily Miltenburg, Emmy Bergsma, Erika van Elsas, Joep Schaper, Lutz Hofer, Madeleine Moret, Matthijs Rooduijn, Marc van de Wardt*, and *Sjoerdje van Heerden* for their patience, encouragement, information, and many nights with 'one more drink'! Last, but certainly not least, my fellow master students: *Loes Aaldering*, who has become not only an amazing colleague, but a very good friend too - we've shared so much since 2012, words would fail to explain this!!! - and will be standing next to me during the defense; *Mathilde van Ditmars*, with whom I share among other things, the amazing "Gossip Girl scaling experience"; *Matthijs Vastenburg*, from *de Biecht* in our undergrad to my stay in your home in Vienna in October 2017, you've always been an excellent partner to discuss research; and *Partick van Erkel (Paddy)*, with whom I share(d) offices, teaching experiences, courses, stress, drinks, conferences and the love for Antwerp. I couldn't have wished for better company, and I'm pleased that even though all of us have moved around, I still see you frequently!

Once a PhD candidate at the *Vrije Universiteit* Amsterdam, I experienced an equally warm bath. Within the High Risk Politics VIDI Project, I indebted to *Dieuwertje Kuijpers*, my fellow PhD student, and *Jona Linde*, the former postdoctoral researcher in our project. I'm happy that you've been my colleagues and allies during the time at the *Vrije Universiteit*. Next to my colleagues in the project, I was very fortunate to have such nice colleagues at the department to discuss research and share lunches with. I want to thank *Bart*

Bes, Ben Crum, Biejan Poor Toulabi, Eelco van Wijk, Franca van Hooren, Hanna Kleider, Hanna Mühlenhof, Jaap Woldendorp, Jan Pieter Beetz, Jeanine Bezuijen, Leo Huberts, Marijn Hoijtink, Martijn Schoonvelde, Menno Soentken, Nana de Graaff, Renske van der Gaag, Trineke Palm, Verena Dräbing, and *Wolfgang Wagner*. I'm especially grateful to *Gary Marks* and *Liesbet Hooghe*, for organizing the research seminars at their place and hosting me at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. Outside of the department, my colleagues from Communication Science, *Jan Kleijnnijenhuis, Kasper Welbers*, and *Wouter van Atteveldt* were always helpful too. And, when the trip to Amstelveen would be to far, Room B10.01 at the UvA would host me. For that, I'm really appreciative, a big shout out to *Eefje Steenvoorden, Eelco Harteveld, Ellis Aizenberg, Emmy Bergsma, Erika van Elsas, Hanna Werner, Harmen van der Veer, Lars Nickolson, Lea Klarenbeek, Lisanne de Blok, Loes Aaldering, Maria Kranendonk, Patrick Statsch*, and *Remko Voogd*.

Next to this big supportive group in Amsterdam, I have been really fortunate with loads of colleagues internationally, that accompanied me during my PhD and hopefully in the time to come. I'm extremely grateful to *Roosmarijn de Geus*, who is the best colleague I could have wished for and who was so kind to show me around in Oxford. I'm looking forward to working with you now we're both done with our dissertations! During my time in Chapel Hill, I'm thankful to *Amy Sentementes, Andrew Tyner, Dave Attewell, Eric Hansen, Eroll Kuhn, Jelle Koedam, Kelsey Shoub, Raphael Marbach*, and *Sophia Hunger*, who discussed my work in class and made me feel at home. Additionally, I'm thankful to the *Comparative Working Group* of the University of Chapel Hill North Carolina, who gave me the opportunity to present and wonderful feedback on my paper. In the very last phase of writing my dissertation, I was very lucky to have the amazing support of *my colleagues at the IPZ*. Especially, I'm indebted to *Anita Gohdes, Céline Colombo, Daniel Bischof, Denise Traber, Eri Bertsou, Florian Foos, Hanna Schwander, Lukas Stötzer*, and *Malu Gatto*. Throughout the years, I've visited many (international) conferences and workshops, which would not be half as nice and helpful, without the company and feedback of *Tarik Abou-Chadi*, and *Zachary Greene*. Thanks a lot!

None of the this all would have been possible without the endless support - which has taken many forms over the years - of my parents. *Papa* en *mama*, despite the fact that since I was 1.5 years old I hardly ever stopped speaking, I cannot express my gratitude in words. That is why I have dedicated this book to you.

Chapter 1

Introduction

"*We also have to be realistic about the other challenges that come with the later stages of Coalition. As we head towards the election there will be increasing pressure on David Cameron and myself to act as party leaders as much as PM* [Prime Minister] *and DPM* [Deputy Prime Minister]*: pressure to put party before nation. And I don't pretend I won't relish the moment I can hit the campaign trail on behalf of the Liberal Democrats in the run up to the General Election. . . . But here's the bigger truth: whether you are the larger or smaller party, the fact is governing together in the public interest carries a cost. Making compromises; doing things you find uncomfortable; challenging some of your traditional support - these are the dilemmas the Conservatives are coming to terms with, just as my party has had to.*" - Nick Clegg[1]

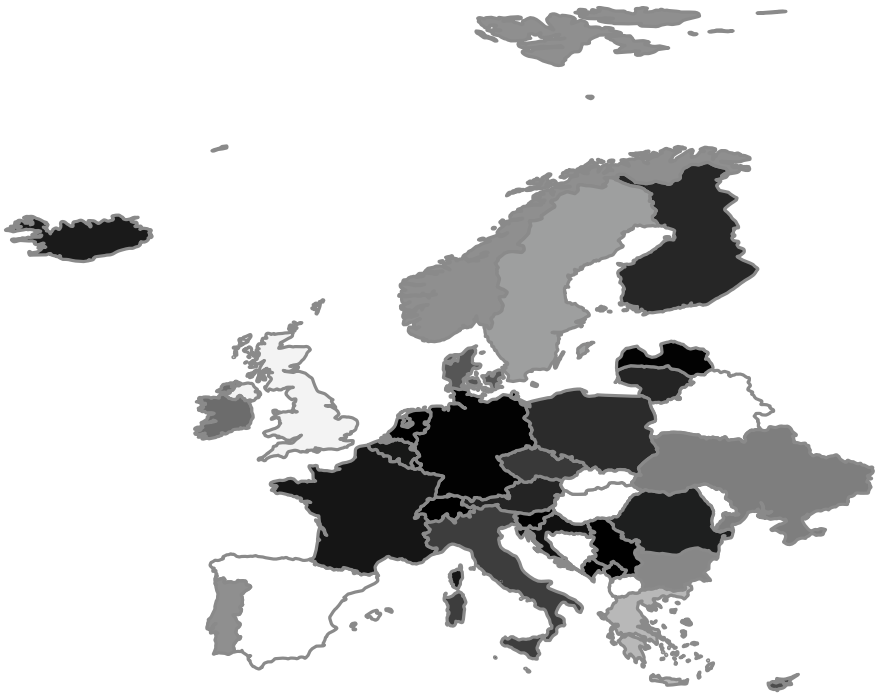
1.1 Coalition Government: The Norm in Europe

The quote above relate to the 2010 election in the United Kingdom. The 2010 election result marked the first time since 1974 that no party gained a majority in parliament, and resulted in the first coalition government formed outside wartime since 1918 (Electoral Reform Society, 2010). In a country used to majority cabinets, the four days prior to the formation of the Tory-Liberal Democrat coalition government headed by David Cameron reflected a panicky state in which journalists and pundits were questioning 'who was governing Britain?'. This state of panic reflected not only the British unfamiliarity with coalition governments, but also their general disdain of them (Electoral Reform Society, 2010). On 20 December 2015, Spain - a country equally unfamiliar with coalition governments - was placed in a similar situation. In the election, no party gained a majority of the votes. Where five days after the British elections David Cameron proudly announced that "his historic Conservative-led coalition government will be united and

[1] `http://www.libdems.org.uk/extracts_of_nick_clegg_s_speech_on_governing_until_2015`

provide strong and stable leadership"[2], Spain was unable to form a government. New elections were called on the 26th of June in 2016. These examples illustrate that once frozen electorates of Europe (Lipset and Rokkan, 1967) are becoming more fragmented, and as a result coalition governments are becoming more frequent (Drummond, 2006; Mair, 2008). In most European countries today, single party governments are not the norm, while coalition governments are.

Figure 1.1: Share of Coalition Governments in European Countries, 1945 - 2016



Note: This figure demonstrates per country the coalition governments as a share of all the governments that have been formed since 1945 using the Parliaments and Governments Database (ParlGov) (Döring and Manow, 2015). The darker the color of the country in the figure is, the higher its share of coalition governments.

Figure 1.1 shows how common coalition governments in Europe are. The darker the color of the country is, the more coalition governments the country has had between 1945 and 2016. As Figure 1.1 shows, the majority of the Western European countries are shaded very dark. This indicates that they almost always have had coalition governments. In fact, in Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg

[2] David Cameron as recorded by the BBC (`http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8676607.stm`).

and the Netherlands, of all of the governments that have been formed since 1945 between 84 and 100 percent were coalition governments. Other countries, like the UK and Spain, have little experience with this form of government: respectively 4 and 0 percent of their governments were based on coalitions. Again other countries, Norway, Sweden and Denmark, were accustomed to minority governments, usually formed by the Social Democrats (Döring and Manow, 2015; Müller and Strøm, 2000). Only between 35 and 60 percent of governments that were formed in these countries were based on a coalition. From the 1980s onward (the 1960s for Denmark), these minority governments were alternated by right-wing coalition governments. In the beginning of the 2000s (1990s for Denmark) coalition governments also became the norm in the Nordic countries (Döring and Manow, 2015; Müller and Strøm, 2000).

Coalitions are thus a common feature of contemporary European politics. Nevertheless, they pose hard questions to the politicians of the parties involved. In a coalition government, two or more parties need to cooperate and coordinate policy. Parties thus sacrifice a part of their independence for the sake of being in office (Müller and Strøm, 1999, 2000; Strøm et al., 2008). Nick Clegg, the former party leader of the Liberal Democrats and Deputy Prime Minister in the first Cameron Ministry (2010-2015), however inexperienced with coalition governments he might have been, hit the nail on the head when describing the challenges that accompany coalition government participation (see the quote on p.1). Coalition partners can be described as *political 'frenemies'*.[3] The oxymoron and portmanteau of the word 'friend' and 'enemy' refers to a person or an organization with whom one combines the characteristics of a friend and an enemy.[4] This description fits political parties who govern in coalition. Coalition government requires parties to cooperate - be friends -, but also to distinguish themselves during the campaigns for (re-)elections - be enemies. At these times, they act as adversaries, because they compete for the scarce votes. Coalition government facilitates parties to obtain their *office-seeking* goals, meaning that they want to control the government (Müller and Strøm, 1999; Riker, 1962). Coalition governments are usually not intrinsically valued, but rather constitute a means to an end. By entering into a government with others, parties can obtain cabinet portfolios and execute the parties' preferred policies. Political parties pursue multiple goals and these might sometimes be conflicting (Müller and Strøm, 1999). Next to their office-seeking goals, parties are *policy-seeking* which means that they seek to influence public policy (de Swaan, 1973; Müller and Strøm, 1999). Third, parties are *vote-seeking* which means that they want to maximize their electoral support (Downs, 1957; Müller and Strøm, 1999). Parties rarely ever can achieve all three goals simultaneously, nor do they value them equally (Harmel and Janda, 1994; Müller and Strøm, 1999; Schumacher et al., 2013). Party strategies, therefore, are the result of a party's trade-off between these three goals. Especially,

[3] This concept has been first used to describe the relations between the US and the USSR in 1953 by the American gossip columnist Walter Winchel in the Nevada State Journal. The article was titled "Howz about calling the Russians our Frienemies?"

[4] *OED Online*. Oxford University Press, December 2016. Web. 8 May 2017.

within coalition governments do these goals often clash. For instance, in order for a party to realize its office goal, it may need to position itself close to a (future) coalition partner (Martin and Stevenson, 2001, 2010; Warwick, 1996, 2006). Yet, at the same time, in order to achieve their vote-seeking goals, the party might need to clearly distinguish itself from its competitors (Bawn and Somer-Topcu, 2012). This trade-off between office and votes, called the *coalition dilemma* by Sagarzazu and Klüver (2015), is exactly what makes the decision for a party to enter into a coalition government so difficult.

The coalition dilemma implies that parties in a coalition government need to consider two audiences: voters and (future) coalition partners. Following the seminal work of Downs (1957), most scholars assume that parties just focus on voters, that is to say they prioritize their vote-seeking strategies. If parties fail to accomplish that goal, i.e. when they suffer electoral losses, parties reconsider their strategies. As a result, they oftentimes change their ideological positions and reconsider which issues to prioritize in their so-called *electoral platform* (for overviews of the literature on positional change, see Adams, 2012; Fagerholm, 2015; for overviews of the literature on issue change, see Budge and Farlie, 1983; Meguid, 2009). Just prioritizing vote-seeking incentives, however, is only beneficial if the party becomes the largest party and is therefore appointed as the *formateur* of the coalition government (Mattila and Raunio, 2004). In all other circumstances, parties should position themselves in the core of the political space to be considered for coalition formation (see, e.g. Pellikaan et al., 2016): The closer a party is to the formateur, the more likely a party is to be considered (Martin and Stevenson, 2001, 2010; Strøm et al., 2008; Warwick, 1996).

How past coalition government participation and future coalition considerations influences parties' behavior is the core topic of this thesis. Specifically, this thesis investigate how coalition considerations affect parties' communication strategies. Party communication consists, among other things, of a longer-term electoral platform, and of more short-term communication regarding specific party actions and formulations of public policy (such as press releases and parliamentary speeches). I use this broader concept, because the messages that parties convey over the course of the electoral cycle - the so-called *parliamentary life cycle* (Strøm, 2008) - is imperative for our understanding of how parties navigate the tension brought on by the coalition dilemma. This is the topic I turn to next.

1.2 The Coalition Dilemma: Competing and Cooperating

How does past coalition government participation and future coalition considerations influence parties to change their communication? This is the central question of my dissertation. It is an important question for the practical reason that in most countries in Western Europe parties need to form coalition governments (see Figure 1.1, and also Andersson et al., 2014; Döring and Manow, 2015; Müller and Strøm, 2000; Strøm

et al., 2008), but it also has a broader scientific relevance. It touches on a broader topic in the political science literature, namely are political parties able to coordinate their strategies for mutual benefit? If no party on its own can form a majority government, post-electoral bargaining determines which parties will coalesce to form a government. This is a process with uncertain outcomes (Falcó-Gimeno and Indridason, 2013; Golder and Stramski, 2010): neither parties nor voters exactly know who will form the government. The formation process is also complex, because parties need to bargain over a shared coalition government agenda. To do so, all members of the coalition government have to make (some) compromises on their policy pledges. The degree to which parties have to compromise typically depends on their bargaining position during the coalition formation (Strøm et al., 2008). Post-electoral coalition bargaining can also be a protracted process, on average it takes parties in Western Europe almost a month (28 days) to form a coalition government (Ecker and Meyer, 2015). The longest formation period in European history was 541 days after the 2010 Belgium elections; the Dutch take the second place with 208 days of formation in 1977.

Every now and then, parties try to circumvent this protracted, complex and uncertain process by explicitly coordinating their electoral strategies. Parties do so in the hope that they can jointly serve their vote and office goals. Parties, therefore, occasionally draft a document with government policy before the elections - i.e. forming so-called *pre-electoral coalitions* (PECs). Or they send *coalition signals*, meaning that they announce during electoral campaigns that two (or more) parties aim to form a government if numerically possible (Golder, 2005, 2006; Gschwend et al., 2016). For instance, the German Social Democrats (SPD) and the Greens (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen) announced during the 2009 elections that they aimed to coalesce together if they received a sufficient number of votes (Decker and Best, 2010). These coalition signals inform voters about the potential government after the elections. Since voters prefer some coalitions over others, coalition signals make voters more likely to cast their ballots for those parties if they prefer the coalition (Blais et al., 2006; Bowler et al., 2010; Gschwend and Hooghe, 2008; Gschwend et al., 2017, 2016; Meffert et al., 2011). Yet, following the seminal work of Downs (1957), most scholars work under the assumption that parties are self-interested organizations consumed with maximizing their vote share (for overviews of the this literature, see Adams, 2012; Fagerholm, 2015). Thereby, party competition is portrayed as a game where every party is on its own: parties campaign with an electoral platform in which they aim to align their policy pledges with the preferences of the majority of the voters.

The very existence of coalition signals and PECs shows that, at least at times, coalition environments lead parties to contest elections with a coordinated electoral platform. The necessity to cooperate for government requires parties to consider more than public preferences. Even if parties do not coordinate explicitly, parties' decisions about their electoral strategies almost always contain a trade-off between office and votes. An example from the Dutch Social Democrats (PvdA) illustrates this. The PvdA moved in

1989 and 1994 to the center of the political spectrum at the cost of electoral support, but gaining the spoils of office (Marx and Schumacher, 2013; Schumacher, 2012; van Praag, 1994). This party shifted to the left in the late 1970s to satisfy its party voters resulting in vote gains, but the resulted in eleven years of opposition[5]. The Christian Democrats (CDA) refused to cooperate with them, because the PvdA drifted too much to the left. The party's move back into the center in the late 1980s at the cost of electoral gains suggests that being considered a coalition partner out-weighted aligning the platform with their core voters. Given that coalition governments have turned into the norm in Western Europe, we cannot understand parties' change in their communication strategies without considering past and future coalitions preferences and participation. Only when we incorporate coalition dynamics into our existing theories of how and when parties change their communication strategies are we able to understand party behavior of the Social Democrats in the Netherlands and beyond for example. Hence, this thesis refines the existing theories of how and when parties change their platform by including coalition dynamics.

It does so by bridging the literature on party platform change (for overviews, see Adams, 2012; Fagerholm, 2015) with the literature on coalition formation (see e.g. Laver and Schofield, 1990; Martin and Stevenson, 2001; Müller and Strøm, 2000; Strøm et al., 2008; Warwick, 2006 for overviews). This allows me to answer the question of how past and future coalition participation influences parties' decision to change their communication strategies. I argue that what makes coalition governments important for party communication is that it requires parties to "govern together, but [to] compete for votes alone" (Sagarzazu and Klüver, 2015, p. 333). Parties in majority governments are not bothered by this coalition dilemma. As mentioned, even the degree to which political parties 'compete for votes alone' varies. Parties sometimes coordinate their strategies to increase their chances to either stay in office together (Kayser, 2003; Schleiter and Tavits, 2016; Strøm and Swindle, 2002) or intend to form a new government together after the elections (Golder, 2005, 2006; Gschwend et al., 2016). These coordinated actions are likely contingent upon the coalition's performance. Some coalitions, like the German Christian Democrats (CDU) and the Liberals (FDP) in the five Kohl cabinets between 1982 and 1998, cooperated very well together and therefore aimed to continue this cooperation after the elections (Martin and Stevenson, 2010). Others, however, have (multiple) fights over policy and these internal quarrels lead them to break up[6] (Andersson et al., 2014; Müller and Strøm, 2000; Strøm et al., 2008), such as the Dutch Christian Democrats (CDA) and the Conservative Liberals (VVD) with the List Pim Fortuyn (LPF) in the first Balkenende cabinet (2002-2003) for example. Coalition governments differ in terms of how well they cooperate and in their past and expected future electoral performance. Some coalition governments are composed of a party that has lost a lot of seats in the election, but therefore it might be a good junior coalition partner for bigger

[5]The period 1977-1989 was interrupted by a one-year spell in government with the Christian Democrats (1981).
[6]When coalitions terminate because of conflict, parties are less likely to cooperate again next time (Tavits, 2008).

parties that gained. Again other governments started with a coalition between two or three popular parties, but the government in its entirety is very unpopular. This can happen, for instance, when governments have to make large budget cuts, like during the recent Euro crisis. This is for example what happened to the Dutch coalition government Rutte II (2012–2017), formed by the Conservative Liberals (VVD) and the Social Democrats (PvdA). Cabinet Rutte II lost half of its support in the polls after a year in government. Their support base decreased from 52% of the votes to 27% of the votes based on opinion polls. These examples indicate that next to the party's own performance, the performance in the coalition will likely matter for how parties deal with the tensions created by the coalition dilemma.

I argue that parties' strategic communication is a central element of the way in which parties deal with the coalition dilemma. Parties need to communicate to their electorate that they have not strayed away significantly from their policy pledges when entering coalitions (Grimmer and Stewart, 2013; Martin and Vanberg, 2007; Sagarzazu and Klüver, 2015). This in order to mitigate electoral punishment (Fortunato, 2017). Simultaneously, parties need to communicate with their coalition partners to convince them that they are part of a united front that defends a shared government agenda. The latter is important, because unity within the coalition is a central precondition for the functioning and the survival of coalition governments at the ballot box (Lupia and Strøm, 1995; Martin and Vanberg, 2011; Müller and Strøm, 2000; Strøm et al., 2008; Warwick, 1994). The messages parties send to both voters and to (future) coalition partners are a reflection of their strategic agenda (Proksch and Slapin (2009) demonstrate that this assumption holds in the European Parliament). This indicates that what parties say, is likely what they (intend to) do. When coalition parties have an incentive to continue the coalition in order to avoid the loss of executive posts or increasing post-electoral search costs after fresh elections (Martin and Stevenson, 2010), coalition parties are likely to emphasize issues that are supported by all coalition members. This is a way to demonstrate unity, and aim to preserve the viability of the coalition. Yet, when the benefits of differentiation loom larger, for instance closer to election time, parties are more likely to focus on their own policy priorities in their communication. Parties are expected to distinguish themselves from their coalition partners (Bawn and Somer-Topcu, 2012; Sagarzazu and Klüver, 2015).

Giving party communication a central role has three important consequences for how we study change in party communication strategies. The first consequence is that in order to study the broader concept of party communication, we need to investigate parties' behavior in-between election periods. There is a time for building cooperation between coalition parties, and there is a time for deserting them. The same holds true for voters. There is a time to prioritize listening to and communicating with (party-) voters. This time line in-between elections is referred to as the parliamentary life cycle (Strøm, 2008; Strøm et al., 2008). The second consequence is that when communication is a tool to demonstrate unity within a

coalition or air the opposite (differentiation), we are focusing on the degrees of distance between parties' platforms. We thus need to develop a measure of *inter-party responsiveness*, i.e. how parties respond to each other. This differs markedly from what scholars do when investigating party platform change. Here they analyze a party's position on an ideological left-right dimension and look for shifts from its own position, not one that is relative to others (for overviews, see Adams, 2012; Fagerholm, 2015, but see Williams (2015) for a similar claim). The third consequence is that coalition and opposition parties are expected to differ in how they use their communication (see also Hobolt and de Vries, 2015). The coalition dilemma implies that coalition parties have different incentives to change their platform than those in opposition. Typically, studies of party platform change deem government participation as irrelevant - exceptions to this latter claim are Bawn and Somer-Topcu (2012) and Schumacher et al. (2015). These three consequences for our understanding of how parties communicate and compete are at the core of this thesis. Incorporating them allows me to further our understanding of change in party communication strategies, thereby contributing significantly to the existing literature. In the next section, I detail how the thesis is structured around these three themes.

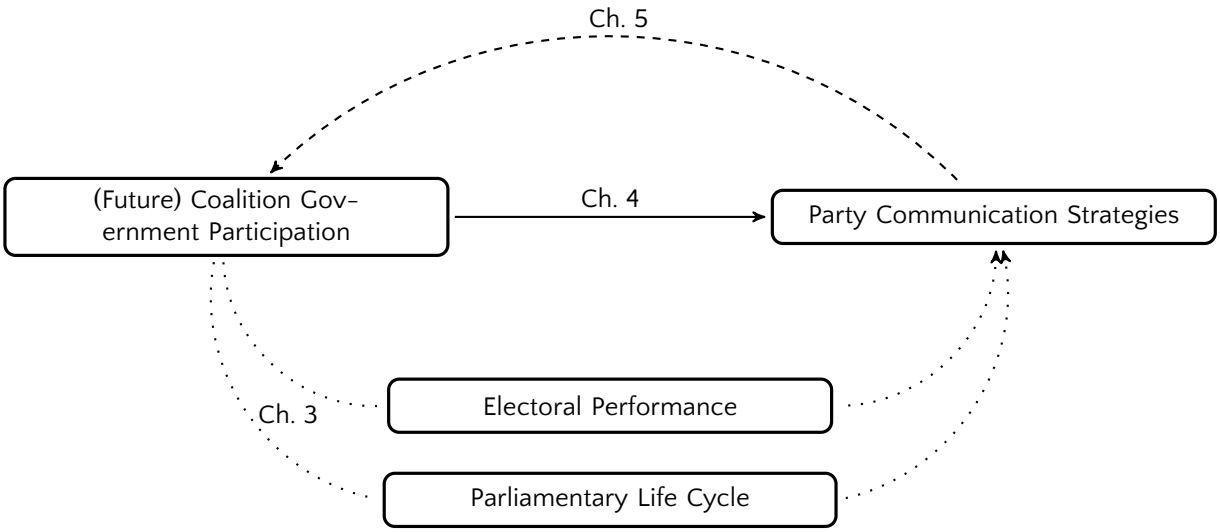
1.3 Studying the Coalition Dilemma

To answer the central research question "how do past and future coalition participation and considerations influence parties' decisions to change their communication?", I take up the theoretical and empirical implications I detailed at the end of the previous section. These implications focus on the study of (changes in) party communication of coalition parties and opposition parties during the parliamentary life cycle - see Figure 1.2 for an overview of the thesis. This is a cumulative thesis. This means that the chapters are minor revisions of articles and that there is some overlap between chapters. I apologize for this, but due to the collection nature of the thesis I am not able to avoid it. Following the structure of journal articles, each chapter has its own theory section, explanation of methodology and analysis.

In Chapter 2, Coalition Government Participation & Party Platform Change, I extend the existing literature on party platform change by discussing how (future) coalition formation presents parties with a number of challenges that complicate their decision whether or not to change their strategy. Analyzing how parties balance being in a coalition government, which necessitates policy compromises, with keeping their own party 'brand', helps us to better understand current party competition in Western Europe. I conceptualize that this in terms of a trade-off, namely the coalition dilemma. This dilemma, I argue, should be central to our current understanding of changes in party communication strategies. Subsequently, to analyze the effect of (future) coalition government participation on change in party communication strate-

gies, we need to (a) study parties' responses to other parties; and (b) examine parties' behavior during the parliamentary life cycle. Chapter 2 reviews the literature on the relationship between coalition government participation, electoral performance, the parliamentary life cycle and parties' communication strategies - i.e. the key variables of the thesis (see Figure 1.2).

Figure 1.2: Overview of Thesis Chapters and Topics



In the first empirical chapter, Chapter 3 Living in the Past or Living in the Future? Analyzing Parties' Platform Change In-between Elections in The Netherlands (co-authored with Gijs Schumacher and Barbara Vis), I study party communication during the parliamentary life cycle. This chapter tests whether parties change their communication if the polls predict that they will lose (the rational anticipation mechanism (Stimson et al., 1995)) or whether parties respond to the losses they experienced in the latest elections (the electoral turnover mechanism (Stimson et al., 1995)), and whether government and opposition parties differ their pattern of responses to electoral performance. More broadly, this chapter investigates how the parliamentary life cycle and whether (prospective) electoral performance influence parties' decisions to prioritize office or vote goals. Chapter 4 (co-authored with Gijs Schumacher), Drifting Apart or Sticking Together? An Analysis of Party Platform Changes in 11 Western European Countries, develops and tests a theory of the conditions under which parties in a coalition government are likely to change their communication by becoming more or less similar than their coalition partner. This chapter thus examines inter-party responsiveness between coalition parties. In the final chapter, Chapter 5 "Flirting" for Coalition Participation? Exploring Parties' Communication Strategies in Parliamentary Debates, I explore how parties thumb through the parliamentary debate in search for potential partners in anticipation of coalition

formation. In doing so, this chapter examines how the coalition dilemma leads parties to research potential partners with which they could join forces. In the next section, I set out how these chapters contribute to refining our current theoretical predictions and empirical strategies both in terms of data requirements and statistical approaches to explain changes in party communication strategies.

1.4 Implications of the Coalition Dilemma for Party Platform Change

This thesis analyzes the influence of (future) coalition government participation on changes in party communication strategies. By means of a variety of quantitative methods, Chapters 3, 4, and 5 provide empirical evidence for the broader theoretical argument, as set out by Chapter 2, that past coalition government participation and future coalition consideration alter parties' communication strategies. I first discuss the theoretical, empirical and methodological contributions of each empirical chapter, after which I elaborate on the broader implications of the thesis.

Chapter 3 demonstrates that government and opposition parties differ in their reaction to electoral performance. As mentioned, parties change their electoral strategy if they cannot achieve the goal(s) they set out for themselves. In this chapter, I analyze how office and vote goals jointly affect parties decision to change their platform over the parliamentary life cycle. Regarding parties' vote-seeking strategy, scholars have theorized and demonstrated that electoral losses lead parties to change (for overviews, see Adams, 2012; Fagerholm, 2015) - the so-called *electoral turn-over* mechanism in the representation literature (Powell, 2000; Stimson et al., 1995). Parties can also change their platform to align themselves more closely to the electorate whilst anticipating poor future electoral performance (Erikson and Wlezien, 2012; Geer, 1996; Laver, 2005; Laver and Sergenti, 2012) - the so-called *rational anticipation* mechanism in the representation literature (Stimson et al., 1995). The latter mechanism has been largely ignored by the party platform change literature. In part, this results from the fact that this literature mainly analyzes electoral manifestos that are only produced at election time. To overcome this issue, I build a new data set of >20,000 press releases issued by thirteen Dutch parties that were elected in parliament between 1997 and 2014. To measure changes in party platforms during the parliamentary life cycle. I do so based on an automated text analysis method called *topic modeling* that clusters press releases with the same topic. Press releases are an effective way for parties to convey (short) messages about their policy stances to a large audience on a daily basis. This enables me to measure the changes in parties attention to issues (i.e. the salience thereof) in their press releases. To evaluate electoral prospects, I collected opinion poll data on a monthly level for the period of analysis. The results of this chapter indicate that opposition parties respond to past election results: performing poorly at the last elections leads them to change their plat-

form during the parliamentary life cycle. Government parties, contrarily, even though they change their platform more than opposition parties do, are neither motivated to do so by past nor prospective electoral performance. This suggests that it is imperative to study the interdependence of vote and office goals to understand when parties change their communication strategy.

Chapter 4 delves deeper into what, if not electoral performance, motivates coalition parties to change. This chapter bridges the literature on coalition formation with the literature on party platform change to analyze how (future) coalition government participation affects parties' platform. Compiling different existing data sets on party platforms (the Manifesto Project Dataset (Volkens et al., 2014)), coalition government (ParlGov database (Döring and Manow, 2015)), coalition termination (Comparative Parliamentary Democracy Data Archive (Strøm et al., 2008)) and opinion poll data (using the data sets of Jennings and Wlezien (2016), Askham-Christensen (2012) and Van der Velden (2014)), this chapter demonstrates that if coalition parties experience good cooperation and are able to continue the coalition, they stick together (i.e. converge their platforms). However, if coalition parties experience conflict or are unpopular and therefore unable to continue governing, they drift apart (i.e. diverge their platforms). I develop a new measure of party platform change that accounts for the policy-distance between two parties. This chapter, therefore, explicitly investigates the interdependence of parties' decision to change their platform, i.e. how coalition parties respond to coalition cooperation.

Chapter 5 builds upon the previous chapter's finding that strategically craft their platforms in order to be considered a likely coalition partner. Chapter 5 theorizes that parties use the parliamentary debates in order to assess with which parties they are able to form a coalition. This chapter builds upon insights from (pre-electoral) coalition formation and legislative studies to theorize how parties strategically use the parliamentary debate in an attempt to accomplish office goals. I propose that parties make *coalition appeals*. Thereby, I go beyond the common wisdom that parties only explicitly send signals to coordinate electoral strategies. I argue and demonstrate that parties also send implicit signals to do this. I substantiate my theoretical argument by collecting legislative speeches in the Netherlands between 1998 and 2012 for all 13 parties that were elected in parliament. To investigate coalition appeals, I create a novel measure indicating how positive parties talk about other parties in their speech. I explicitly model that parties involved in political communication are interdependent and influence each other. This chapter, therefore, also contributes to the claim that party behavior is interdependent.

In sum, my thesis theorizes that past and future coalition government participation affects parties' communication strategies. Parties change the way they communicate and what they communicate in response to coalition government participation. Why because of the coalition dilemma. This dilemma necessitates parties to balance vote-seeking goals with office-seeking goals when deciding on their electoral strategies.

Empirically, my thesis introduces (1) new data of party communication in between elections - press releases and speeches during the parliamentary debates - and (2) new data of party performance - opinion poll results - and (3) new measures of party communication - changes in parties attention to issues (i.e. the salience thereof) in their press releases and the tone of voice towards other parties in the legislative debate. Methodologically, my thesis proposes to model the interdependence of parties' decision to change their communication strategies utilizing multiple forms of automated text analysis to measure party communication. Based on these theoretical, empirical and methodological contributions, my thesis refines the current theoretical predictions of party platform change. It demonstrates that to understand contemporary party decision-making on their electoral strategies, it is crucial to analyze the interactions between vote and office goals. Specifically, we should bridge the knowledge on party platform change with what we know about coalition governance - i.e. the formation and survival of coalitions. To understand how parties make trade-offs between vote and office goals, my thesis shows that party communication, broader understood than what parties write down in their manifestos, is key. In order to examine party communication within and between elections, we need to embark on new empirical strategies of data collection and employ novel statistical approaches. We need to model coalition government participation as a joint venture in which parties respond to each other. This inter-party responsiveness calls for approaches that allow for an understanding and modeling of this interdependence. My thesis provides an important first step.

The findings of my thesis contribute to debates in several sub-fields of political science. First, the findings speak to the literature of coalition formation. This field of study typically focus on the post-election phase and takes the election as a starting point. My findings not only indicate that parties have made up their minds (long) before the post-electoral formation process starts (see Chapter 5), they also strategically adjust their communication to be in order to be considered a good coalition partner - i.e. converge its platform to its coalition partner if they are popular, familiar with governing together and did not experience conflict (see Chapter 4). Second, the findings of my thesis contribute to the literature on policy making, because they suggest that the extent to which parties commit to their own policy agenda or moderate for joint government policy varies with the trust in and popularity of the coalition. Tommasi et al. (2013) theorize using a veto-player logic (for overviews of this literature, see König et al., 2010) that the extent to which actors give in to joint policy depends on the interplay. In my thesis, I empirically substantiate this theoretical prediction. If parties in a coalition government work well together, they defend joint government policy in their electoral platforms (i.e. they stick together, see Chapter 4), if not, they prioritize their own issues. Third, my findings inform the literature on party communication. This literature typically investigates the interplay between the political and the media agenda. Thereby they overlook that parties

use different outlets (e.g. press releases and parliamentary speeches) to convey different pieces of information. What parties say and where they say it depends on their role. Government parties have different incentives than opposition parties when communicating to voters and other parties. Fourth, and finally, the findings of my dissertation inform scholars of legislative politics. It suggests that it not only matters what parties do or say in parliament, it is also important *how* parties say it. Parties can play with their tone of their messages to send (implicit) signals to other parties, for instance about the possibility to coalesce.

My thesis also opens up a broader discussion in political science on the role of political parties in democracies. If political parties are both responsive to voters and to other political parties with whom they might coalesce, what does this mean for their democratic function? Parties are assumed to be responsive, indicating that they are the vehicle through which the public is represented in politics. Parties are also assumed to be responsible, indicating that parties in government take into account the long-term needs of citizens and the country (American Political Science Association, 1950; Bardi et al., 2014; Bartolini and Mair, 2001; Daalder, 1992; Katz and Mair, 1994; Sartori, 1976). Coalition politics hinders parties' abilities to directly translate public opinion into public policy. Since parties need to compromise (some of) their policy pledges in order to form a shared coalition agenda. Coalition politics might also hinder parties' responsibility. Cooperating in government not only requires parties to be ideologically close and preferably hold a majority of the votes, it also necessitates a certain level of trust in one another. This means that parties might not address 'difficult' topics to avoid conflict. For instance, during the Euro crisis in the Netherlands, the Christian Democrats (CDA) and the Social Democrats (PvdA), who where in government in the period 2008-2010, had to discuss both mortgage reduction and the laws regarding dismissal of employees. Experts had argued that these issues should have been discussed and changed, yet the parties did not want to touch these topics. Why? Because they radically disagreed on the solutions. Investigating the role of past and future coalition government participation for changes in parties' communication strategies, thus, opens avenues for further research on how being part of a coalition environment affects political representation. Especially, since (1) populist parties accuse parties that are in coalition governments of forming cartels and thereby betraying their ideological principles and subsequently 'the people' (Mudde, 2004), and (2) these accusations fit with people's ideas that parties in a coalition government converge (Fortunato and Stevenson, 2013).

Taken together, this dissertation thus presents a comprehensive study on the influence of past coalition government participation and future coalition considerations on strategic party communication. The chapters of the dissertation rely on a range of different (quantitative) methods and data sources to address the central question. These data source include the use of parties' press releases (Chapter 3), legislative speeches (Chapter 5) and electoral manifesto's (Chapter 4) to measure party communication and opinion

polls to measure parties' performance over the parliamentary life cycle (Chapters 3,4, and 5). The findings of the chapters clearly indicate that parties do take into account coalition politics in their decision to change their communication. This suggests that future models of party competition should take more seriously parties' expectations of coalition government participation as a factor that may influence their communication.

Chapter 2

Coalition Government Participation & Party Communication Strategies

2.1 Introduction

How does past coalition government participation and future coalition considerations influence parties to change their communication? Party communication consists, among other things, of a longer-term electoral platform, and of more short-term communication regarding specific party actions and formulations of public policy (such as press releases and parliamentary speeches). Parties communicate their actions and formulations of public policy with various goals in mind: office, policy and votes (Müller and Strøm, 1999). These goals oftentimes conflict. Parties are therefore pressured to trade-off vote, policy and office goals. Here, I review the literature that analyzes how the achievement of their goals - or the failure thereof - is reflected in party platform change. Party platforms, where parties outline their ideological position on and attention to specific policy issues, are the most often studied form of party communication. Typically, however, the literature examines only the vote goals. Most, if not all, parties, however, are not just vote-seekers, but combine this goal with the goals of office and policy (Harmel and Janda, 1994; Müller and Strøm, 1999). This means that parties also aim to control government (*office-seeking*) and augment their influence on public policy (*policy-seeking*) (de Swaan, 1973; Müller and Strøm, 1999; Riker, 1962). This is not to say that votes are unimportant. Yet, votes sometimes hinder to obtain other goals. Vote and office goals are inter-related: Parties compete for votes, not for the sake of votes per se, but to enable them to enter government and subsequently execute their preferred policies. There is, however, one caveat: Most

A manuscript based on this chapter is currently being prepared for submission to a journal.

parties in Western Europe compete in multi-party systems where coalition governments are the norm (Andersson et al., 2014). Being in a coalition government complicates parties decision to rethink their platform when this did not yield the goal(s) they set out to achieve. Parties in a coalition environment need to account for the fact that gaining votes is a poor predictor of government participation (Mattila and Raunio, 2004). The exception to this latter claim is the largest party, which typically delivers the *formateur*. For all other parties holds that winning votes in an election fails to translate automatically in government participation. Additionally, parties in a coalition environment are confronted with the so-called *coalition dilemma* (Sagarzazu and Klüver, 2015): In order to realize their office goals, parties should position themselves close to a (future) coalition partner (Martin and Stevenson, 2001, 2010; Warwick, 1996, 2006), but to accomplish their vote goals, parties benefit electorally when they clearly distinguish themselves (Bawn and Somer-Topcu, 2012).

The fact that a vote-seeking strategy does not necessarily help, and sometimes even hurt, parties to achieve their office or policy goals, has important implications for how we study party behavior. I draw upon the existing reviews of the literature on party platform change (Adams, 2012; Fagerholm, 2015), and extend this literature by discussing how the possibility of coalition participation presents parties with a number of challenges complicating their decision whether or not to change their platform.

In the next section, I explain the coalition dilemma and how this complicates party platform change. Subsequently, I review the existing literature and point out why these studies are inapt to answer the question how past coalition government participation and future coalition considerations influence party platform change. Finally, I conclude by proposing how that in order to analyze the effect of coalition government participation on party platform change, we need to (a) analyze vote and office goals in interaction; (b) study parties' responses to other parties; and (c) examine parties' behavior during the parliamentary life cycle.

2.2 "Govern Together, but Compete for Votes Alone"

Parties in coalition governments continuously need to consider two audiences to which their platform should be enticing: voters and (future) coalition partners. This 'double audience' is exactly what complicates coalition parties' decision to change their platform. Voters and (future) coalition partners request sometimes opposing actions from a party. As a consequence of governing together, voters perceive coalition parties as more ideological similar than otherwise similar ones not in coalition government (Fortunato and Stevenson, 2013). Voters equate this (perceived) convergence with selling out principles for power and punish coalition parties at the ballot booth (Fortunato, 2017). While a clear distinction from current

partners helps governing parties at the polls (Bawn and Somer-Topcu, 2012). This divergence, nonetheless, might hurt parties' likelihood to enter office if they are not the formateur party (Mattila and Raunio, 2004). Distinguishing from the former coalition party might alienate it. Ideological proximity towards (potential) coalition partners is, after all, one of the most important predictors for forming a stable coalition government (Laver, 2003; Lupia and Strøm, 1995; Martin and Stevenson, 2001, 2010; Strøm et al., 2008; Warwick, 1996). Parties in a coalition government are, thus, caught in the so-called *coalition dilemma* (Sagarzazu and Klüver, 2015, p. 333): Successful coalition government necessitates ideological unity within the coalition (Laver, 2003; Lupia and Strøm, 1995; Martin and Stevenson, 2001, 2010; Strøm et al., 2008; Warwick, 1996), yet successful electoral competition requires coalition parties to take up relatively extreme positions (Bawn and Somer-Topcu, 2012). So, coalition government participation requires parties to "govern together, but [to] compete for votes alone" (Sagarzazu and Klüver, 2015, p.333). The Dutch Social Democrats (*PvdA*) is one of many examples of parties that learned their lesson from experiencing this trade-off. The party's shift towards the left in the 1970s satisfied party-voters and brought massive gains in electoral support. Yet, after a stint in government (1972-1977) the Christian Democrats (*CDA*) refused cooperation with the Social Democrats. The CDA favored a coalition with the Conservative Liberals (*VVD*), because the they deemed the PvdA too left-wing. The Social Democrats stayed in opposition for 11 years, until it slowly found its way back to the center. This centric movement led to vote loss in the 1989 and 1994 elections, yet it did result in coalition participation on both occasions (Marx and Schumacher, 2013; Schumacher, 2012; van Praag, 1994).[1] This example demonstrates that the coalition dilemma brings up all sorts of new questions to understand parties' decision making.

Understanding how parties in a coalition government handle this coalition dilemma requires scholars to study how and when parties prioritize vote and office goals. Just prioritizing vote-seeking incentives, the common assumption in studies of party platform change (see Adams, 2012; Fagerholm, 2015), is only beneficial if the party becomes the largest party and is therefore usually appointed as the *formateur* of the coalition government (Mattila and Raunio, 2004). In all other circumstances, parties should position themselves in the core of the political space to be considered for coalition formation (see, e.g. Pellikaan et al., 2016): The closer a party is to the formateur, the more likely a party is to be considered (Martin and Stevenson, 2001, 2010; Schofield et al., 1998; Strøm et al., 2008; Warwick, 1996). Balancing vote and office goals thus requires parties to be responsive to other parties. Parties' decisions are thus shaped, in part, by those of the other parties in the party system. Moreover, the coalition dilemma evokes us to think about the role of the parliamentary life cycle - i.e. the period in-between elections (Strøm, 2008). When parties prioritize vote and office goals likely changes over the life-time of a coalition (Lupia and Strøm,

[1]The period 1977-1989 was interrupted by a one-year spell in government with the Christian Democrats (1981). This coalition rather quickly broke down, leading to new elections in 1982.

1995; Sagarzazu and Klüver, 2015). Sagarzazu and Klüver (2015) show that parties prioritize vote goals when elections are close - i.e. at the beginning and the end of the parliamentary life cycle - and prioritize office in the middle of the parliamentary life cycle by focusing on enacting a common policy agenda.

2.3 Party Platform Change & the Trade-off Between Office and Votes

The literature explaining party platform change typically deems government participation as an irrelevant factor for parties' decision to change their platform (for an overviews, see Adams, 2012; Fagerholm, 2015; and exception is Schumacher et al., 2015). Nevertheless, there are numerous indications in the literature suggesting that government participation motivates for party platform change. First, ample studies reported that never (or hardly ever) being in government - the so-called *niche* or *challenger* parties - influences party platform change. Compared to the 'mainstream' parties which frequently alter between being in government and in opposition, these parties are more likely to (a) politicize (new) political issues, such as immigration or EU integration (De Vries and Hobolt, 2012; Hobolt and de Vries, 2015), and (b) to change their electoral platform in reaction to party-voter shifts instead of general public opinion shifts (e.g. Adams et al., 2006; Bischof and Wagner, 2017). Second, Bawn and Somer-Topcu (2012) demonstrate that if government parties propose a relatively extreme platform in which parties distinguish themselves from the other parties, they do better at the elections. This is not the case for opposition parties. Their finding suggests that government participation motivates how parties change their electoral platform. Third, we know that parties in government suffer from the *cost of governing*. This is the empirical regularity that incumbent governments in advanced industrial democracies lose between 1 and 3.15 percentage points of the votes, even when controlling for the government's performance and the institutional structure of the political system (Nannestad and Paldam, 2002; Stevenson, 2002). Because parties' are assumed to change their platform after poor electoral performance, government participation is likely to influence party platform change (cf. Schumacher et al., 2015). While these studies demonstrate that government participation (or the lack thereof) motivates party platform change, those studies primarily demonstrate how government participation hurts parties' vote-seeking behavior. So, these studies do not examine the relation between vote-seeking and office-seeking strategies, which is crucial if we want to understand how coalition government participation influences party platform change.

Additionally, the literature explaining party platform change usually consider parties to independently decide when to change their platform. The exceptions to this are Adams and Somer-Topcu (2009), Williams (2015), and Böhmelt et al. (2016). The study of Adams and Somer-Topcu (2009) demonstrates that parties are particularly responsive to rivals within their own party family (cf. Williams, 2015). Böhmelt et al.

(2016) show that parties also learn from and emulate parties in a global setting: Parties copy successful strategies of parties across their borders. Many other studies on political parties, however, (implicitly) assume parties' decisions on their platform to be related. For one, scholars have theorized and empirically demonstrated that parties respond to newly emerged parties such as green parties or populist parties (Abou-Chadi, 2016; Meguid, 2009; Pellikaan et al., 2007). The success of these parties indicated that the newcomers were able to represent preferences of voters that were unaddressed by the existing parties. Because existing parties do not want to lose their voters to these newcomers, they adapt their electoral platform. Another indication that parties are responsive to each other is that in parties' decision to emphasize certain issues, parties make the choice between (a) engaging with issues brought on the agenda by other parties (Kaplan et al., 2006; Meyer and Wagner, 2016; Sigelman and Buell Jr., 2004) or (b) ignoring the issues of the others and only emphasize the issues they have a competitive advantage on (Budge and Farlie, 1983; Petrocik, 1996). Thereby, parties might adjust their platform based on the issues other parties have addressed. A third indication is that parties sometimes coordinate their strategies. Parties do so in the hope that they jointly realize vote and office goals. Parties, therefore, occasionally draft a document with government policy before the elections - i.e. forming so-called *pre-electoral coalitions* (PECs). Or more frequently send *coalition signals*, meaning that they announce during electoral campaigns that two (or more) parties aim to form a government if numerically possible (Golder, 2005, 2006; Gschwend et al., 2016). Thereby, parties inform voters about the potential government after the elections. Parties are more likely to form PECs or send coalition signals if they are ideologically close. These coordinated actions thus imply that parties have adjusted their platform in such a way that they would be good coalition partners to each other. These three streams of literature thus indicate that party decisions to change its platform are not solely dependent on voters' preferences, but encompass what other parties do too. Especially in the latter strand of literature, it becomes prevalent that if we want to understand how coalition government participation influences party platform change we should study how parties respond to each other.

Also, the literature explaining party platform change almost exclusively draws upon sources that are produced at election periods only: the Manifesto Project Data set (Volkens et al., 2014) and sometimes on the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (Bakker et al., 2012) (see Adams, 2012; Fagerholm, 2015 for overviews of the application of these data sets). The latter data are collected after the European Parliament elections. Thereby, these data sets are inapt to capture parties' reactions in-between elections. Yet, the recent work of Sagarzazu and Klüver (2015) argues that to understand the coalition dilemma, the parliamentary life cycle is crucial. This argument is echoed by the work on coalition formation. Strøm (2008) argues that parties incentives to prioritize their coalition partners change. Just after fresh elections, coalition parties rely on unity and therefore invest in a strong cooperation. There is also a time to desert this cooperation, i.e. when

the party needs to be reelected. The same holds for voters: there is a time to prioritize listening to and communicating with (party-) voters. The findings of Sagarzazu and Klüver (2015) demonstrate exactly this: coalition parties emphasize the same issues in their press releases at the beginning of the parliamentary life cycle. The closer new elections, however, the more coalition parties start emphasize different issues. We thus need sources that are more dynamic in nature than manifestos or expert surveys are to understand how coalition government participation influences party platform change.

2.4 Examining the Coalition Dilemma

Hence, to answer the question how past coalition government participation and future coalition considerations influences changes in party communication strategies, we thus need to refine our theoretical predictions and empirical strategies. First, I propose that we need to theorize how parties trade-off vote-seeking strategies with office seeking strategies. Because coalition governments vary in how well they cooperate and how popular they are, how the trade-off between office and vote goals motivates party platform change likely depends on parties' experience with their partner in a coalition government. Therefore, the currently separated fields on how coalition governments form and survive and party platform change should be bridged. Drawing on insights from studies of (a) post-election bargaining and coalition formation (see, e.g. Bäck et al., 2011; Laver and Shepsle, 1996; Schermann and Ennser-Jedenastik, 2012), (b) survival of coalition governments (see, e.g. Lupia and Strøm, 1995; Strøm et al., 2008; Warwick, 1996), and (c) the governance of coalition governments (see, e.g. Martin and Vanberg, 2011; Strøm et al., 2008; Thies, 2001) enables us to refine our theories on changes in party communication. It informs us about the varies considerations parties include when deciding to cooperate and coordinate in a coalition. Thereby, we would be better able to understand how and when parties change their communication.

Second, I put forward that to understand how coalition government participation motivates parties decision to change their platform, we should study *inter-party responsiveness* - i.e. how (dis)similar parties platforms are in terms of issue emphasis and issue position. This because parties' decision to trade off vote and office goals goes hand in hand with deciding to converge or diverge from their current or future coalition partner. This not only indicates that we should refine our theoretical predictions from the individual party level to a dyadic level. It also means that to understand how parties handle the coalition dilemma, we need to adjust our empirical strategies. This calls for the development of more fine-grained measures of party platform change. Measures that are able to evaluate how similar or different parties are in terms of issues emphasis, and whether parties position themselves closer to or further away from (some of the) other parties. The first implication is that we need issue-based measures of party platform change

– i.e. ones that include both changes in parties ideological position as well as changes in parties' attention to issues. Issue competition has become more important over the recent decades (Green-Pedersen, 2007). This is especially important, because issue salience is the main predictor of portfolio allocation – i.e. the key pay-off for parties entering a coalition government (Bäck et al., 2011). The second implication is that studying inter-party responsiveness requires us to revise our statistical approaches. Current approaches assume parties' platform changes to be independent. The fact that parties (a) respond to newly emerged parties; (b) engage with issues brought on the agenda by other parties; and (c) occasionally coordinate their strategies to increase the chances of forming a coalition government clearly indicate that these parties' decisions to change their platform are interdependent of each other (cf. Williams, 2015). I therefore propose to introduce network related approaches to study party platform change in coalition environments.

Third, to understand how coalition government participation motivates parties to change their platform, we need sources that are more dynamic in nature than manifestos are. Parties do not only present policy alternatives in campaign periods, but on a daily basis, they participate in legislative committees and parliamentary debates where they for instance draft bills and amendments and/or adopt legislation (see, e.g. Martin and Vanberg, 2011), and send out press releases or tweets aimed at gaining broad media attention (see e.g. Haselmayer et al., 2017; Hopmann et al., 2010). These activities give parties important information about the policy priorities of other parties (Martin and Vanberg, 2011). I therefore propose to broaden our scope and study parties' communication strategies. Party communication consists, among other things, of a longer-term electoral platform, and of more short-term communication regarding party actions and thoughts on public policy (such as press releases and parliamentary speeches). Complementing our current knowledge with these data pictures how parties on a day-to-day basis manage their affairs, which is vital in a coalition environment (Martin and Vanberg, 2008; Strøm, 2008) and to understand when parties prioritize votes over office or vice-versa. Technological advances allow us to analyze the vast amounts of textual data produced by legislatures year in and out (for overviews, see Grimmer and Stewart, 2013; Monroe et al., 2008).

Chapter 3

Living in the Past or Living in the Future?

Analyzing Parties' Platform Change In-between Elections in The Netherlands

3.1 Introduction

The literature on political representation identifies two key mechanisms to align public opinion and parties' electoral platforms. The first one is electoral performance, whereby poor electoral performance motivates parties to change their platform (Budge, 1994; Budge et al., 2010; Harmel et al., 1995; Harmel and Janda, 1994; Somer-Topcu, 2009). The second mechanism is rational anticipation (Stimson et al., 1995) or electoral prospects. Here, parties change their platform to align more closely to the electorate in anticipation of poor future electoral performance (Erikson et al., 2002; Geer, 1996; Laver, 2005; Laver and Sergenti, 2012). While there is a burgeoning literature testing, and regularly finding support for, the first mechanism (for overviews see Adams, 2012; Fagerholm, 2015), the second mechanism - rational anticipation - has been more or less ignored by this literature. Consequently, we do not conclusively know whether parties are looking back to past electoral performance, as the first mechanism proposes. Or whether they are looking forward and change their platform in anticipation of electoral performance, as the second, rational anticipation, mechanism proposes. Given that governing parties and opposition ones may have different incentives to change their platform (e.g., Schumacher et al., 2015), this difference should also be explored. In this paper, we do exactly that by examining party platform change in-between elections, taking into account the moderating effects of timing between elections and the effect of government participation.

To address these questions, we need data in-between elections. Our data cover Dutch political parties between 1997 and 2014. We use the Netherlands because the high number of parties, the high level of elec-

This chapter is an article co-authored article with Gijs Schumacher and Barbara Vis. The manuscript based on this chapter is currently *forthcoming* at *Political Communication*. All Supportive Information (SI) for this chapter is online available at `www.marikenvandervelden.eu/research`.

toral volatility, and the absence of fixed coalitions ensure much variation over-time in who governs, and in parties' electoral performance. This makes the decision-making environment complex. So, if we find an effect here, we are likely to find it also in other – in many respects less complex – Western European party systems. We created a new dataset of 21,773 press releases from 15 political parties. We analyze press releases rather than other sources of party platforms for three reasons. First, election manifestos are produced at the time of an election only, thereby failing to capture parties' reactions to environmental stimuli in-between elections. The rational anticipation mechanism can thus not be tested with party manifesto data. Second, press releases are more independent (i.e. parties have more agency) from the legislative agenda and the media agenda compared to other sources that are available in-between elections, such as legislative speeches, legislative voting behavior or media reports about party positions (De Nooy and Kleinnijenhuis, 2013; Helbling and Tresch, 2011; Kriesi et al., 2006, 2008; Proksch and Slapin, 2015). Third, parties' press releases influence the media agenda (Asp, 1983; Brandenburg, 2002; Walgrave and Van Aelst, 2006) and thereby the salience of particular issues in the perception of voters (McCombs and Shaw, 1972; Weaver et al., 2004). Because issue salience is an important predictor of vote choice (Brandenburg, 2002; Green and Hobolt, 2008; Kleinnijenhuis and Ridder, 1998), parties use press releases strategically to manipulate voters' perception of what parties stand for. Therefore, press releases are a good source to analyze how parties respond to (prospective) electoral performance and government–opposition dynamics. We construct a dependent variable, labeled party platform change, which analyzes the changes in a party's attention to issues (i.e. the salience thereof) in their press releases. We use hierarchical topic modeling - an automated text analysis tool - (Grimmer, 2010; Grimmer and Stewart, 2013) to identify the topics of press releases.

We hypothesize that proximity to elections moderates the effects of past and future electoral performance. Past electoral performance should be the most relevant directly after an election, while information about future electoral performance should be the most relevant the closer is the next election. Our findings suggest that electoral defeat indeed motivates party platform change in-between elections. However, we find such an effect only for opposition parties. And contrary to existing findings (Somer-Topcu, 2009), we find no indication that this effects weakens over time. Furthermore, our results demonstrate that electoral prospects do not influence party platform change. The findings are thus largely in line with the electoral performance mechanism and with a theory of political parties as slow responders (Harmel and Janda, 1994). Conversely, the findings contradict mechanism two, the theory of forward-looking parties that rationally anticipate losses. In line with our expectations, we also find a systematic difference between parties in government and in opposition, with government parties changing more on average (cf. Schumacher et al., 2015).

3.2 Do Parties Respond to Electoral Defeat or Rationally Anticipate Losses?

Electoral defeat is often identified as "the mother of all change" (Harmel and Janda, 1994, p. 280). Parties are typically uncertain about the preferences of the electorate. Still, what they are certain of, is the number of seats they won or lost in the last national election. Electoral defeat signals that a party is on the 'wrong side of public opinion', and that it should thus change its platform (Budge, 1994; Budge et al., 2010; Harmel et al., 1995; Harmel and Janda, 1994; Somer-Topcu, 2009). There is some empirical support for the notion that parties change their platform after an electoral defeat (see the citations in the previous sentence) and some evidence against this finding (Adams et al., 2004; Schumacher et al., 2013). If parties change their election manifesto because of electoral defeat in the last national election, parties likely already start changing their platform over the course of the electoral cycle. Hence, we should find a similar effect on a party's agenda in-between two elections. But is the effect of past electoral performance stable in the period in-between elections? Explaining changes in election manifestos, Somer-Topcu (2009) shows that the effect of past electoral performance is weaker the longer since the last national election. Consequently, we consider it plausible that the pain of an electoral defeat is more likely to have an effect in the first year after the election than in, say, the fourth year after an election. The effect of electoral defeat should be strongest directly after the elections, and should weaken over time.

Electoral Performance Hypothesis (H1) *The negative effect of past electoral performance weakens the longer since the last national election*.

According to the rational anticipation mechanism, conversely, parties rationally anticipate electoral losses and respond accordingly (Stimson et al., 1995). Parties then base their decision on whether to change their platform on electoral performance, captured by their standing in opinion polls. Polling agencies report opinion polls on voter preferences and thereby provide information on the popularity of the party itself and that of the other parties. Parties, pundits and the media use these polls as-if they contain real information on public opinion shifts (Daschmann, 2000; Geer, 1996; van der Meer et al., 2016) even though many polls are not based on representative samples, and shifts in seat shares are considered relevant even when they are insignificant. Party leaders of parties that do well in the polls have an incentive to stress their party's success and to emphasize how well their strategy is working. Party leaders of parties that are under-performing in the polls, however, may consider this a motivation to change because this signals that the party's platform is out of sync with public opinion (Erikson et al., 2002; Geer, 1996). By aligning their platform more closely to public opinion, a party aims to avoid electoral defeat. In several theoretical models, unsatisfactory polls motivate parties to incrementally adapt their platform until it yields satisfactory results (Bendor et al., 2011; Laver, 2005; Laver and Sergenti, 2012). However, this

theoretical prediction has not yet been systematically tested. In addition to testing this rational anticipation mechanism empirically, we also theorize that also here it is plausible that timing in the electoral cycle matters. Polls are about a party's future electoral performance, i.e. its electoral prospects. If the "future" is still years away, polling information might not be very influential. If the "future" is in say four weeks, polling information is more relevant. In the latter case, so we hypothesize, parties are more likely to use such information (H2).

Rational Anticipation Hypothesis (H2) *The negative effect of electoral prospects becomes stronger the closer to the next national election*.

Do government and opposition parties react similar to (prospective) electoral performance?

Are government parties that lost votes less motivated to change their platform than are opposition parties that lost votes? It is plausible that they are, because government parties have what they want (office), and their platform makes them an attractive coalition partner. At the same time, this also means that government parties have more to lose than do opposition parties. Consequently, Schumacher and co-authors (2015) argued that government parties are more likely to change their platform because they fear losing political power. This is a reasonable scenario, since government parties' electoral prospects are typically worse: It is a pervasive fact that parties in office lose between 1 and 3.15 percent of their seats (Nannestad and Paldam, 2002) – the cost of governing. Parties in coalition governments oftentimes have to deal with conflicting imperatives: voters want parties to stick to their policy pledges, but healthy coalition governance requires compromise – the so-called coalition dilemma (Sagarzazu and Klüver, 2015). By consequence, voters perceive parties in a coalition government to be ideologically closer and as compromising their position, for which voters typically punish parties in such a government (Fortunato, 2017; Fortunato and Stevenson, 2013).[1] Therefore, government parties have good reasons to clearly distinguish themselves from their coalition partner(s) (Sagarzazu and Klüver, 2015). The latter is especially so because government parties that communicate a more extreme platform do better at the ballot booth (Bawn and Somer-Topcu, 2012). These findings imply that government parties face an incentive to change their platform to try and escape the cost of governing. Opposition parties, however, do not have the same incentive. Indeed, Schumacher and co-authors (2015) found that government parties change their election manifestos more than opposition parties. Again, we expect that this behavior also manifests itself in-between elections (H3).

[1] In the robustness section, we show that these differences are robust against splitting up government parties in junior coalition parties and PM parties and spitting up opposition parties into "mainstream" and "challenger" parties.

Government Participation Hypothesis (H3) *Government parties are more likely to change their platform than opposition parties*.

The discussion above indicates the interdependence between party performance in terms votes and in terms of office. Yet, the literature on party platform change typically assumes that performance in one domain (votes or office) independently influences parties' decision to change their platform. However, parties need votes to be able to participate in a (coalition) government. At the same time, governing influences parties' popularity. This suggest that there is some merit in exploring the mechanisms of electoral performance and rational anticipation separately for government and opposition parties in-between elections. We do so by two three-way interactions: (1) between timing in the electoral cycle, government party, and electoral performance, and (2) between timing in the electoral cycle, government party, and electoral prospects.

3.3 Data & Measurement

To investigate when parties change their platform in-between elections, we built a new and unique dataset of press releases issued by 15 Dutch national political parties that were in parliament between January 1997 and February 2014 (see Table 3.1). Press releases are an effective way for parties to convey their messages to a larger audience. They are relatively short messages, typically on one subject. In Supportive Infomation (SI) 1.M we present three examples of a press release. Several studies on European countries have demonstrated that the press releases parties issue influence which issues are on the media's agenda (Brandenburg, 2002; Grimmer, 2010; Hänggli and Kriesi, 2010; Hopmann et al., 2010). To this end, parties have professionalized their communication strategies and "bombard journalist with messages on a daily basis" (Helfer and van Aelst, 2016, p. 59). Still, only a limited amount of these press releases actually become news (Berkowitz and Adams, 1990; Haselmayer et al., 2015, 2017; Helfer and van Aelst, 2016). Parties try to influence to 'make the cut' by sending press releases to their favored media outlets (Puglisi and Snyder, 2011), which of course is also what their electorate reads (Haselmayer et al., 2017).

The press releases were collected by "Nieuwsbank" (`www.nieuwsbank.nl`). This Dutch press agency collects all press releases of organizations, companies and governments published on the Internet since 1997 as long as the websites are accessible to their software. Their collection included >30,000 press releases issued by Dutch parties over this period. We first cleaned these documents, that is, for each text document we removed all punctuation, white space, numbers, stop words, sparse terms (which are words that occur less than 0.05% of the time). Next, we removed those press releases with no substantive content, for instance those stating that parliamentarian X attended political meeting Y. This resulted in

Table 3.1: Overview of Parties, Their Period in Parliament, and – if applicable – in Office

Party	In Parliament	In Office
50Plus	2012–2014	
Christian Democrats (CDA)	1997–2014	2002–2012
Christian Union(CU)	2003–2014	2006–2010
Reformed Political League (GPV)*	1997–2003	
Reformatory Political Federation (RPF)*	1997–2003	
Progressive Liberals (D66)	1997–2014	1997–2002; 2003–2006
Green Left (GL)	1997–2014	
Liveable Netherlands (LN)	2002–2003	
List Pim Fortuyn (LPF)	2002–2006	2002–2003
Social Democrats (PvdA)	1997–2014	1997–2002; 2006–2010; 2012–2014
Animal Rights Party (PvdD)	2006–2014	
Freedom Party (PVV)	2006–2014	
Reformed Political Party (SGP)	1997–2014	
Socialist Party (SP)	1997–2014	
Conservative Liberals (VVD)	1997–2014	1997–2006; 2010–2014

* as of 2003 merged into the Christian Union (CU).

Note: All parties that were not in office in 1997–2014 have never been in office.

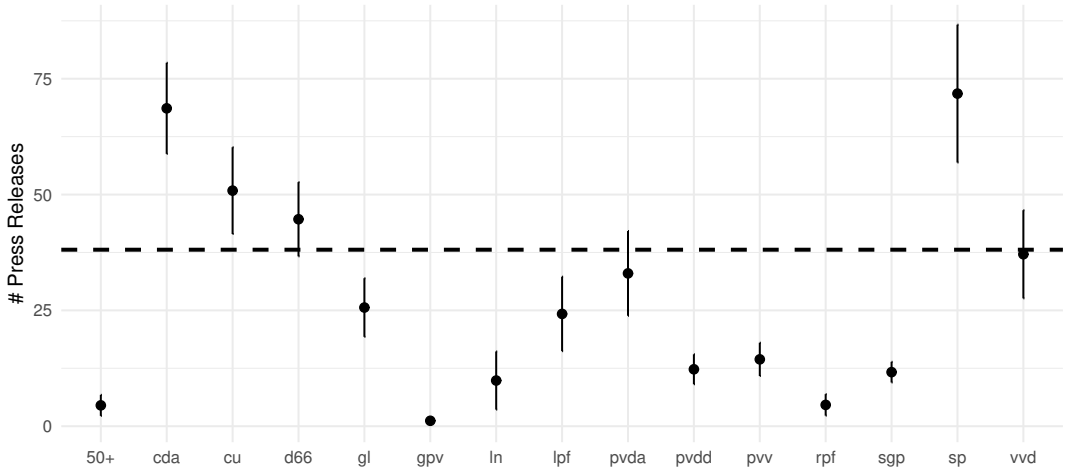
21,773 press releases for our analysis.

To have both a dynamic measure and sufficient variation in the press releases sent, we focus on the press releases a party sends per quarter. On average, parties sent 35 press releases per quarter, so on average one press release in three days. Figure 3.1 demonstrates that there is a lot of variation across and within parties (see Figure 1.A-1 in Si 1.A for over-time variation within parties). The Christian Democrats (CDA) and the Socialist Party (SP) sent on average the most press releases per quarter (respectively 68.6 and 66.4); this approximates issuing three press releases every four days on average. The GVP – a small and now merged Orthodox Protestant party – sent on average the fewest press releases per quarter (0.8).

Next, we created a document term matrix indicating the frequency of each lemma in each document.[2] Using this matrix, we identified a single topic for each press release using hierarchical topic modelling. This is an unsupervised, automated method to identify single topics in texts (Grimmer, 2010; Grimmer and Stewart, 2013). The assumption is that documents with high similarities in word frequencies are likely to be about the same topic. In addition, the hierarchical topic model uses information about which party sent the press release to assist in identifying the topic structure (for a technical exposition, see Grimmer, 2010). The researcher determines the number of topics to be identified. We ran several models setting

[2]We lemmatized each document using the software FrogR (van Atteveldt, 2008; Van Den Bosch et al., 2007) and "were" (waren) as similar words.

Figure 3.1: Descriptive Information # Press Releases Issued by Parties per Quarter



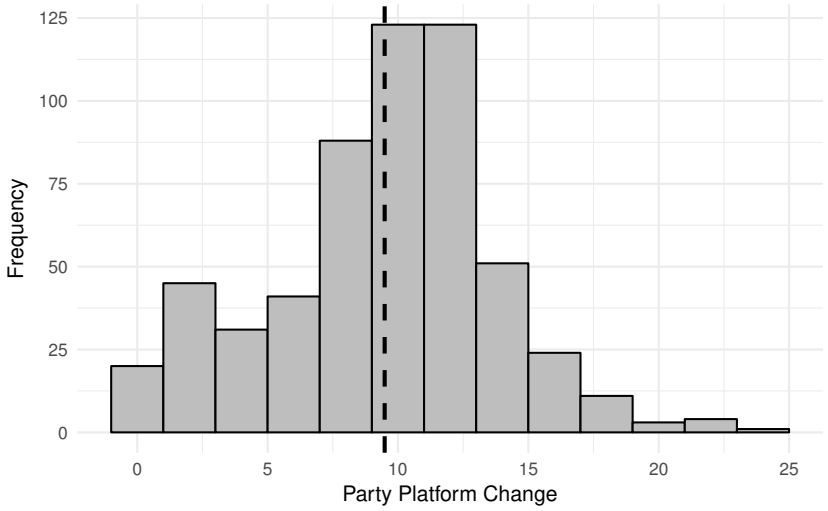
Note: Dashed line indicates average # of press releases
CDA = Christian Democrats, CU, GPV & RPF = Christian Union, D66 = Progressive Liberals, GL = Greens, LPF = List Pim Fortuyn, PvdA = Labour Party, PvdD = Animal Rights Party, PVV = Freedom Party, SGP = Reformed Party, SP = Socialists, VVD = Conservative Liberals

the number of topics in a range from 15 to 50. On the basis of reading 50 of the documents per topic, 50 titles of the press releases, and the 20 best-word matches per topic, we selected the model that identified 25 topics (SI 1.B describes this process in more detail). The 25-topic model balances specificity in terms of the issues the model describes (see Table 1.B-2 in SI 1.B) and its unique topics. For instance, in some of the models the issue of the economy was dispersed over multiple issues (see SI 1.B for our approach and the topics we identified). The correlation between the dependent variable based on models with a different number of topics and our measure based on the 25-topic model is very high (between 0.79 and 0.92, see Figure 1.B-1 in SI 1.B).

The output of the hierarchical topic model is a matrix in which the cells indicate the number of press releases about $topic_i$ sent by a party in quarter t. We measured change in a party's platform – our dependent variable – using Equation 3.1. For each $topic_i$, we take the difference in attention between quarter t and $t-1$. We weigh this difference by the sum of the attention to the topic in quarter t and $t-1$. Party Platform Change is the sum of all the weighted differences in issue attention (see Equation 3.1 and Figure 3.2 for its distribution). If this variable has a value of 0, the party did not change its platform. The average of this variable is 9.5. If this variable has a value 14 and higher, the party changed its platform substantively (one standard deviation above the mean).

$$Party\ Platform\ Change = \Sigma i_{1:k} \frac{(|Topic_{i,t} - Topic_{i,t-1}|)}{Topic_{i,t} + Topic_{i,t-1}} \tag{3.1}$$

Figure 3.2: Distribution of Party Platform Change



Note: The X-axis displays the values of our measure of Party Platform Change and the Y-axis shows the frequency of any of the values of Party Platform Change. The dashed line indicates the mean score of party platform change.

Table 3.3 illustrates how we calculate our dependent variable using the Christian Democrats (CDA) in the second quarter of 2010 as an example. In 2010 Q1 and 2010 Q2, the CDA sent respectively 95 and 84 press releases. Our topic model assigned these press releases to a specific topic. For each topic we divided the absolute number of press releases by the total number of press releases. This percentage indicates the relative attention of a party on each topic (columns 2 and 3 in Table 3.3). In the next step, we calculated the absolute change in attention per topic between two quarters (column 4 in table 2). We divided this absolute change by the percentage of attention per topic in Q1 (column 5 in Table 3.3). To create an overall measure of platform change, we summed these changes; a value of 8.72 in this example. As Table 3.3 demonstrates, some topics are more important – i.e. salient – for the CDA in Q1 than they were in Q2 (e.g., European Union), or vice-versa (e.g., local politics). Our measure accounts for this variation in salience, because discussing a new issue should get more weight than changing how much a party discusses an already existing issue. Because we examine the sum of the weighted changes, low scores hardly contribute to the value of Party Platform Change.

Si 1.C discusses the amount of variation within and between parties in terms of our measure of platform change. SI 1.C also shows more qualitatively what a party's platform change looks like in a quarter

Table 3.3: Example of Calculation of Party Platform Change for CDA, 2010 Q2

Topics	%Attention 2010 Q2	%Attention 2010 Q1	|Change|	$\frac{(\|Change\|)}{Q1 + Q2}$
Public Broadcast	0.02	0.00	0.02	1.00
Education	0.05	0.04	0.01	0.11
Employment Policy	0.08	0.04	0.04	0.33
Financial Policy	0.07	0.07	0.00	0.00
European Union	0.01	0.06	0.05	0.71
Defense	0.04	0.03	0.01	0.14
Financial Policy	0.02	0.04	0.02	0.33
Multiculturalism	0.00	0.02	0.02	1.00
Public Transport	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.33
European Union	0.06	0.06	0.00	0.00
Housing Policy	0.01	0.00	0.01	1.00
European Union	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.20
Economy	0.05	0.03	0.02	0.25
Local Politics	0.18	0.09	0.09	0.33
Education	0.05	0.04	0.01	0.11
International Politics	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.33
Environmental Policy	0.02	0.02	0.00	0.00
Agricultural Policy	0.00	0.03	0.03	1.00
Health Care	0.05	0.04	0.01	0.11
Economy	0.06	0.06	0.00	0.00
Economy	0.01	0.04	0.03	0.60
Youth Policy	0.05	0.07	0.02	0.17
Law & Order	0.04	0.03	0.01	0.14
Judiciary	0.07	0.05	0.02	0.17
Child Care	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.33
	Party Platform Change CDA 2010 Q2			**8.72**

of a month in which our dependent variable has a low or a high score. As an additional validation, we compare our measure to the average attention to issues in an electoral term to the average attention to issues in election manifestos using the Manifesto Project (Volkens et al., 2014). A problem with this latter approach is that the topics identified by our topic model and by the Manifesto Project do not exactly match. Therefore, we focus only on a number of cases of clear matches: the issue of the economy, the environment, multiculturalism and the EU. The correlation between the average attention for these four issues in our data set with the average attention in the Manifesto Project is 0.76. This indicates that what is salient to parties in our data corresponds with the salience of a topic in parties' election manifestos. For instance, the correlation between attention to the environment in our data and in the manifesto data for the Greens is 0.67. For the Freedom Party, the correlation on multiculturalism as measured in our data and by the Manifesto Project is 0.98. This indicates that our measure is conform the main data source used to measure party platform change (for overviews of studies using this data, see Adams, 2012; Fagerholm,

2015).

Our core independent variables are Electoral Performance (H1), Electoral Prospects (H2), Government Party (H3), and Timing in the Electoral Cycle (H1 and H2). We use the Parlgov Data (Döring and Manow, 2015) to establish parties' electoral performance and whether or not they are in government. We measure electoral performance as the seats a party gained or lost at the parliamentary elections. We measure whether a party is in government by coding the 15 parties as (1) parties in office, (0) parties in opposition (also see Table 3.1). In the robustness section below, we account for possible differences between the senior and junior coalition party as well as possible differences between opposition parties who frequently alter with being in government and opposition parties that have never been in government (see also SI 1.F and SI 1.G).

We operationalize electoral prospects as the difference between the percentage of seats a party currently holds and the polled seat share average over a quarter of a year. Electoral prospects are positive for parties expecting to win seats in the next election and negative for parties expecting to lose seats in the next election. In the robustness section below and in SI 1.E, we present analyses using two different operationalizations of electoral prospects. Substantively, the results based on these different operationalizations of electoral prospects are the same. For the period 1997-2002, these data consist of weekly opinion polls collected by TNS NIPO in which a representative sample of the Dutch population was asked about their vote intention ("If elections were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?"). The aggregated weekly opinion polls, which are at the individual level available through the Data Archiving Network Service (DANS), indicate the polled seat share per party over the period 1965-2000. After 2000, the weekly polls are based on a variety of polling agencies, which were collected and presented at `www.allepeilingen.com` (van der Velden, 2014). Polling agencies can reliably calculate seat shares because the Netherlands has a proportional electoral system with only one district and virtually no electoral threshold.

To measure the timing within the electoral cycle, we counted the number of months after the last national election. In our analysis, we also control for the state of the economy, measured by the change in percentage in GDP and the change in percentage in inflation as registered by the Central Bureau of Statistics (StatLine 2016). In SI 1.K, we demonstrate that the results are robust against using a people's own subjective evaluation of the economy. Because parties are likely to send less press releases in the summer recess of parliament, we control for that too. Since this time-period had no pre-electoral coalition agreements (Golder, 2005, 2006), we do not need to control for those. In SI 1.J, we add a dummy for the 2002 elections to control for the possible influence of the assassination of Pim Fortuyn – a salient, and highly unusual, event in Dutch politics. This did not alter our main results. Table 3.4 gives an overview of

the descriptive information of the variables included in the analyses.

Table 3.4: Operationalization and Descriptive Statistics of Dependent and Independent Variables

DV	**Operationalization**	**Mean (SD)**	**Min.-Max.**
Party Platform Change	Change in issue attention	2.08 (0.87)	0.00 – 4.56
Continues IVs			
Electoral Performance	$Seats_t - Seats_{t-1}$	0.16 (0.67)	-0.69 – 2.35
Electoral Prospects	$Polls_{t-1} - Seats_t$	0.16 (0.72)	-0.87 – 6.19
Timing in the Electoral Cycle	# of months since last elections	21.01 (12.40)	1.00 – 52.00
GDP (%)	Change in growth of GDP (%)	0.35 (0.72)	-2.20 – 1.80
Inflation (%)	Change in inflation (%)	2.11 (0.90)	0.32 – 4.90
Dichotomous IVs		**0**	**1**
Government Party	(0) No; (1) Yes	399 (70%)	167 (30%)
Recess	(0) Active Parliament (1) Parliament in Summer Recess	430 (76%)	136 (24%)
Regression Formulas			**Predicted Signs**
Electoral Performance Model: Pr(P) = $\beta 1$(Electoral Performance) + $\beta 2$ (Government Party) + $\beta 3$ (Timing)+ $\beta 4$ (Electoral Performance * Government Party * Timing)			H1: $\beta 1 < 0$, increasing over time H3: $\beta 2 > 0$
Rational Anticipation Model: Pr(P) = $\beta 5$(Electoral Prospects) + $\beta 2$ (Government Party) + $\beta 3$ (Timing)+ $\beta 6$ (Electoral Prospects * Government Party * Timing)			H2: $\beta 5 < 0$, increasing over time H3: $\beta 2 > 0$

3.4 Method of Estimation

We estimate two models – i.e. the electoral performance model and the rational anticipation model – with three-way interaction effects (see Table 3.4). We refrain from modeling this as a four-way interaction effect because such a model suffers from a large number of empty cells, which stems from combinations of values of the interacting variables for which there are no actual observations. This biases estimation. To estimate our models, we need to deal with variation between party observations (15 in total, but not all at the same time present in parliament) as well as over time (69 quarters between 1997 and 2014). Estimating a simple regression on the pooled data could therefore lead to erroneous conclusions (Beck and Katz, 1995). We have to account for heteroskedastic error terms, since it is very likely that the error terms have different variances between panels and are also correlated across different panels. Furthermore, it is likely that the observations of Party Platform Change (our dependent variable) are correlated across time within panels. Consequently, we use panel corrected standard errors (PCSE) to address the panel-specific AR(1) error structure to eliminate autocorrelation. We do not use an AR(1) process with a lagged dependent variable because a lagged dependent variable introduces biases associated with trending in the independent variables and the error term and washes out the effects of the main theoretical model

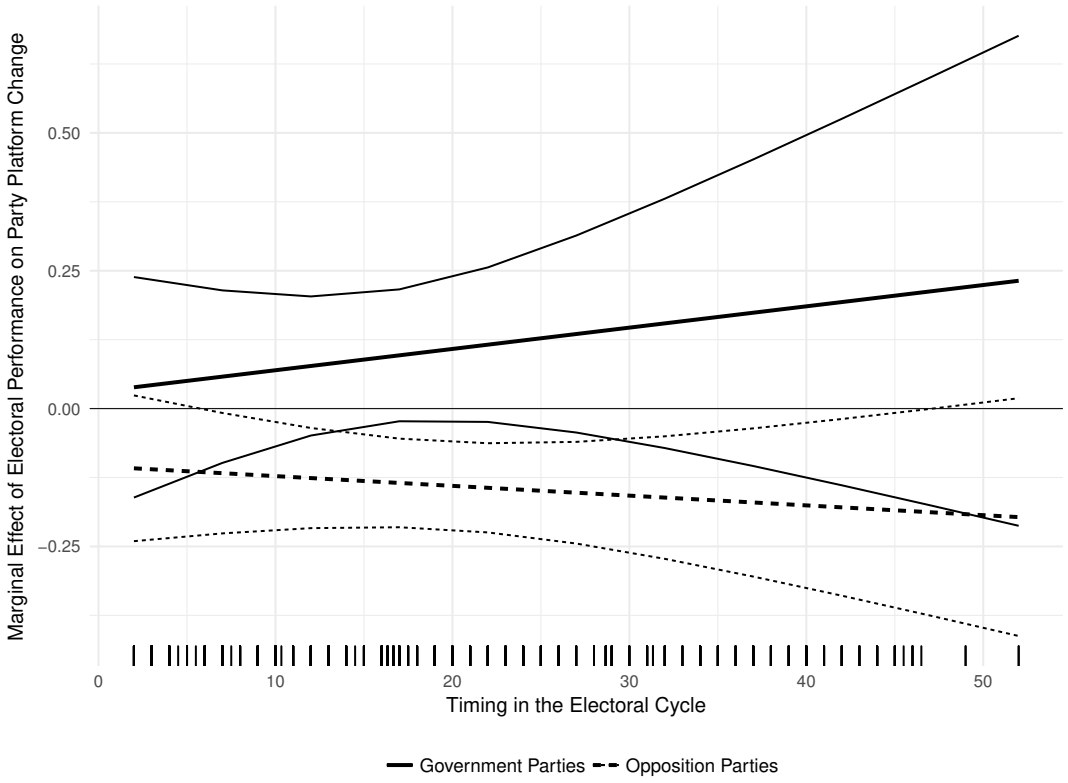
(Achen, 2000; Plumper et al., 2005). Our model is robust against jackknifing standard errors, presented in SI 1.J.

3.5 Do Parties Live in the Past or in the Future?

Do parties that experienced electoral defeat change more than parties that experienced electoral victory? Does this effect dissipates over time? And are there differences between government and opposition parties? We address these questions with the electoral performance model, including a three-way regression effect between timing in the electoral cycle, government party and electoral performance as specified in Table 3.4. In line with the recommendations of Brambor, Clark, and Golder (2006), we calculate and visualize (see Figure 3.3) the marginal effects and standard errors to demonstrate the effect electoral performance for all the levels of timing in the electoral cycle (0-50) and government party (0-1) that are present in our sample. Figure 3.3 demonstrates that for government parties (solid line), electoral performance does not have a statistically significant effect on party platform change, regardless of the timing in the electoral cycle. For opposition parties, conversely, electoral performance does influence party platform change (see dotted line in Figure 3.3). A year after the previous election, poor electoral performance motivates opposition parties to change their platform more. This effect strengthens the closer are new elections. Hence, retrospective information is less important for government parties than it is for opposition parties. For reasons of clarity, we only present the effects of electoral defeat over time for government and opposition parties separately. Is there a general effect of electoral defeat over time? This effect holds the middle between the regression lines drawn in Figure 3.3 and is not statistically significant. We thus reject H1, the electoral performance hypothesis, which states the negative effect of past electoral performance weakens the longer since the last national election. Instead, we find that the effect of electoral defeat does not become weaker over time, not in general, not for opposition parties and not for government parties. We do find a negative effect of electoral defeat for opposition parties, but this effect actually becomes a little bit stronger over time.

Our H2, the rational anticipation hypothesis, predicts that facing negative prospects close to new elections explains party platform change. The rational anticipation model tests the three-way interaction between timing in the electoral cycle, government party, and electoral prospects. Figure 3.4 summarizes the effect of timing in the electoral cycle on party platform change for different levels of electoral prospects for both government and opposition parties (see SI 1.D for the full model). The solid line in Figure 3.4 displays the effect for government parties; the dotted line displays the effect of opposition parties. These findings demonstrate that regardless of the timing in the electoral cycle, electoral prospects do not motivate

Figure 3.3: Marginal Effect of Timing in the Electoral Cycle, Government Participation and Electoral Performance

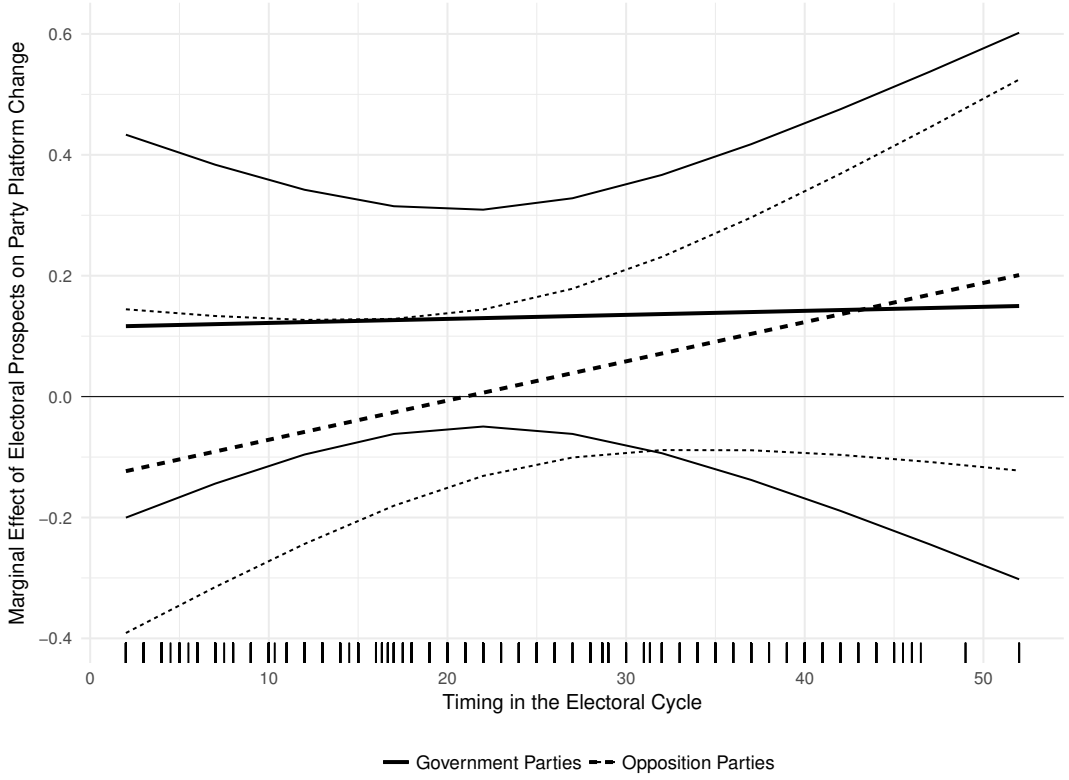


Note: The straight lines demonstrate the effect (thicker line) and the 95% confidence intervals (thinner lines) of government parties, the dotted lines show demonstrate the effect (thinker line) and the 95% confidence intervals of opposition parties (thinner lines). The y-axis shows the effect (b-coefficient) of electoral performance on parties' platform change at different points between elections. Positive values indicate that parties change their platform, whereas negative values indicate the reverse.

government parties (solid line) or opposition parties (dotted line) to change.

While we do not find support for our first and second hypotheses - respectively testing the effect of electoral performance and the effect of rational anticipation over the course of the electoral cycle - Figure 3.3 and 3.4 do indicate that the patterns for government parties and opposition parties are different. So, is there a main effect of being a government party on party platform change? According to H3, the government participation hypothesis, government parties change more than opposition parties do. We find support for this hypothesis. First, looking at the effect of office in the model testing the electoral performance mechanism – see the upper row of 3.5 – we see that the statistically significant marginal effect of the being a government party is 1.54. This indicates that on average, government parties are more likely to change their platform than opposition parties are. Also in the model testing the rational

Figure 3.4: Marginal Effect of Timing in the Electoral Cycle, Government Participation and Electoral Prospects

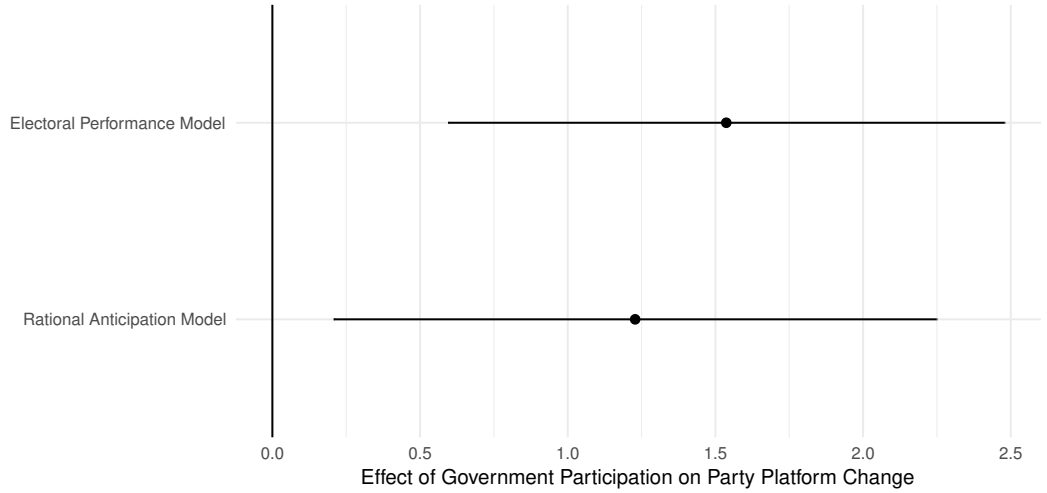


Note: The straight lines demonstrate the effect (thicker line) and the 95% confidence intervals (thinner lines) of government parties, the dotted lines show demonstrate the effect (thinker line) and the 95% confidence intervals of opposition parties (thinner lines). The y-axis shows the effect (b-coefficient) of electoral performance on parties' platform change at different points between elections. Positive values indicate that parties change their platform, whereas negative values indicate the reverse.

anticipation mechanism, there is a statistically significant marginal effect of being a government party. The lower row of Figure 3.5 demonstrates that compared to opposition parties, government parties are more likely to change their platform.

In both our models, we controlled for economic performance and for whether or not the parliament is in summer recess. We included both changes in the percentage of GDP growth and the percentage of inflation. The economic indicators (see SI 1.D) had no effect on Party Platform Change. Also, the activity in parliament during the recess did not significantly influence parties to change their platform.

Figure 3.5: The Effect of Government Participation on Party Platform Change



Note: The dots demonstrate the effect of government parties compared to opposition parties on prospective and past electoral performance. The lines around the dots depict 95% confidence intervals. The x-axis shows the effect (b-coefficient) of government participation on parties' platform change. Positive values indicate that parties change their platform, whereas negative values indicate the reverse.

3.6 Robustness Checks

The results presented could have depended on some choices in our operationalizations. We have run several robustness analyses and discuss these briefly here; in SI 1.E through 1.G, we discuss these analyses in more detail.

First, to assess their electoral prospects, parties could use different reference points to benchmark their polling results. In SI 1.E, we demonstrate that our findings continue to hold when we take one of two other possible reference points: (1) the difference between the percentage of the trend in a party's polled seats averaged out over 2 quarters before t and the polled seats averaged out over a quarter of a year relative to the number of the trend in the polled seats. And (2) the difference between the percentage of a party's polled seats averaged out over a quarter before t and the polled seats averaged out over a quarter of a year relative to the number of the trend in the polled seats. Also these robustness analyses fail to support H2 that electoral performance, or more specifically the prospects regarding performance, influences parties' decision to change their platform.

Second, parties in a coalition are not a homogeneous group, since the incentives junior coalition party or parties face differ from those of the Prime Minister's party due to an asymmetrical power distribution (Strøm et al., 2008; Thies, 2001). Parties in a coalition cannot single-handedly promote their own policy

agenda when governing together with other partners. To avoid intra-cabinet conflicts and early cabinet breakdown, parties thus need to coordinate their activities with their partners (Strøm et al., 2008). Given that governing in a coalition requires unity and compromise to maintain cabinet stability, coalition parties coordinate their activities and talk about the issues that are emphasized by their partners. However, due to the asymmetrical power distribution between junior coalition partners and the Prime Minister's party – with the latter having usually more ministerial portfolios than the former – junior coalition parties are more likely to be responsive to the Prime Minister's party than vice-versa (Sagarzazu and Klüver, 2015). In SI 1.F, we ran an additional analysis where we split up government status between (0) Prime-Minister party (61 cases, 11%), (1) junior coalition party (106 cases, 19%), and (2) opposition parties (399 cases, 70%). Table 1.F-1 demonstrates that we find differences in the probability to change the party's platform between Prime Minister parties and opposition parties, but not between Prime Minister parties and junior coalition parties. The finding that there are no significant changes between Prime Minster parties and junior coalition parties corroborate our main results and our conclusion that government and opposition parties are incentivized by different stimuli.

Third, scholars argue that parties never in government (called *niche* or *challenger parties*) behave differently than the other parties (e.g. Adams et al., 2006; Meguid, 2005; van de Wardt et al., 2014; **?**). To examine this, we further split the opposition in a group that frequently alters between opposition and government and a group that has never been in office. The analyses in SI 1.G demonstrate that, indeed, parties that have never been in office change their platform less frequently than government parties and other opposition parties.

3.7 Discussion

Do parties look forward and examine their electoral prospects based on their standing in the polls and change their platform accordingly, as the rational anticipation mechanism proposes? Or do parties look back to their electoral performance in the last election and change their platform in response to electoral losses, as the electoral performance mechanism proposes? And to what extent do parties in government and in opposition react differently in this regard? Our analysis of >20,000 press releases from 15 Dutch political parties that were in parliament in the period 1997-2014 demonstrated that electoral defeat indeed motivates party platform change, but only for opposition parties. We found no indication that this effects weakens over time. We found no effect of electoral prospects on party platform change, indicating that parties thus do not change their platform according to the polls. These results are in line with a theory of political parties as backward-looking actors (Harmel and Janda, 1994) and against a theory of forward-

looking parties that rationally anticipate losses (Stimson et al., 1995). We also found a systematic difference between opposition and government parties, with government parties changing more on average.

Our findings indicate that the period in-between elections is an important period to study; something that with for instance party manifesto data is not possible, but which our press releases data are particularly apt for. Parties often receive cues about how they are performing over the course of the electoral cycle. Based on this information – conveyed by polling data but also, more and more, via social media (Barbera, 2014; Barbera and Rivero, 2014) – parties can, with some margin of certainty, infer whether they will face losses or gains in the next elections. With polling and social media becoming increasingly available, one might expect electoral prospects to play a more central role in the future than they did in our findings for the 1997-2014 period.

Finally, our results – and likewise, for instance, the work of Sagarzazu and Klüver (2015) – demonstrate that communication outlets like press releases are important tools to study party behavior. A key reason for this is that voters get (most of) their information on political party platforms via the media (for overviews, see Esser and Strömbäck, 2014; Strömbäck, 2008). Hence, voters adjust their perceptions of parties' platform based on the media information they consume. What follows from this is that voters indicate support (or not) for parties in the polls based on what parties have been saying in the media. Thereby, polling data function as a feedback loop: based on this information parties can adjust their platform and issue new press releases. These interactions between media, parties and voters, so we argue, are important for understand party behavior and can only picked up by sources that are more dynamic in nature, like press releases. Whether parties strategically emphasize specific issues to jockey voters is an interesting avenue for further research.

Chapter 4

Do Coalition Partners Drift Apart or Stick Together?

An analysis of party platform changes in 11 Western European countries

4.1 Introduction

Government parties face a problem: due to the cost of governing (Bawn and Somer-Topcu, 2012; Nannestad and Paldam, 2002; Powell and Whitten, 1993), they face electoral losses and potentially loss of office. Parties in a coalition government face an even bigger problem: voters perceive coalition parties as more similar in terms of ideology than they are (Adams et al., 2016; Fortunato and Adams, 2015; Fortunato and Stevenson, 2013). This increases parties' probability of electoral punishment (Fortunato, 2017). Therefore, there is a vote-seeking reason for parties in a coalition government to stress their mutual differences and radicalize their position (Bawn and Somer-Topcu, 2012; Fortunato and Adams, 2015; Sagarzazu and Klüver, 2015). This finding implies that coalition partners likely drift apart. But why risk breaking up a winning team by dissociating from your current partner? Indeed, Adams and co-authors (Adams et al., 2012) theorize that sharing responsibility for the policies of a coalition government incentivizes policy-seeking parties to converge to similar policy positions. This suggest that coalition parties are sticking together.

Parties in a coalition government aim to stay in government in the next electoral term. The question for these parties is whether they will keep their current coalition partner(s). Parties favor the same coalition partner if they can keep or expand their number of ministerial portfolios (office-seeking) and if they can effectively execute policies (policy-seeking) (Martin and Stevenson, 2001, 2010). We put forward that if parties get signals indicating that these conditions cannot be met, they will seek alternative coalitions and, therefore, drift apart from their current coalition partner. What are these signals? First, parties' expec-

This chapter is an article co-authored article with Gijs Schumacher. The manuscript based on this chapter is currently being prepared for submission to a journal. All supportive information for this chapter is online available at `www.marikenvandervelden.eu/research`.

tation to execute policy effectively in the future depends on trust in its coalition partner. Trust emerges when coalition parties are familiar with each other due to a long history of governing together (Browne and Franklin, 1973; Franklin, 1991; Franklin and Mackie, 1983; Martin and Stevenson, 2001, 2010), or when they experience good cooperation (i.e. no internal conflicts) (Tavits, 2008). Second, public opinion polls indicate the electoral prospects of a coalition, and thereby signal whether a party should jump ship or stay on board of the coalition (Kayser, 2003; Schleiter and Tavits, 2016; Strøm and Swindle, 2002). If there is trust between coalition parties (H2 and H3) or when they receive information from the polls that they are popular (H4), we hypothesize that they stick together. Bad polls and low trust due to coalition in-fighting or an absence of a shared history make government parties drift apart, towards other coalition partners. If there is *trust* between coalition parties (H2 and H3) or receive information from the polls that they are *popular* (H4), we hypothesize that they stick together. Trust emerges when coalition parties are familiar to each other due to a long history of governing together, or when they experience good cooperation (i.e. no internal conflicts). Bad polls and low trust due to coalition in-fighting or an absence of a shared history make government parties drift apart.

The literature on party platform shifts has not analyzed the effect of participation in a coalition government (for an overview of this literature, see Adams 2012).[1] Our study breaks new ground by theorizing under which conditions coalition parties drift apart or stick together. To demonstrate this, we need to measure the similarity of parties' election platforms.[2] This requires a more fine-grained measure of election platform change (our dependent variable): *the change in issue distance between two parties*. For each party dyad, we calculate the issue distance using several categorizations of the Manifesto Data (see the data section (p. 4.3) and SI 2.A and 2.C for more information). Our dependent variable and unit of analysis (i.e. the unique party dyad per national election) differ markedly from the practice in the empirical party shifts literature that focuses on left-right party shifts with parties as units of analysis.[3] We deviate from this standard for two reasons: (1) our theory concerns the relation between two parties, not a sole characteristic of a single party; and (2) we analyze change in issue distance because (a) issue competition has become more important (Green-Pedersen, 2007); and (b) because the parties we analyze are engaged in political competition on multiple dimensions.

We have calculated issue distance for 3,766 dyads of parties in 11 countries in the period 1950-2013.[4] We use times-series cross-sectional analyses clustered on party dyads to account for the interdepen-

[1] Sagarzazu and Klüver (2015) demonstrate that in the German context coalition partners tend to drift apart in their communication in press-releases in the run-up to elections.

[2] Dyadic data are also the format of choice in the international relations literature addressing coalition or alliance behavior (for an overview, see Cranmer et al. 2012).

[3] The effective number of manifesto issues (ENMI) is an example of different use of manifesto data and is similar to our measure (Greene, 2016a).

[4] Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden. SI 2.B gives an overview of the country-election waves that are included.

dence of the data. We demonstrate that on average, coalition party dyads increase their issue distance. Being more familiar with your coalition partner and being popular, makes a party pair more likely to stick together. Bad cooperation (terminating the coalition due to conflict) makes coalition partners more likely to drift apart. These results hold while controlling for ideological differences between party dyads, economic context, the presence of pre-electoral coalitions; when using different operationalizations of the dependent and independent variables and using different model specifications.

4.2 Drifting Apart or Sticking Together?

Of all governments in Western Europe between 1945 and 1999, 64% have been coalition governments and 23% have been one-party minority governments dependent on support parties in parliament (Mitchell, 2012). Due to increased levels of electoral fractionalization, coalition governments also emerged in countries accustomed to one-party majority government (e.g. the UK from 2010 till 2015). In sum, coalition government has become the norm in Western Europe. Yet, most theories of party competition leave aside the question whether parties adapt their platform to coalition partners.The empirically literature on party platform shifts primarily analyzes the effect of public opinion shifts, opinion leader shifts, rival party shifts, party voter shifts, and electoral performance (Adams and Ezrow, 2009; Adams et al., 2008; Adams and Somer-Topcu, 2009; Budge, 1994; Budge et al., 2010; Harmel and Janda, 1994; Schumacher et al., 2013). A recent paper reports that governing parties on average change more than opposition parties (Schumacher et al., 2015). It is unclear, however, whether this change translates into proposing a platform more or less similar to the governing party's coalition partner. In the perspective of voters – but also according to experts (Cahill and Adams, 2015) - coalition parties are harder to distinguish and more likely to be identified as ideologically similar (Adams et al., 2016; Fortunato and Adams, 2015; Fortunato and Stevenson, 2013) and similar in terms of their valence attributes (Clark, 2009). Parties that are in office typically want to be reelected, and, since compromise is unpopular (Fortunato, 2017), they have to convince voters that they fulfilled their pledges. In an attempt to persuade voters to cast their ballots for them – votes are typically seen as instrumental to office – parties could emphasize different or new issues than their former coalition partner. This might not only help them to gain votes in the next election (Bawn and Somer-Topcu, 2012; Fortunato, 2017), but also strengthen their position in post-electoral bargains over ministerial portfolios (Bäck et al., 2011; Greene and Haber, 2015).

Thus, voters perceive coalition partners as more alike, leading to electoral punishment for perceived compromise (Fortunato, 2017). Coalition parties, therefore, have the incentive to distinguish their platform from their coalition partner(s). In fact, government parties perform better in elections if they radicalize

after governing (Bawn and Somer-Topcu, 2012; Fortunato, 2015). Hence, parties should "*govern together*" (i.e. make compromises for joint policy initiatives in the middle of the electoral cycle), but "*compete for votes alone*" (i.e. differentiate from their partners to strengthen their own policy profile at the legislative term) (Sagarzazu and Klüver, 2015, p.333). This suggests that coalition partners propose platforms that are less alike, therefore we hypothesize:

Drift Apart Hypothesis (H1a): *Coalition dyads increase their issue distance at the next election.*

The second and opposing conclusion we draw from the literature is that coalition parties converge their position. The literature on coalition formation proposes two mechanisms that result in party convergence. First, extensive research reports that parties' shared policy views explains coalition formation (e.g. Laver and Shepsle 1996; Martin and Stevenson 2001; Warwick 2006). Thus, when coalition partners value both ideological proximity and continuation, they should propose ideologically similar platforms when contesting elections. A second mechanism resulting in convergence stems from the party position literature: the more radical party in the coalition has an electoral disadvantage compared to the more moderate party in the coalition. This is due to the fact that voters cluster in the middle of ideological distributions. For that reason, Adams and co-authors (Adams, 2012; Adams and Merrill III, 2009) predict that the more radical party shifts to the center, and thus becomes more like its more moderate coalition partner. Assuming that parties plant the seeds of future coalitions in their election manifestos, parties de-emphasize those issues that are not critical to them, but which are problematic for their potential coalition partner, we hypothesize:

Stick Together Hypothesis (H1b): *Coalition dyads decrease their issue distance at the next election.*

Trust & Popularity

The first condition under which coalition parties stick together is *trust*. Trust lowers transaction costs: being familiar with a coalition partner cheapens search, information and bargaining costs. Parties that have worked together share mutual trust and understanding which facilitates future collaboration (Browne and Franklin, 1973; Franklin, 1991; Franklin and Mackie, 1983; Martin and Stevenson, 2010) and continuing cooperation with the current partner is less costly or risky than striking new bargains with other parties (Martin and Stevenson, 2010; Warwick, 2006). If numerically possible, parties prefer to continue existing coalition governments after fresh elections - the so-called "*incumbency advantage*" (Martin and Stevenson, 2001, 2010). The literature on coalition governance has demonstrated that coalition parties typically "*keep tabs*" on their partner(s) by strategic choices in portfolio allocation and committee appointments (Carroll and

Cox, 2011; Fernandes et al., 2016; Martin and Vanberg, 2004; Thies, 2001). Even though this is born out of a need for control rather than trust, the familiarity with their partner is strengthened through this close cooperation in several settings. Hence, if parties favor the continuation of coalition government arrangements and if they care about the ideological similarity of a coalition, parties in a coalition government are unlikely to diverge ideologically. Doing so would alienate the coalition partners and thereby risk reducing the probability of continuing the existing coalition. Thus, we hypothesize:

Familiarity Hypothesis (H2): *The more often coalition dyads shared office, the more likely they are to decrease their issue distance at the next election.*

The other side of trust is *distrust*, due to negative experience with coalition partners. Parties are unlikely to team up again in a coalition government if their coalition broke down due to conflict (Tavits, 2008). Also, parties shy away from forming or continuing coalitions with partners with whom they are likely to experience conflict based on less similar preferred policies (Laver and Shepsle, 1990; Maoz and Somer-Topcu, 2010; Warwick, 1996). Coalition in-fighting, thus, reduces mutual trust between current coalition partners and increases the bargaining costs of future coalition agreements. Because government parties punish their coalition partners for defecting from cooperation in the coalition (Tavits, 2008), they are more likely to dissociate themselves from their former partners.[5] This leads to the following hypothesis:

Conflict Hypothesis (H3): *Coalition dyads that terminated due to conflict, are more likely to increase their issue distance at the next election.*

Popularity of a coalition party dyad functions as a second important condition. Regular opinion polls inform government parties about their future electoral prospects, and by consequence, the prospect of being in the same coalition again. Indicating whether the government will lose seats or win seats in the next election, polls could incentivize parties to reconsider their election platform (Geer, 1996). When a government party is confronted with losing its position, it has incentives to dissociate themselves from the current issues on the political agenda and emphasize new or previously ignored issues in order to improve their electoral fortunes. This leads to the following hypothesis:[6]

Popularity Hypothesis (H4): *The more popular coalition dyads, the more likely they are to decrease their issue distance at the next election.*

Table 4.1 summarizes the theory section, outlining the dependent variable (issue distance change), independent variables, hypotheses, and the coefficients' predicted signs.

[5] We discuss and test the reversed causality possibility extensively in the robustness section.
[6] We discuss and test the reversed causality possibility extensively in the robustness section.

Table 4.1: Definitions and Hypotheses

Definitions		
Dependent Variable		
Pr(P): Δ Issue Distance of Party Dyads		
Independent Variables		
Cabinet Dyad: Cabinet Dyad (1) or No Cabinet Dyad (0) Prior to Election		
Familiarity: History of Being in Coalition Government		
Conflict: 0 Conflict, 1 No Conflict , 2 No Cabinet Dyad		
	Hypotheses	**Predictions**
H1a	Pr(P) = β_1(Cabinet Dyad) + Controls	$\beta_1 > 0$
H1b	Pr(P) = β_1(Cabinet Dyad) + Controls	$\beta_1 < 0$
H2	Pr(P) = β_1(Cabinet Dyad) + β_2(Familiarity) + β_3(Cabinet Dyad * Familiarity) + Controls	$\beta_3 < 0$ for Higher Familiarity
H3	Pr(P) = β_4(Conflict) + Controls	$\beta_4 < 0$ for Conflict=1
H4	Pr(P) = β_1(Cabinet Dyad) + β_5Popularity) + β_6(Cabinet Dyad * Popularity) + Controls	$\beta_6 < 0$ for Higher Popularity

4.3 Data & Measurement

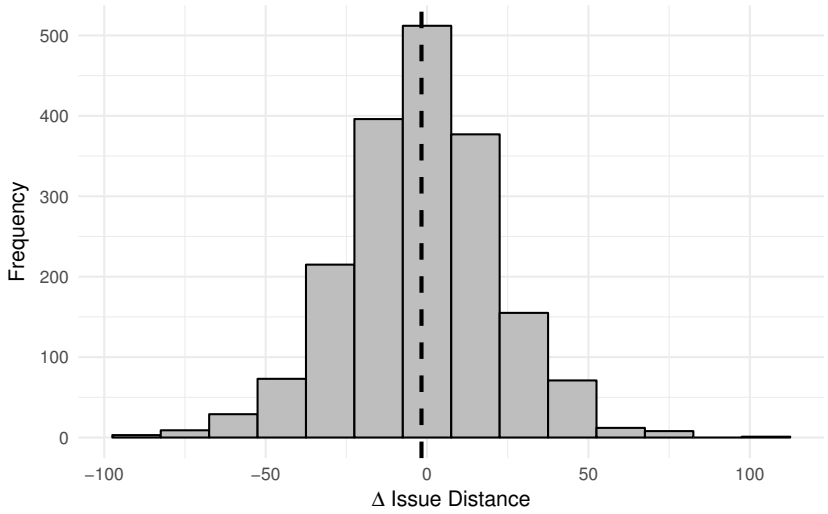
Our sample consists of countries with a tradition of coalition governments. Based on data availability, this gives us a sample of 11 European countries from 1950 till 2013 with 166 unique country-election waves and 636 party dyads (149 unique coalition dyads). We included all party platforms that are present in the Manifesto Project Dataset (Klingemann et al., 2006; Volkens et al., 2014) in at least two subsequent elections. Our paper investigates how government parties strategically react towards their current partner(s) by diverging or converging their platform. To empirically demonstrate this, we make an indirect comparison between coalition party dyads and other party dyads - i.e. the ones consisting of a government and an opposition party or of two opposition parties.

Although there are various data sources that could enable us to study parties' platform divergence (convergence), we rely on the Manifesto Project Dataset for two main reasons: (1) this data is not affected by institutional parliamentary differences between countries of which for instance parliamentary speeches would suffer; and (2) a party's manifesto is an authoritative document that reflects the concessions made within the party too (Greene, 2016b). Our dependent variable, which we call Δ *Issue Distance*, measures the difference in distance between the electoral platform of two parties between two subsequent elections (see Equation 4.1):

$$\Delta IssueDistance = \Sigma|P_{i,k,t} - P_{j,k,t}| - \Sigma|P_{i,k,t-1} - P_{j,k,t-1}| \tag{4.1}$$

We take the sum of the absolute distances between the position of party i on issue k at time t ($P_{i,k,t}$) and the position of party j on issue k at time t ($P_{j,k,t}$). We create 19 issue categories from the Manifesto Project Data using a re-categorization scheme that includes positional issues such as the party's position on the economy and positional issues or valence issues such as the party's attention to the environment (Schumacher et al., 2015). SI 2.A gives an overview of which CMP categories belong to which issue. Figure 4.1 shows the total distribution of Δ *Issue Distance* in our data set.

Figure 4.1: Distribution of Δ Issue Distance



Note: The X-axis displays the values of Δ Issue Distance and the Y-axis shows the frequency of any of the values of Δ Issue Distance. The dashed line indicates the mean score of Δ Issue Distance.

To illustrate how we constructed the measure, Table 4.2 displays issue position and issue attention of the German parties CDU/CSU and SPD at the 2009 and 2013 elections on the 19 re-categorized issues.[7] For each issue at each election year, we calculate the distance between the party dyad CDU/CSU-SPD. Our dependent variable is the sum of changes in distance of the issues. We, thereby account for a variance in salience over time: if an issue is not salient - i.e. they spend no or very little words on the issue in the manifesto - it does not give any weight to our measure. In this example, our dependent variable has a value of -0.6. This means that at the 2013 election, the issue distance between CDU/CSU and SPD decreased compared to the 2009 election. In other words, the platforms of these two parties became more alike.

Our dependent variable, thus, measures the distance of the platform of the party dyads on an aggregate issue level. Some of the issue categories, however, will carry more weight to determine the distance between a dyad, because the distance between party dyads on this issue is larger. Figure 4.2 shows the

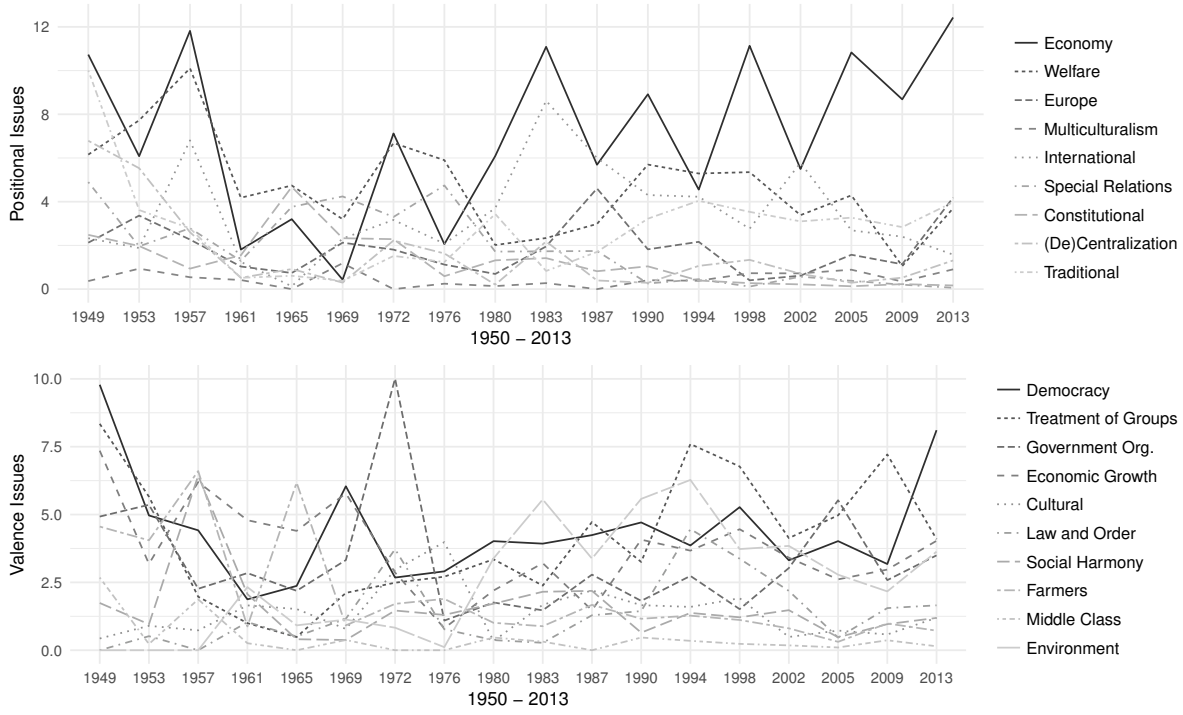
[7] SI 2.C demonstrates descriptive information of change in issue distance per country.

Table 4.2: Example of Δ Issue Distance Measure

		2009			*2013*			
	Issue (Scale)	**CDU**	**SPD**	***Issue Distance***	**CDU**	**SPD**	***Issue Distance***	**Δ Issue *Distance***
1	*Economic Policy* (–74.3 – 63.8)	–1.4	–15.9	*14.5*	–1.3	–13.3	*12*	**–2.5**
2	*Welfare Policy* (–16.7 – 63.4)	4.8	*7.7*	*2.9*	9.2	14.6	*5.4*	**2.5**
3	*Europe* (–17.2 – 25.7)	2	3.2	*1.2*	1.4	2.2	*0.8*	**–0.4**
4	*Multiculturalism* (–16.1 – 33.0)	1.5	1.2	*0.3*	–0.5	0.9	*1.5*	**1.2**
5	*International Issues* (–40.9 – 40.7)	2.9	5.6	*2.7*	2.4	4.2	*1.9*	**–0.8**
6	*Special Relations* (–12.2 – 16.7)	0.6	0.4	*0.2*	0.2	0.1	*0.1*	**–0.1**
7	*Constitutional Issues* (–43.8 – 42.6)	0.2	0.5	*0.3*	0.1	0	*0.2*	**–0.1**
8	*(De)centralization* (–13.3 – 24.2)	1.5	0.1	*1.4*	2.3	1.8	*0.5*	**–0.9**
9	*Traditional Issues* (–11.7 – 50.0)	6.8	0.8	*6*	5	0.3	*4.8*	**–1.2**
10	*Democracy* (0.0 – 49.0)	3	6.3	*3.3*	4.6	*7*	*2.4*	**–0.8**
11	*Treatment of Groups* (0.0 – 57.5)	10	17.7	*7.7*	6	11.7	*5.7*	**–2**
12	*Government Organization* (0.0 – 72.6)	6.8	6.1	*0.7*	4.4	4.1	*0.2*	**–0.5**
13	*Economic Growth* (0.0 – 60.6)	15.1	12.3	*2.8*	14.5	9.4	*5.2*	**2.4**
14	*Cultural Issues* (0.0 – 35.4)	3.4	2.6	*0.8*	3.9	1.9	*2.1*	**1.3**
15	*Law and Order* (0.0 – 22.0)	4.7	3.5	*1.2*	5.2	2.3	*2.9*	**1.7**
16	*Social Harmony* (0.0 – 60.5)	3.3	2.5	*0.8*	3	3.2	*0.3*	**–0.5**
17	*Farmers' Issues* (0.0 – 70.0)	2.9	0.3	*2.6*	2.6	0.5	*2.1*	**–0.5**
18	*Middle Class Issues* (0.0 – 73.0)	0.6	0.1	*0.5*	0.3	.1	*0.2*	**–0.3**
19	*Environmental Issues* (0.0 – 74.7)	5.9	0.4	*0.5*	6.8	5.4	*1.4*	**0.9**
	$\sum$ Issue Differences			**50.4**			**49.6**	**–0.6**

average dynamics of the distances for the different issue categories for the German case. The upper panel of Figure 4.2 shows the over-time variation for the positional issues and the lower panel displays the over-time variation for the valence issues. Our measure, thus, accounts for the dynamic nature of issues because if an issue category is salient for the CDU/CSU and therefore it spends a lot of attention to that issue but the SPD does not, the issue distance on that particular issue will be large and this will drive up the overall value of the aggregate issue distance measure. When an issue category is salient for both parties, but they position themselves on the opposite side of the spectrum, the distance on this issue category will also carry more weight in our aggregate measure of issue distance.

Figure 4.2: Average Changes in Distance between CDU/CSU and SPD per Issue Category over Time



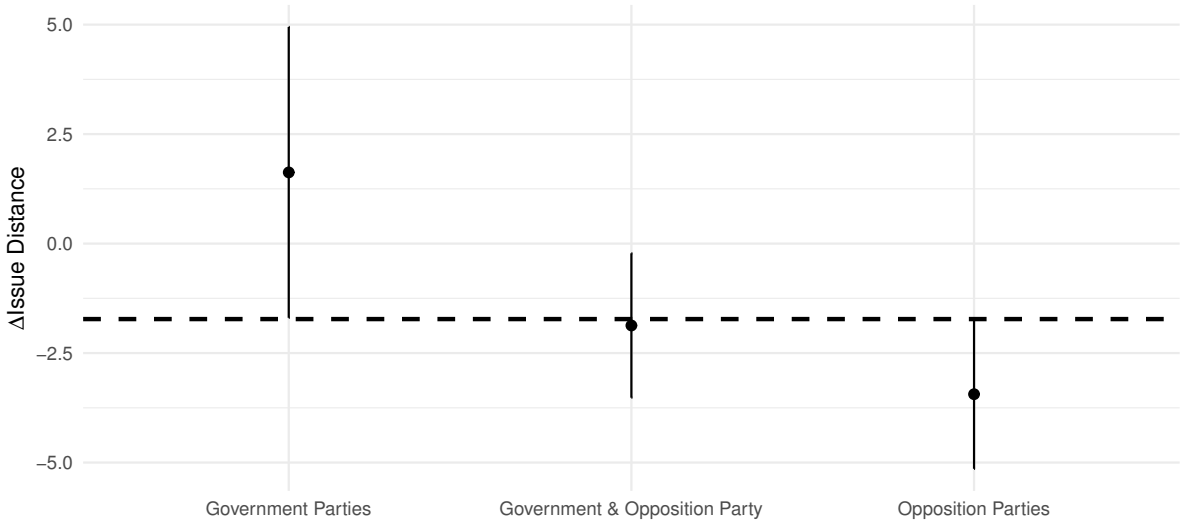
SI 2.D shows that the results we present in the next section do not depend on how we define our issue categories. We replicate the models using a dependent variable in which we aggregate the distance between party dyads using: a) all 56 CMP categories; b) the seven CMP policy areas (i.e., international relations, liberal democracy, political organization, economy, welfare, morality and culture, interest groups); c) Lowe and co-authors' definition of CMP issue scales (Lowe et al., 2011); and d) a separate aggregate measure for positional and valence issues.

While it is becoming customary in the party responsiveness literature to replicate findings using de-

pendent variables constructed also from expert surveys and voter surveys of party positions, we do not do replicate our models using these data sources, because expert surveys and voter surveys of party positions are strongly influenced by what parties do in government (Adams et al., 2016; Cahill and Adams, 2015; Fortunato and Adams, 2015; Fortunato and Stevenson, 2013). In our case, using this data would lead to a possible overestimation of our results. We are not interested in what parties do in government, but rather in what they communicate to the electorate after a spell in coalition government. The election manifesto is one obvious source of information that parties may turn to communicate agreement or disagreement with their former coalition partner. To put it differently, our theory is about expressed party positions, not perceived party positions.

We use the Parlgov database (Döring and Manow, 2015) to determine the coalition composition (*Coalition Dyad*) (H1a and H1b) and the party pair's *Familiarity* (H2). To measure whether or not a party dyad is a *Coalition Dyad*, we consider dyads that consist of two parties that are in the coalition (value of 1) and group all other dyads (value of 0). Figure 4.3 demonstrates that dyads consisting of two opposition parties and dyads with a government and an opposition parties behave on average similar in how they adjust their platform. Both groups on average converge their platforms. Dyads consisting of government parties behave very different from the other two types of dyads: they on average diverge.

Figure 4.3: Difference between Party Dyads on Δ Issue Change



Note: The X-axis displays the different types of party dyads and the Y-axis shows the average values of Δ Issue Distance for different types of party dyads. The dashed line indicates the mean score of Δ Issue Distance.

Familiarity is operationalized as the number of times a party dyad has been in the coalition together since 1950 weighted by the number of occasions one of the two parties in the pair have been in government divided by two (see left side of Figure 4.4). If our *Familiarity* variable has a value of 1, the party pair has only been in government together, and a value of 0 means that the party pair has never been in government together (see left part of Figure 3). As this variable is skewed to the value of 0 (never been a coalition dyad), we create a dichotomy of the Familiarity variable (0 never been a coalition dyad; 1 ever been a coalition dyad) to the analyses too, to control for the fact that we otherwise only pick up the effect of not being a coalition dyad. We also re-run our analyses specifying our familiarity variable without the dummy, as log + 1 and categorizing in into three categories: not familiar (0), somewhat familiar (values between 0 and 0.5) and very familiar (values between 0.5 and 1), which yielded the same results (see SI 2.E).

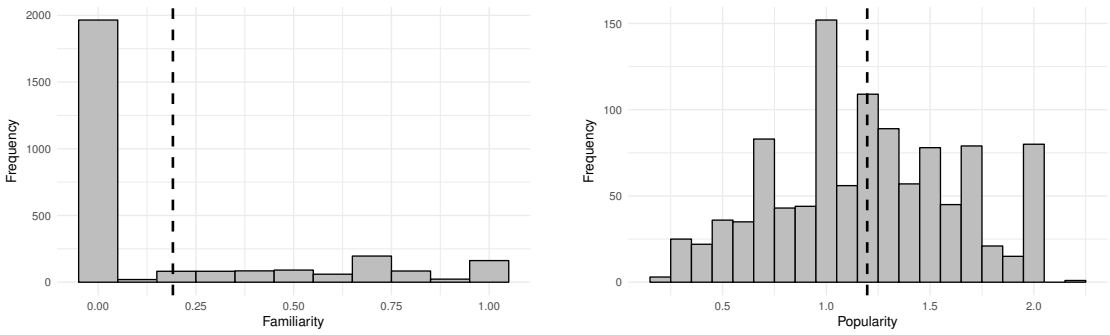
We indicate whether a coalition terminated because of *Conflict* (H3) using the Comparative Parliamentary Democracy Data Archive's measure of government termination (Strøm et al., 2008). Table 4.3 summarizes for all the countries in our data how many coalition governments have terminated and why, ranging from disagreement with the Parliament, intra-coalition policy or personal conflicts or conflicts within a party. Although in our main analyses, we do not disaggregate conflict to specific types of conflict, but SI 2.T does show that the results hold even when we do so. If a party pair is not in a coalition it should not be affected by how governments end their collaboration (value of 2). When a party pair is in government, the government is terminated because it either did not experience conflict (value of 1) or because of coalition terminated due to a conflict (value of 0). Hence, we only indicate a conflict when the coalition actually terminated and not when conflicts were solved. This may be less fine-grained then is desirable. Yet, by only including 'extreme' cases of conflict, we make it harder to find an effect of *Conflict*.

Table 4.3: Overview of Types of Conflict in Coalition Resulting in Termination

	Conflict: Parliament	**Conflict: Policy**	**Conflict: Personal**	**Conflict: Intra-Party**	**Total**
Austria	0	4	1	3	*8*
Belgium	0	13	0	3	*16*
Denmark	9	2	0	1	*12*
Finland	3	14	0	1	*18*
Germany	2	5	2	8	*17*
Iceland	0	5	1	0	*6*
Ireland	3	3	3	6	*15*
Luxembourg	0	2	1	0	*3*
Netherlands	1	6	0	1	*8*
Norway	0	2	0	2	*4*
Sweden	0	3	0	0	*3*
TOTAL	**18**	**59**	**8**	**25**	**110**

For our *Popularity* variable (H4),we first computed a party pair's popularity. We subtracted the number of seats a party pair currently holds in parliament by the average over the polled seats it has six months prior to the election, that is around the time of the formulation of the election manifesto. In the second step, we rank ordered the parties based on the values of number of current seats minus polled seats; the higher the score on this rank order, the more popular a party pair has become. Last, to calculate the popularity of the party dyad, we summed up the rankings of party *i* and party *j* and divided this summed score by the number of possible dyads one of the parties is in. This resulted in an index from 0 to 1, where a higher value of *Popularity* means that a party pair has become more popular compared to the other parties in the system, and a lower *Popularity* score means that those dyads are the party dyads least favored by the electorate (see right side of Figure 4.4). We use the Parlgov data set for the current number of seats and use the data sets of Jennings and Wlezien (2016), Askham-Christensen (2012) and Van der Velden (2014) for the opinion polls.This yields opinion poll data between 1968 and 2014 for 8 countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden. The attrition shown in Table 4.5 Model 4 (p.56) is due to the fact that we do not have opinion poll data for Finland, Iceland, and Luxembourg and none for the other countries between 1950 and 1968.

Figure 4.4: Histograms of Familiarity and Popularity



Note: The X-axis displays the values of Familiarity (left) and Popularity (right) and the Y-axis shows the frequency of any of the values of respectively Familiarity and Popularity. The dashed lines indicates the mean scores of respectively Familiarity and Popularity.

In our analyses, we control for economic indicators (GDP, unemployment, inflation), as one might expect that sluggish growth and strong unemployment motivate dissociation, whereas good economic times motivate association with the ruling coalition (i.e. stick together). To measure economic performance, we use GDP, the percentage of change in GDP growth rate one year before the election and the *Misery Index* (Okun, 1962), the percentage of change in unemployment rate one year before the election plus the percentage of change in inflation one year before the election. To account for the fact that parties on opposite

sides of the ideological left-right scale are per definition further apart than parties on the same side, we also control for the ideological variation within party dyads. The *Ideological Position* of party dyads is measured using the CMP 'rile' measure (Klingemann et al., 2006; Volkens et al., 2014), giving the dyads a value of 0 when they are on the same ideological side and a value of 1 when the party dyads are on opposite sides (e.g. a left-wing party and a right-wing party being a dyad).[8] In the main analyses, we defined the 0 as the cut-off point for whether or not a party dyad is on the same ideological side, but in SI 2.S, we also show the results using the mean and median value of the party system as the cut-off point, which yields similar results. Finally, we account for the complexity of the multiparty system by controlling for the *effective number of parties* (ENPS) within the system using the Comparative Political Data Set I (Armingeon et al., 2014) and the *number of coalition parties* (NCP), measured by the ParlGov dataset (Döring and Manow, 2015). The ENPS is an index of the number of parties relative to the seats they gained at the election (Laakso and Taagepera, 1979). Finally, we account for the complexity of the multiparty system by controlling for the *effective number of parties* (ENPS) within the system using the Comparative Political Data Set I (Armingeon et al., 2014) and the number of coalition parties, measured by the ParlGov dataset (Döring and Manow, 2015). The ENPS is an index of the number of parties relative to the seats they gained at the election (Laakso and Taagepera 1979). Table 4.4 shows the descriptive information of the dependent and independent variables of this study.

4.4 Method of Estimation

To explain whether coalition formation influences parties' changes in issue distances, we are dealing with variation between a dyad of party observations, across countries as well as over time. Hence, we have to estimate a model that deals with the interdependency between a pair of observations (i.e. the dyadic structure of the data), the cross-sectional structure (i.e., panel differences based on countries and parties) as well as time dependencies (i.e., issues relating to autocorrelation). To deal with the interdependency of party dyads and years, we use simple party combinations nested in year panel setup. Recently, Erikson and co-authors have warned scholars for the possibility of underestimating the size of standard errors and overestimating the power of hypothesis tests when using dyadic data (Erikson et al., 2014). To overcome this estimation flaw, they propose randomization test (for specifics on randomization test, see Erikson et al., 2014, p. 2; for an application within the party politics literature, see Meyer and Wagner, 2016). The applications of dyadic data they are warning for are cases in which the independent variables are not on the dyadic level. This is, however, not the case in our study. We, therefore, are not able to conduct this ran-

[8] Using a Cramer's V, we calculated the association between our control of being on the same ideological side and our dependent variable change in issue distance. The association between the two is 0.02, which means that the two are unrelated.

Table 4.4: Operationalization and Descriptive Statistics of Variables

DV	Operationalization	Mean (SD)	Min.-Max.
Δ Issue Distance	Sum of changes on each issue between party dyads	-2.34 (25.41)	-132.3 - 100.7
	Continuous IV's		
Popularity	Relative Popularity of Party Dyad	1.20 (0.44)	0.22 - 2.20
Familiarity	History of Being a Cabinet Dyad	0.19 (0.32)	0 - 1
NCP	Number of Coalition Parties	2.45 (1.39)	0 - 5
GDP	% Change GDP Growth	2.79 (2.59)	-4.98 - 9.70
Misery Index	Change % Inflation + Change % Unemployment	11.01 (5.65)	1.56 - 50.91
ENPS	Effective Number of Parties	77.77 (7.27)	52.86 - 88.98
	Dichotomous IV's	**0**	**1**
Cabinet Dyad	0 No Cabinet Dyad, 1 Cabinet Dyad	3,024 (88%)	402 (12%)
Ideological Position	0 same side of left-right scale,1 opposite side	2,092 (56%)	1,674 (54%)
	Categorical IV's		
Conflict	0 Conflict, 1 No conflict, 2 No Cabinet Dyad		
	Conflict	3,356 (98%)	70 (2%)
	No Conflict	3,094 (90%)	332 (10%)
	No Cabinet Dyad	402 (12%)	3,024 (88%)

domization test. We do deal with the dyadic data structure by clustering on the dyad level. We additionally run a fixed effects model SI 2.F and to account for the possibility that specific country characteristics are driving the analysis, we re-run the models with one country dropped at the time SI 2.G.

Party combinations nested in year panel setup alone, however, does not solve all issues arising when using a panel data-estimation strategy. We have to account for heteroskedastic error terms, as it is very likely that the error terms have different variances between panels and are also correlated across different panels. Furthermore, it is likely that the observations of change in issue distance (our dependent variable) are correlated across time within panels. Consequently, we use a Prais-Winsten solution to address the panel-specific AR(1) error structure (Greene, 1990, p. 473) to eliminate autocorrelation.[9] In SI 2.H we show the results of a Error Correction Model (ECM).

[9]We do not use an AR(1) process with a lagged dependent variable as recent studies indicate that a lagged dependent variable introduces biases associated with trending in the independent variables and the error term and washes out the effects of the main theoretical model (Achen, 2000; Plumper et al., 2005).

4.5 Do Coalition Parties Drift Apart or Stick Together?

Table 4.5[10] presents the results from our time-series cross-sectional regression analyses. Model 1 in Table 4.5 tests the 'drift-apart-hypothesis' (H1a) and the 'stick-together-hypothesis' (H1b). The positive coefficient of Coalition Dyad in this model shows that when party dyads were together in a coalition, they increase their distance; in other words they drift apart, which supports H1a and leads us to reject H1b.[11] The estimated effect of being a Coalition Dyad is 3.66, though this seems a rather small effect, we argue it is substantively important for two reasons. First, our effect is probably a conservative estimate of the actual underlying effects of coalitions on party policy convergence, due to likely errors in the manifesto-based estimates. Second, and related to the nature of the data, the effects of environmental stimuli on party platform change tend to be small (for an overview of this literarure, see Adams 2012).

In model 2 of Table 4.5, we added the interaction term between Familiarity and Coalition Dyad and the constituent terms of that interaction effect. We are interested in the effect of Familiarity conditional on the dyad being in a coalition. Figure 4.5 plots this conditional effect. Familiarity has a negative and significant effect on the change in issue distance for coalition parties. The negative sign implies that the more familiar a coalition dyad, the more likely they are to converge on their election platforms. This supports H2. There is, however, a cut-off point: if coalition dyads have spent half of all the coalitions they have been part of with the same partner, they stay as close as they already are. Hence, familiarity does no longer (statistical significantly) affect parties' strategy for changing their platform. In model 3 of Table 4.5, we replaced the Coalition Dyad variable for the Conflict variable. This allows a distinction between coalition dyads that ended in conflict or not. The coefficient for non-conflict coalition dyads is negative (compared to conflict coalition dyads) and significant. This means that when a coalition government terminates due to conflict, parties increase their issue distance much more than when they end their coalition without conflict (support H3).

In model 4 of Table 4.5 we added the interaction term between the Coalition Dyad variable and Popularity. The conditional effect of Popularity for Coalition Dyads is insignificant. We, thus, do not find an effect for popularity (no empirical support for the fourth hypothesis). We do find a significant conditional effect of Popularity for party dyads that are not in government (the effect of popularity in model 4 shows this). This could indicate that the effect of Popularity for government party dyads is conditional on trust. The reason of government termination (conflict or no conflict) may thus explain our null-finding regarding

[10] Due to data limitations country dummies could not be included, but we ran a fixed effect model which yielded the same results (see SI 2.F).

[11] We also modeled time explicitly using a multilevel model, since issue changes of party dyads (level 1) are nested in election years (level 2) within countries (level 3). A variance component model showed that 24% of the variation is at the election years level. The multilevel model (SI 2.I) also finds support for the H1b: party dyads in government increase their issue distance.

Table 4.5: Regression Effects Drift Apart or Stick Together?

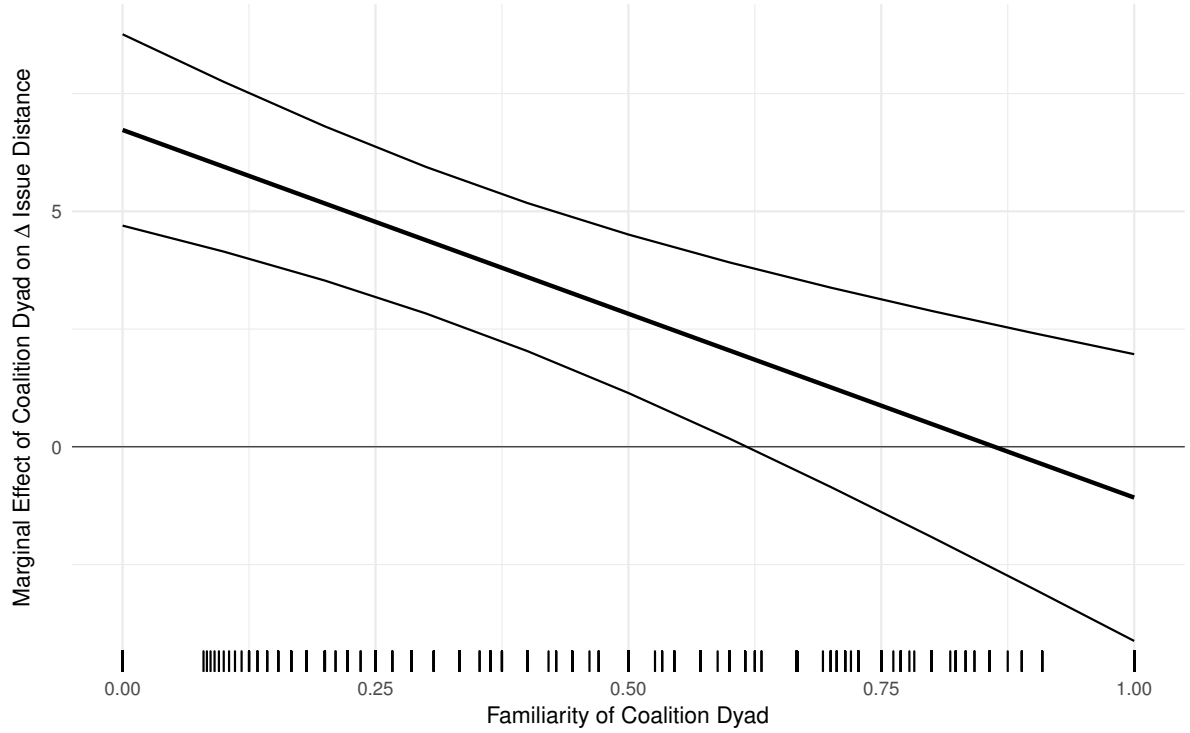
Y: Δ Issue Distance	**Model 1**		**Model 2**		**Model 3**		**Model 4**	
Cabinet Dyad *(ref. = No Cabinet Dyad)*	3.66*	(.54)	6.73*	(1.04)			-2.66	(3.21)
Familiarity			3.82	(2.07)	3.07	(1.84)	-0.03	(2.07)
Conflict *(ref. = Conflict)*								
No Conflict					-7.97*	(2.59)		
No Coalition Dyad					-9.16*	(2.49)		
Popularity							-1.81*	(.56)
Coalition Dyad * Familiarity			-7.81*	(2.00)				
Coalition Dyad * Popularity							3.91	(2.07)
Misery Index	0.27*	(.01)	0.28*	(.01)	0.28*	(.01)	1.08*	(.11)
GDP	-0.17*	(.01)	-0.15*	(.03)	-0.30*	(.02)	-0.12	(.16)
ENPS	-0.08*	(.01)	-0.08*	(.02)	-0.06*	(.02)	0.13*	(.04)
NCP	0.30*	(.11)	0.28*	(.12)	0.09	(.11)	1.20*	(0.29)
Ideological Position *(ref. = same side)*	5.42*	(.02)	5.46*	(.04)	5.11*	(.07)	5.16*	(.43)
Constant	-2.00	(1.04)	-3.02*	(1.42)	-2.76	(1.52)	-23.18*	(4.19)
N	1789		1789		1739		636	
Wald (df)	98642.06* (7)		409.75* (9)		18094.79* (8)		409.75* (9)	

Note: Table entries are Prais-Winsten regression coefficients corrected for panel-level heteroskedasticity and standard errors.
* means significant at the p < .05 level (two-tailed).

popularity.[12] Therefore, we estimate model 4 with an interaction with the Conflict variable, instead of the Coalition Dyad variable. SI 2.J shows the model that estimates the effect of the interaction between popularity and different effects of the termination causes, as visually displayed in Figure 4.6. Figure 4.6 shows that coalition dyads that are popular and did not experience conflict decrease their issue distance, but equally popular coalition dyads that do experience conflict increase their issue distance. In other words, the effect of the popularity of the pair of coalition partners depends on how the coalition partners have

[12] In the Conclusion Section, we also discuss the possibility that our approach - i.e. measuring dyads - could contribute to a null-finding.

Figure 4.5: Marginal Effect of Coalition Dyad for Different Values of Familiarity



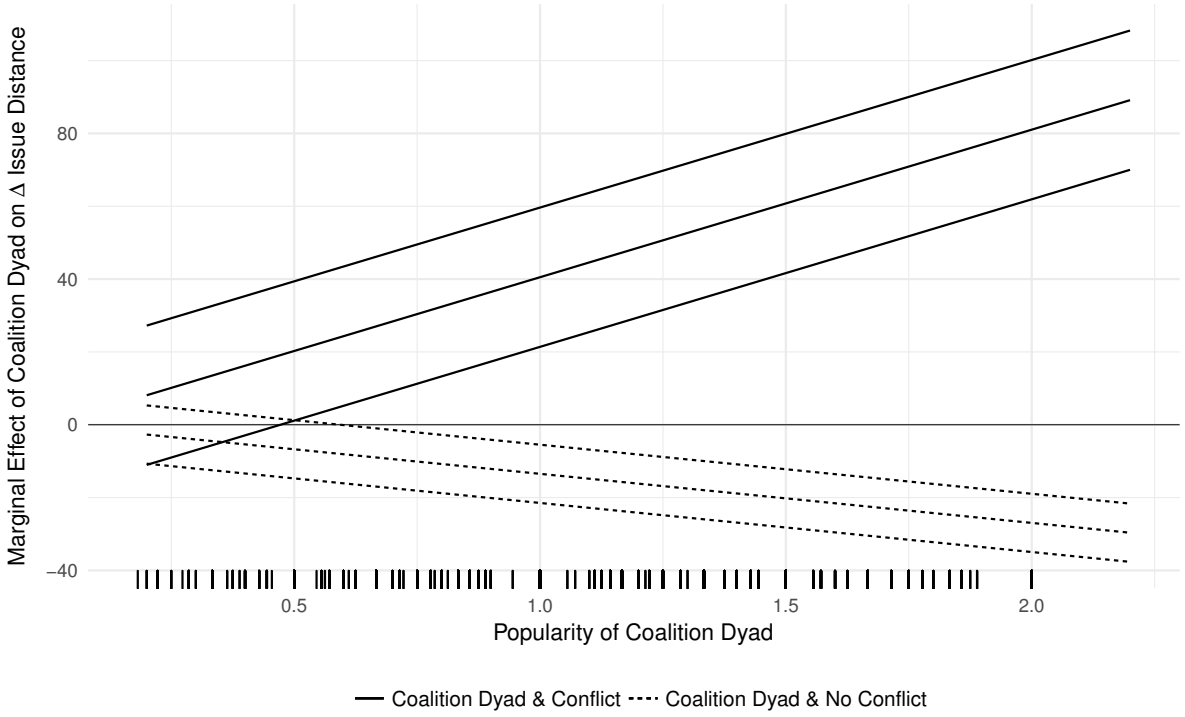
Note: The straight lines demonstrate the effect (thicker line) and the 95% confidence intervals (thinner lines) of Coalition Dyads. The y-axis shows the effect (b-coefficient) of Coalition Dyads on Δ Issue Distance for different levels of Familiarity. Positive values indicate that Coalition Dyads diverged, whereas negative values indicate the reverse (i.e. converged).

been getting along. This finding supports a modified version of our fourth hypothesis: popular coalition pairs decrease issue distance unless they experience conflict.

The control variables show the following effects: a growth in GDP leads to a slight decrease in issue distance, while an increase in the Misery Index has the opposite effect. The Effective Number of Parties (ENPS) has no effect on a party dyad's issue distance. The more parties in government, party dyads increase their issue distance. Furthermore, the ideological position effect shows that if parties are on opposite ends of the ideological left-right scale, they increase their issue distance.

Hence, our analyses have shown that on average coalition dyads drift apart (H1b), but are less inclined to do so when the coalition government works (i.e. support for the familiarity hypothesis (H2) and popularity (H4) hypotheses conditional on coalition termination). Conversely, coalition dyads increase their distance enormously when they have experienced bad cooperation (support for H3).

Figure 4.6: Marginal Effect of Coalition Dyad for Different Values of Popularity



Note: The straight lines demonstrate the effect (thicker line) and the 95% confidence intervals (thinner lines) of Coalition Dyads that experienced Conflict, the dotted lines show demonstrate the effect (thinker line) and the 95% confidence intervals (thinner lines) of Coalition Dyads that did not experienced Conflict. The y-axis shows the effect (b-coefficient) of Coalition Dyads on Δ Issue Distance for different levels of Popularity. Positive values indicate that Coalition Dyads diverged, whereas negative values indicate the reverse (i.e. converged).

4.6 Robustness Checks

There are several alternative explanations for our findings. To address these, we report briefly several robustness checks that are discussed in detail in the SI. Note that the robustness checks with alternative operationalizations of variables and different model specifications are discussed in the Sections Data & Measurement and Method of Estimation.

First, some scholars argue that *small parties behave differently from large parties* (e.g. Adams et al. 2006; Meguid 2005). But restricting our analyses to party dyads with at least 10%, 25% and 40% of the vote share did not produce different findings (see SI 2.K, 2.L and 2.M).

Second, the causal arrow may be reversed: *divergence in party platforms between elections causes conflict*, rather than conflict causing a divergence of a party dyad (H3). SI 2.N presents a table with cases

in which party dyads with an increased issue distance split up a coalition due to conflict. This table shows that in four out of seventeen cases in which a government terminated due to conflict and the party dyads increased their issue distance, a policy reason determined the termination of the coalition (which is 6% of all the cases in which conflict is the reason for government termination and the coalition party dyads did diverge). These coalition are: cabinet Lubbers II (The Netherlands, 1986-1989); cabinet Kok II (The Netherlands, 1998-2002); cabinet Balkenende II (The Netherlands, 2003-2006); and, cabinet Fitzgerald II (Ireland, 1982-1987). The majority of cases of coalition governments terminated because of internal party conflicts, see SI 2.N. By taking a closer look at those cases (see SI 2.O for a detailed description of the cases), the changes in policy as proposed by the coalition government where against the existing party line of the resigning party. In other words, a change in coalition position led to conflict. For example, cabinet Lubbers II terminated because the Liberal Party did not support the policy proposal to increase taxes on commuter transport. Moreover,SI 2.P additionally shows even if we re-run the analysis without these cases, the results still hold. In sum, the alternative route of causation could still be true, but with only four coalition governments terminating due to a policy conflict, it seems to be an exception rather than the main explanation.

Third, conflict between two parties could simply be a symptom of unpopularity and thus not an independent cause of party divergence. To test this, SI 2.Q tests whether popularity explains conflict. This model shows that popularity - controlled for familiarity, economic performance, and party system indicators - does not have a significant effect. This non-finding makes it unlikely that being an unpopular government is an indicator for terminating due to a conflict. We, therefore, can conclude that experiencing conflict leads parties to drift apart.

Fourth, conflict between two parties could arise because there are personal disagreements between members of cabinet. To exclude the fact that the specific type of conflict drives our findings, SI 2.T shows the analyses for the dis-aggregated measure of conflict. Regardless of the type of conflict, our finding that conflict leads coalition parties to drift apart (H3) holds.

Fifth, the context in which parties strike coalitions matters. Pre-electoral coalition agreements (PEC) (Golder, 2005, 2006) are an example of this. In SI 2.R we detail that this is a rare phenomenon in our sample (<5%). Including PECs as a variable in our analyses yields a significant and negative effect. The main findings of the paper do not change.

In sum, Table 4.6 provides an overview of all the robustness checks we have conducted to test our hypotheses, against which are results are robust and in which section of the SI they are reported.

Table 4.6: Overview of Robustness Checks

Results Robust Against	Alternative	Hypothesis	SI
Operationalization of DV	(1) Categories of Lowe et al. (2011) (2) Categories defined by CMP (3) All categories of CMP (4) Only positional issues (5) Only valence issues	H1-H4	SI 2.D
Operationalization of Familiarity	(1) Log-transformed variable (2) Creating a categorical variable (3) Creating a dichotomous variable	H2	SI 2.E
Operationalization of Conflict	Using types of conflict	H3	SI 2.T
Operationalization of Popularity	Using party dyads sum of polled votes	H4	SI 2.V
Operationalization of Same Ideological Side	(1) Country mean value as cut-off point (2) Country median value as cut-off point	H1 - H4	SI 2.S
Model Specification	(1) Fixed Effects Model (2) Error Correction Model) (3) Multi-Level Model 4) Model with all variables	H1-H4 H1-H4 H1 H1-H4	SI 2.F SI 2.H SI 2.I SI 2.U
Specific Country Characteristics	(1) Country-Wise Deletion (2) Pre-Electoral Coalition Agreements (3) Allowance for Early Elections (all but Norway)	H1-H4	SI 2.G SI 2.R SI 2.G
Party Size Differences	(1) Analysis with party dyads >10% vote share (2) Analysis with party dyads >25% vote share (3) Analysis with party dyads >40% vote share	H1-H4	SI 2.K SI 2.L SI 2.M
Reversed Causality of Conflict	(1) Case studies (2) analyses without conflict cases (3) Using popularity to predict conflict	H3	SI 2.O SI 2.P SI 2.Q

4.7 Discussion

Do coalition parties stick together or drift apart? Our analyses of 3,766 party platform changes in 11 European democracies demonstrate that on average coalition partners drift apart. Existing studies show that government parties can improve electoral performance by radicalizing their issue stances (Bawn and Somer-Topcu, 2012; Fortunato, 2017). Because voters perceive coalition partners as more ideologically similar than they are (Adams et al., 2016; Fortunato and Adams, 2015; Fortunato and Stevenson, 2013), our finding party dyads diverge after a spell in office suggests that parties use their election manifestos to highlight policy differences with their coalition partner to mitigate the inferences voters would otherwise draw from these partners' concrete actions.

We theorized beyond this implication of existing studies and followed a recent trend in theoretical models of party behavior by assuming that parties do not calculate optimal responses to their environment, but use rules of thumb to decide their strategy (Bendor et al., 2011; Laver, 2005; Laver and Sergenti, 2012). The complexity and uncertainty parties in multi-party systems face in their quest for vote, office or policy pay-offs prohibits the calculation of optimal responses. We proposed that parties drift apart in response to bad signals (conflict, lack of trust, unpopular coalition) and stick together in response to positive signals (no conflict, trust and popular in the polls). Our results demonstrate that indeed the more familiar coalition dyads are, the more likely they are to stick together. Conflict motivates coalition parties to drift apart and a popular coalition is likely to stick together if conflict is absent. Our findings indicate that when coalition parties receive signals of bad cooperation, they strategically choose not to defend the government policy, but rather emphasize the party's own policy priorities in their election platforms; i.e. drift apart.

In addition to establishing these empirical regularities our paper has four contributions to the broader political science literature. First, for models of government formation our results inform the post-election coalition bargaining process by demonstrating that parties use their positioning to signal preferences for a coalition partner. Another addition to this literature is that we demonstrate that the popularity of the outgoing government affects how close or distant existing coalition partners position themselves.

Second, for models of policy-making, our results suggest that the extent to which parties commit to their own policy agenda or moderate for joint government policy varies with the trust in and popularity of the coalition. Models of policy making have relied on the veto-player logic (Tsebelis, 1995, 2002) to explain which policies governments choose (for an overview of this literature, see König et al. 2010). Tommassi et al. (2013) add to these models that the extent to which actors give in to create joint policy or stick to their own guns depends on the interplay between the actors over time. Consistent with this theoretical prediction, we empirically demonstrate that the strategic decision of a party to emphasize the policy issues in their manifestos that give them more electoral benefits (i.e. commit) instead of defending joint government policy (i.e. adapt) depends on how well the coalition works. Our analyses show that parties only want to adapt their position to a partner they know will honor the bargained agreement in the future.

Third, to studies of party policy shifts, we contribute a new way of conceptualizing party platform change. Our dependent variable, change in issue distance, expresses changes in the degree of ideological overlap between parties. Rather than analyzing party shifts in isolation, our measure analyzes party shifts relative to other parties. This way we are better able to capture parties' strategic behavior vis-à-vis potential rivals and potential coalition partners.

Fourth, and finally, what does this mean for democracy? Our results show that on average the 'give-

and-take' game of coalition politics motivate parties to drift away from their coalition partners for electoral benefits instead of defending joint government policy (Fortunato, 2017; Fortunato and Stevenson, 2013). This ideological drift of coalition partners can be seen as harmful for democracy, because parties do not take responsibility for their policies and therefore are not accountable to the electorate. Yet, divergence from the current government policy can also be seen as parties being responsive to the public. Our results demonstrate that coalition partners respond to opinion polls, dissociating from their current coalition partner could be the way to signal to voters that if they would select the party into future government, they will propose more congruent government policies.

An avenue for further research is how parties independently from one another adapt their platform after coalition government participation. While our theory is a first step towards how parties react on coalition participation, the dyadic approach we use has also its drawbacks. It does not allow to draw conclusions about which party adapts. Questions worth exploring in future research is (1) whether junior partners are more likely to adapt to senior partners (Fortunato and Adams, 2015)? and (2) are unpopular parties more likely to adapt their platform to popular parties?

Chapter 5

"Flirting" for Coalition Participation?

The Importance of Inter-Party Communication for Coalition Formation

5.1 Introduction

More and more, political parties in Europe have to partake in coalitions to govern (Andersson et al., 2014). As a consequence of coalition government becoming the norm, post-electoral bargaining determines who forms the government. To provide more clarity to voters, parties sometimes form pre-electoral coalitions (PEC) and inform voters in advance about the potential government that will form after the election if that party will be the *formateur* (Golder, 2005, 2006). These so-called *coalition signals* influence voting behavior, because they enable voters to estimate the likelihood of different coalitions emerging (Meffert et al., 2011). Voters prefer some coalitions over others, coalition signals therefore affect how voters cast their ballots (Blais et al., 2006; Bowler et al., 2010; Gschwend and Hooghe, 2008; Gschwend et al., 2017, 2016; Meffert et al., 2011). Picking the 'right' partner is thus quintessential for a party's electoral fortune and their prospects for office. Do parties need to form an pre-electoral agreement or explicitly state their preferences to signal that they prefer to coalesce with that party? In her influential work on PECs, Golder (2005, 2006) argues so. But what if a party during the parliamentary debate goes easier on one particular party than on the others? Or uses the debate to highlight common interests? Even without explicitly stating their coalition preference, I argue that these more implicit 'flirty' actions are likely perceived by the receiving party as a coalition signal (for a similar argumentation, but applied to voters, see Decker and Best, 2010). Parties' (implicitly) uttered preference are typically unaccounted for in the burgeoning literature on post-electoral coalition formation (for overviews, see Laver, 1998; Laver and Schofield, 1990; Martin and Stevenson, 2001; Müller and Strøm, 2000; Strøm et al., 2008). The main focus of this literature

A manuscript based on this chapter is currently being prepared for submission to a journal. All supportive information for this chapter is online available at `www.marikenvandervelden.eu/research`.

is on the post-election phase and takes the election as a starting point. Yet, the prevalence of PECs and coalition signals suggest that parties have made up their minds (long) before the post-electoral formation process starts. This evokes the question how parties search for potential coalition partners in anticipation of coalition formation. So, do parties 'flirt' for coalition participation, and if so, with whom?

Since successful coalition governance benefits from detailed agreements formed by post-election bargains (Falco-Gimeno, 2014; Müller and Meyer, 2010; Müller and Strøm, 2000), parties could anticipate these bargains by in advance polling which parties are thinking alike and care for the same issues. Especially, because bargaining over coalition agreements are a costly endeavor: parties invest time to negotiate with their bargaining partners as well as discuss within their own party what they can compromise on and which portfolio's do they deem necessary for their pledge fulfillment. Parties do not want to invest this time in vain and therefore search for ways to lower these costs. For example, party leader Pechtold, from the progressive liberal party D66, at that time an opposition party, argued in the opening debate - called *Prinsjesdag* - of the parliamentary session 2016-2017 that: "*[w]e can continue as coalition and opposition to position ourselves at the very opposite, but I believe that we should cooperate*."[1] Thereby, he openly made a pass at the coalition parties - the Liberal Conservatives (VVD) and the Social Democrats (PvdA). The Dutch national newspaper *Trouw* even headlined "A debate with coalition formation in mind"[2] after this debate. Bearing this example in mind, I put forward that with their speech, parties convey messages to other parties. This allows parties to explore potential coalition cooperation. Current studies typically investigate how parties formally agree on coalition cooperation Golder (2005, 2006); Gschwend et al. (2016). Yet, this example illustrates that parties likely employ informal routes too. Furthermore, there is variation between countries in the extent to which parties form PECs or send coalition signals. While PECs are common in France and coalition signals are common in Germany, both are quite uncommon in the Netherlands (Golder, 2005, 2006). Even though the latter two countries are equally reliant upon coalition government. This indicates that both German and Dutch political parties benefit from cheapened post-electoral coalition bargaining. I therefore argue to broaden the scope: parties also informally attempt to lower post-electoral bargaining.

The parliamentary debate allows for tactics for parties to search for potential coalition partners. The parliamentary arena serves as a forum for communication in which parties voice their policy priorities (Martin and Vanberg, 2007; Proksch and Slapin, 2012), while simultaneously learning the issue priorities of other parties. Moreover, participating in the debate also allow parties to make *empathy speeches* (Hill and Hurley, 2002) where they can indicate to other parties that they share their concerns about a policy

[1] "*We kunnen heel erg tegenover elkaar blijven staan als oppositie en coalitie, maar volgens mij moeten we samenwerken*" said by Pechtold in the parliamentary debate of 20-09-2016.

[2] "Een debat met de formatie in gedachte", Trouw, 21-09-2016

matter. The scarcity of time during the parliamentary debate - called the 'plenary bottleneck' (Cox, 2006) - necessitates parties to use their resources - time and words - strategically. As such, what parties say in parliament is a reflection of their strategic considerations. These debates, therefore, enable parties to infer whether a party would be a solid coalition partner. Debates allow parties to infer their ideological proximity to another party, learn whether other parties care for the same issues and gain knowledge on how cohesive a party is. These are important pieces of information for coalition formation, because ideological proximity is a key predictor of coalition formation (Martin and Stevenson, 2001, 2010), issue salience is an important predictor of ministerial portfolio allocation (Bäck et al., 2011), and cohesiveness of a party shows the internal stability (Greene and Haber, 2015; Greene and Jensen, 2014). So, parties can utilize the debate to send out tailored signals to other parties[3] that they are thinking alike and are on the same - 'right' - side on this issue and thus have a common ground to build upon, which cheapens post-electoral bargaining; i.e. parties 'flirt' by making *coalition appeals*.

To answer the question whether parties flirt for coalition participation, I measure coalition appeals by the ratio of negative and positive words used when *Party A* mentions *Party B*. To determine this so-called *sentiment* (i.e. the ratio between positive and negative words) in the party's speech, I use an existing dictionary, the Word-Emotion Association Lexicon (Mohammad and Turney, 2013). This results in a measure of how positive (negative) *party A* is about *Party B* and vice-versa. To investigate whether parties flirt with potential coalition partners (H1) and if there is a difference between government and opposition parties (H2), I have build an original data set of the Dutch parliamentary debates between 1998 and 2012. I used the Dutch case, because of the high number of parties, the high level of electoral volatility, and the absence of fixed coalitions. This ensures much variation over-time in who governs, as well as variation in parties' electoral performance. This makes the Netherlands an interesting case of countries with coalition governments. The Netherlands, therefore an interesting case to study whether parties flirt for coalition participation.

My findings demonstrate that parties use the parliamentary debates to convey messages: parties are more likely to send coalition appeals to parties that have coalition potential (support for H1). The results also demonstrate that government parties differentiate their coalition appeals: they are more likely to send coalition appeals to opposition parties than to their current partners, but I do not find the same pattern for opposition parties. Opposition parties are more likely to send coalition appeals to current opposition parties (partly support for H2). My findings indicates that parties think about future coalition formation well before new elections. Thereby, my study underlines the importance of party behavior for our understanding of coalition formation. Hence my study build upon and substantiates the voiced critique

[3]When parties send out tailored messages to specifically selected voters on certain characteristics, this is known as *micro-targeting* (Hersh and Schaffner, 2013; Hillygus and Shields, 2009; Simon, 2002).

that studies of coalition formation are typically too static in nature and should include parties' day-to-day relationships (Martin and Vanberg, 2008; Strøm, 2008; Strøm et al., 2008). Simultaneously, these results suggest that to understand parties' strategic decisions on whether or not to change their platform, it is imperative to jointly analyze the importance of votes and office goals.

5.2 'Flirting' for Coalition Participation?

When selecting a coalition partner, parties factor in different costs - search costs, negotiation costs, and enforcement costs (Martin and Stevenson, 2001, 2010). Once selected, parties usually start their partnership with drafting an agreement that defines the government's shared policy agenda (De Winter et al., 2000; Müller and Strøm, 2000; Strøm et al., 2008). These coalition agreements are the results of "intense, protracted and hard-nosed" (Strøm et al., 2008, p. 159) bargaining. This process of bargaining, in which parties engage in communication in order to find common ground, is costly because of the dedicated time and energy necessary to reach, and later on maintain, the agreement (Strøm et al., 2008). Shared policy views make the bargaining process easier, because there are fewer issues parties have to compromise on (i.e. lower negotiation costs). For example, the current Dutch coalition formation is one of the many examples that demonstrate that without shared policy views, the bargaining process is particularly hard. The Greens (GL) could not come to an agreement with the Christian Democrats (CDA) and the Conservative Liberals (VVD) on immigration after 50 days of negotiation. The Progressive Liberals (D66) does not even want to start negotiations with the Christian Union (CU), because there platforms differ too much. Likewise, when parties already agree on many issues, parties might have higher trust in their partner to execute these policies while in government (i.e. lower enforcement costs). For these reasons, coalitions are typically ideologically connected (Axelrod, 1984; de Swaan, 1973; Laver and Shepsle, 1996; Martin and Stevenson, 2001; Warwick, 2006). Another way to lower bargaining costs is having fewer parties at the table - called minimal winning or minimal party coalitions (Leiserson, 1968; Riker, 1962; Von Neumann and Morgenstern, 1953). This is defined as a coalition in which each member is essential (pivotal) for the majority status of that coalition. The logic is as follows: the fewer bargaining partners, the more likely the party is to get its preferred ministerial portfolios. This, in turn, enables the party to implement its preferred policy.

There are some well-known strategies that lower search costs in the post-electoral formation period. First, parties can decide to coordinate their electoral strategies by forming PECs or sending coalition signals in order to increase their chance for office (Golder, 2005, 2006; Gschwend et al., 2016). Parties occasionally draft a document with government policy before the elections. Or more importantly, parties

frequently send *coalition signals*, meaning that they announce during electoral campaigns that two (or more) parties aim to form a government if numerically possible. Second, because parties prefer to keep their current coalition partner(s) (Martin and Stevenson, 2010), government parties sometimes call elections when they are very popular in the polls. Thereby, they bet on being re-elected and continue their cooperation for another term (Kayser, 2003; Schleiter and Tavits, 2016; Strøm and Swindle, 2002). Third, a recent paper (Chapter 4 of this thesis) suggests that parties strategically craft their platforms in order to be considered a likely coalition partner (van der Velden and Schumacher, 2015). So, ahead of the elections, parties not only have favored coalition partners in mind, it seems that they also employ strategies to increase the likelihood of ending up in government together with these favored parties. Parties' selection of a preferred potential coalition partner(s) is thus an essential, yet understudied, area of party competition in Western Europe.

How do political parties select preferred potential coalition partners in anticipation of post-electoral coalition formation? I expect parties to strategically employ parliamentary debates. As mentioned above, these debates are very valuable for parties to broadcast and emulate their policy priorities (Martin and Vanberg, 2008; Proksch and Slapin, 2012). Parties, therefore, strategically exploit these debates to make *coalition appeals* to other parties; i.e. by positively mentioning them in their speech, parties send a signal that they are thinking alike. Coalition appeals thus contain ideas about the importance of communication as a tool of broadcasting policy priorities. To preserve the value of a coalition appeal, it demands that parties employ coalition appeals selectively. So, I theorize that parties carefully select their 'targets' based on ideological proximity and the "size principle"; i.e. the most important indicators for coalition formation (Martin and Stevenson, 2001). Both principals of size and ideology are combined in Axelrod's (1984) *minimally connected winning coalitions* formation model (see also de Swaan, 1973), in which parties are assumed to look for a minimal winning coalition with ideologically adjacent parties. Based on these characteristics, parties make appeals by sending tailored messages to potential future coalition partners. The targeted party's responses enable parties to infer how well they could cooperate. Taking the example of Pechtold's coalition appeal on p.64, if the response of the Dutch VVD was positive, Pechtold's party could conclude that there would be a possibility to cooperate in a coalition during the next electoral term. Positive responses to coalition appeals thus create an understanding between parties. This shared understanding is important, because it enhances trust between parties (Tavits, 2008). Trust between parties is important for the post-electoral coalition formation phase. Research on coalition formation demonstrates that when parties have trust in their potential coalition partner, they are more likely to coalesce (Browne and Franklin, 1973; Franklin, 1991; Franklin and Mackie, 1983; Martin and Stevenson, 2010). That is to say, trust cheapens the search, transaction and enforcement costs. I thus expect parties to make coalition ap-

peals to potential coalition partners – i.e. parties that are ideologically close and with whom they can form a (majority) coalition government (H1).

Flirting Hypothesis (H1) *Parties send coalition appeals to potential coalition partners*.

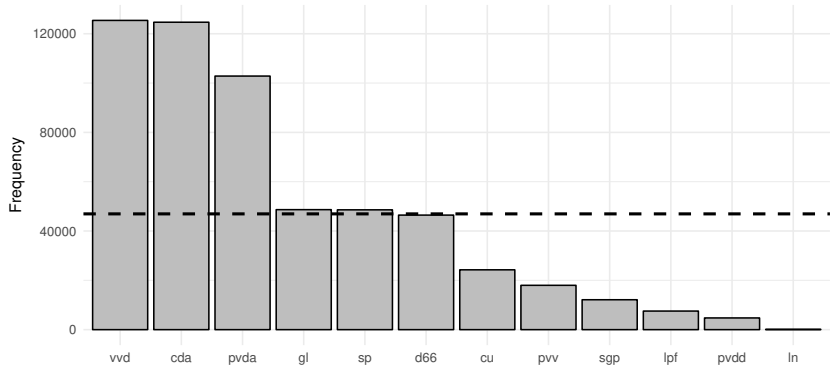
While coalition parties typically have a preference for continuing their cooperation with its current partner(s), the so-called *incumbency advantage* (Martin and Stevenson, 2010), this is not always possible due to the *cost of governing*. That is, the empirical regularity that government parties typically lose between 1 and 3.15 percentage points of the votes (Nannestad and Paldam, 2002; Stevenson, 2002). Opinion polls inform parties about the chances that they can continue their cooperation. If this is an unlikely situation, parties need to start looking for a new partner, if they aim to be reelected into government. This is, for instance, exactly what the German Liberals (FDP) in 1982 did after the local (*Länder*) elections results signaled that a new coalition with their current partner would be unlikely. After ten years in coalition with the Social Democrats (SPD) in the Brandt and Schmidt cabinets, running up to the 1982 elections, they saw that a new coalition with the SPD would be unlikely (Poguntke in Müller and Strøm, 1999, Ch. 9). Opposition parties could strategically seize this opportunity, like the German Christian Democrats (CDU/CSU) did: The CDU/CSU profiled themselves as a good alternative to the SPD (Poguntke in Müller and Strøm, 1999, Ch. 9). The parliamentary debate, as I mentioned before, is an ideal place to send coalition appeals, because the policy propositions are discussed with all parties before implementation. During these debates, opposition parties have the opportunity to voice their opinion on the proposals as drafted by the government parties, and to make amendments on the proposal. Ample studies in legislative behavior have demonstrates that especially opposition parties make use of this opportunity (for an overview, see Martin and Vanberg, 2011). So, when coalition parties are likely to be in need of a new partner after the new elections, they likely send coalition appeals to current opposition parties. Opposition parties, in turn, could seize this opportunity to 'flirt back' and signal that they are willing to cooperate. By praising (one of) the government parties, opposition parties could gain the additional benefit of pulling the proposal even closer to the opposition party's policy stance. Yet, they thereby also signal to the current coalition parties that they might be a good replacement for the current partner. As mentioned, because of the cost of governing, coalition parties need to keep their eyes open for new partners. I therefore expect that coalition parties are more likely to make coalition appeals to opposition parties than opposition parties are (H2).

Cost of Governing Hypothesis (H2) *Government parties are more likely to send coalition appeals to opposition parties than opposition parties are* .

5.3 Data & Measurement

Do parties make coalition appeals to potential coalition partners? To answer this question, I have build an original data set consisting of speeches made by all members of parliament (MPs) during parliamentary debates in the Netherlands (1998-2012). During this time period, 6 cabinets have been formed. In this period, a total of 13 parties have been elected in parliament, but the number of parties that were in parliament per cabinet varies between 8 and 10. Table 5.1 gives an overview of the cabinets and parties for the time period 1998 - 2012. Within this time frame, 563,400 speeches have been held in Parliament (the Second Chamber). This translates to, on average, 258 speeches per party per month. Not all parties, however, are at the same time and for the same period in parliament, nor do they have an equal opportunity to speak.[4] Figure 5.1 clearly visualizes that the larger parties, which tend to dominate office, speak much more often than smaller parties do. This indicates that smaller parties have fewer opportunities than the larger ones to make coalition appeals. So, when they devote the little time they have to mention another party, this is likely a signal to that party.

Figure 5.1: # Speeches per Party 1998-2002



Note: Y-axis demonstrates the number of speeches and the dashed line indicates average number of speeches held by all parties. CDA = Christian Democrats, CU = Christian Union, D66 = Progressive Liberals, GL = Greens, LPF = List Pim Fortuyn, PvdA = Social Democrats, PvdD = Animal Rights Party, PVV = Freedom Party, SGP = Reformed Party, SP = Socialists, VVD = Conservative Liberals

I measure the dependent variable, coalition appeals, by analyzing the text of the speeches held in parliament in several steps. First, I measure whether a politician mentions another party in her speech. To do this, I have created a dictionary for each party to measure whether a member of that party mentions another party. This dictionary consists of all the members of parliament for each party, the party name and

[4]The chair of the Dutch Second Chamber bargains with the party leaders for their speaking time. This is typically a couple of minutes per MP: the larger the party, the more speaking time. This time is without being interrupted.

Table 5.1: Overview of Dutch Cabinets 1998–2002

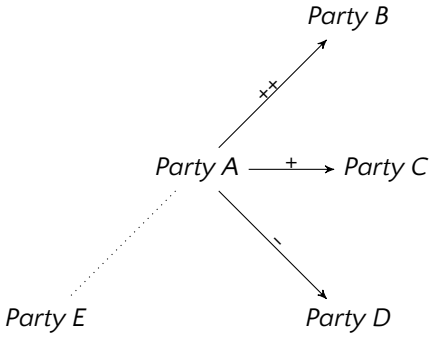
Cabinet	Coalition Parties	Opposition Parties
Kok II (1998–2002)	PvdA*, VVD, D66	CDA, GL, GPV, RPF, SP, SGP
Balkenende I (2002–2003)	CDA*, VVD, LPF	CU, D66, GL, LN, PvdA, SP, SGP
Balkenende II (2003–2006)	CDA*, VVD, D66	CU, GL, LPF, PvdA, SP, SGP
Balkenende III (2006–2006)	CDA*, VVD	CU, D66, GL, LPF, PvdA, SP, SGP
Balkenende IV (2006–2010)	CDA*, PvdA, CU	D66, GL, PvdD, PVV, SP, SGP, VVD
Rutte I (2010–2012)	VVD*, CDA	CU, D66, GL, PvdA, PvdD, PVV, SP, SGP

* means party of the Prime Minister

Note: CDA = Christian Democrats, CU, GPV & RPF = Christian Union, D66 = Progressive Liberals, GL = Greens, LPF = List Pim Fortuyn, PvdA = Social Democrats, PvdD = Animal Rights Party, PVV = Freedom Party, SGP = Reformed Party, SP = Socialists, VVD = Conservative Liberals

its synonyms, and if the party is in government, the (junior) ministers names and departments. Additionally to being mentioned by directly naming the party or a member of the party, the party can also be mentioned by something like "as the former speaker said". The dictionary also accounts for these 'indirect' mentions of a party. Using this dictionary, I measure for each party whether *Party A* mentioned *Party B*, *Party C*, ..., *Party N*. The data that arise is a network of relations among parties: *Party A* mentions *Party B*, not *Party C*, ..., but mentions *Party N*. The left-side panel of 5.2 shows an hypothetical example of such a network and the right-side panel of Figure 5.2 visualizes the resulting dyadic data structure.

Figure 5.2: Example of Network of Relations among Parties & Data Structure



Party	Target	Coalition Appeal
Party A	*Party B*	++
Party B	*Party A*	+
Party A	*Party C*	+
Party C	*Party A*	++
Party A	*Party D*	-
Party D	*Party A*	0
Party A	*Party E*	0
Party E	*Party A*	-
...	...	...

Note: Dashed line indicates that Party A does not mention Party E (0 in the table), $++$, $+$, and $-$ indicate the tone in which Party A mentions the other parties, $++$ being most positive, $+$ being positive, and $-$ being negative.

In the second step, to determine whether parties positively or negatively mention another party, I measure the ratio of negative and positive words used when *Party A* mentions *Party B* in its speech. To do so, I use an existing and validated dictionary, the Word-Emotion Association Lexicon (Mohammad and Turney, 2013) to count the positive and negative words used in the speeches of members of parliament. Of all

words in the dictionary, almost 62% have a negative connotation - these are words like *bestraffend* (punitive), *onbetrouwbaar* (unreliable) and *teleurgesteld* (disappointed) - and 38% have a positive connotation - e.g. *doeltreffend* (effective), *keuze* (choice), or *overeenkomst* (agreement). Since there are more negative words than positive words in the dictionary - indicating that negative words are easier detected by the dictionary - using this dictionary is a conservative approach for assessing whether parties flirt, because the dictonary makes it harder to find a relatively positive tone of the text. I have used the dictonary for the entire speech of *Party A* when it mentions *Party B*, but I validate this measure using 20, 50 and 100 words surrounding the mentioning of another party, see SI 3.C, with the *Keyword in Context* function of the Quanteda package (Benoit et al., 2016). SI 3.C demonstrates that this yields substantively similar results. I chose the entire speech over the surrounding words approach, because (1) there is no consensus about the number of surrounding words to use; and (2) the majority of the speeches are on one topic and MPs use multiple sentences to detail their opinion on this topic. As an additional validation of this measure, I read a random sample of 50 speeches per party to validate the tone of the text. I thereby aim to establish whether the text that is indicated by my measure as *Party A* being positive of *Party B* coincides with a manual approach. For most of the cases, the manual approach indicated a positive message as identified by the dictionary as positive. I detail this approach in SI 3.C.

In the third and final step, I first aggregated the speech level data to a monthly level. This results in 10,508 observations for 13 parties over 14 years.[5] Based on the data on the monthly level, I measured the dependent variable using Equation (5.1). $Coalition\ Appeals_{ij}$ is the difference between positive and negative words a party uses when mentioning its target as a share of the total number of positive and negative words used bt the party.

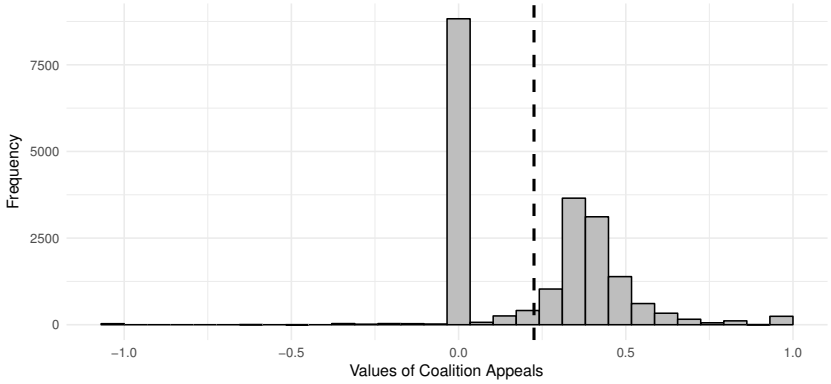
$$Coalition\ Appeals_{ij} = \frac{positive\ words_{ij} - negative\ words_{ij}}{positive\ words_{ij} + negative\ words_{ij}} \tag{5.1}$$

For instance, if $Party_i$ uses 75 positive words and 25 negative words in the speech where it mentions $Party_j$ - indicating that $Party_i$ is positive about $Party_j$ - the dependent variable would have a value of 0.50 ($\frac{75-25}{75+25}$). If $Party_i$ would be more negative about $Party_j$, using 25 positive words and 75 negative words, the dependent variable would have a value of -0.5 ($\frac{25-75}{25+75}$). Hence, the higher the values, the more positive appeals parties are making. Figure 5.3 shows the distribution of my dependent variable. This distribution shows that *if* a party mentions another party, the values are normally distributed. There are also a number of cases where a party does not mention another party (value of 0). What Figure 5.3 also demonstrates is that parties use more positive words when mentioning another party than they use negative words; in other words, the parties in the Dutch parliament appeal to each other in a relative

[5] Not all parties are at the same time in government.

positive tone. This finding fits the overall pattern of how parties that compete in the wake of past and dawn of future coalition negotiations behave. They are more likely to choose strategies that ensures trust and cooperation with possible coalition partners (Tavits, 2008) than to employ strategies aimed at conflict such as exploiting a wedge issue (van de Wardt et al., 2014) or engage in negative campaigning (Walter, 2014).

Figure 5.3: Distribution of Coalition Appeals

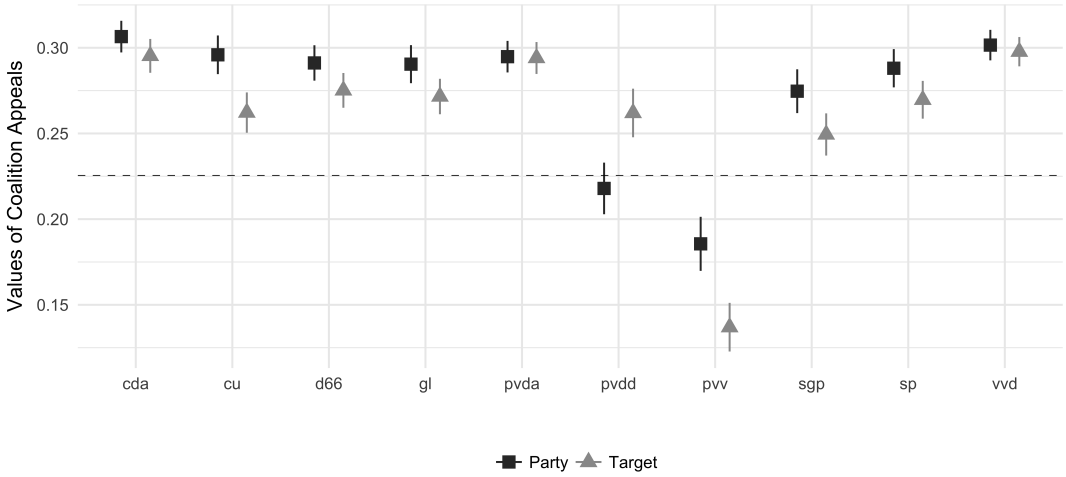


Note: The X-axis displays the values of Coalition Appeals and the Y-axis shows the frequency of any of the values of Coalition Appeals. The dashed line indicates the mean score of Coalition Appeals .

Parties are, however, not equally positive all the time nor towards all parties. Figure 5.4 gives a descriptive overview of parties' coalition appeals and to whom they make coalition appeals. This figure demonstrates that the parties that are typically in a coalition - the Christian Democrats (CDA), the Labour Party (PvdA) and the Conservative Liberals (VVD) - are making as many appeals as they receive. Smaller parties, that are sometimes junior coalition parties - like Christian Union (CU) and the Progressive Liberals (D66) - send out more coalition appeals than they receive. Also, Figure 5.4 demonstrates that Geert Wilders' party (PVV) does not receive any coalition appeals. This latter observation fits the fact that most parties have explicitly stated that they do not want to coalesce with Wilders.

To test the *flirting hypothesis* (H1) - parties send coalition appeals to potential coalition partners - I measure coalition potential with an interaction between ideological proximity and size of both the party and the target. With an interaction between those three indicators, I can estimate the relative importance of ideology given a party's and a target's size. Thereby, I can distinguish between the importance of ideology for smaller and larger parties when making coalition appeals. To operationalize the party's and the target's size, I use a their popularity as measured by opinion polls at month $t-1$. I used the polling results from all the main Dutch polling agencies (van der Velden, 2014) and when I had multiple observations in

Figure 5.4: Who Makes Coalition Appeals & Who is Targeted? The Netherlands, 1998 - 2012



Note: Dashed line indicates the mean value of Coalition Appeals.
CDA = Christian Democrats, CU, GPV & RPF = Christian Union, D66 = Progressive Liberals, GL = Greens, LPF = List Pim Fortuyn, PvdA = Labour Party, PvdD = Animal Party, PVV = Freedom Party, SGP = Reformed Party, SP = Socialists, VVD = Conservative Liberals

one month, I used the mean of the polled votes. In the Dutch case, the share of votes is almost similar to the share of seats, as the Netherlands has a proportional system with just one district and without a threshold for parties. I use polling data instead of parties current seats, because the polls allow parties to infer with whom they are able to form a coalition after fresh elections. Past performance is less indicative of new coalition formation. An additional benefit of polling data is that they are available at the monthly level.

To determine ideology, I combine parties' positions on issues with their attention to issues using the Manifesto Project Dataset (Klingemann et al., 2006; Volkens et al., 2014). I do this, because the work of Bäck et al. (2011) demonstrates that both parties' ideological proximity and their issue attention are important for coalition formation (see also, Greene and Haber, 2015). Specifically, I calculate the sum of the absolute distance between two parties on 19 issue categories (see Equation 5.2). These 19 issues consist of positional issues (e.g., positive references to multiculturalism versus negative references to multiculturalism) and valence issues (e.g., mentions of environmental issues) and are shown in SI 2.A (for a detailed discussion on this re-categorization of the Manifesto Project scheme, see Schumacher et al., 2015). Because issue competition has become more important over the recent decades (Green-Pedersen, 2007), issue-based measures help us to better understand how parties decide on their electoral platform. Additionally, Bäck et al. (2011) demonstrates that issue salience is an important predictor of portfolio allocation - i.e. the most important pay-off for parties entering a coalition government. Although there are various data sources that

could enable us to study parties' platform divergence (convergence), I rely on the Manifesto Project Dataset (Klingemann et al., 2006; Volkens et al., 2014) for two main reasons: a party's manifesto is an authoritative document that also reflects the concessions made within the party (Greene, 2016b); and (2) expert surveys and voter surveys of party positions are strongly influenced by what parties do in government (Adams et al., 2016; Cahill and Adams, 2015; Fortunato and Adams, 2015; Fortunato and Stevenson, 2013). Hence, using these latter data sources would lead to a possible overestimation of the results.

$$Issue\ Distance = \Sigma|P_{i,k,t} - P_{j,k,t}| \tag{5.2}$$

$Issue\ Distance$ takes the sum of the absolute distances between the position of party i on issue k at time t ($P_{i,k,t}$) and the position of party j on issue k at time t ($P_{j,k,t}$). SI 3.B shows that the results I present do not depend on the definition of issue categories. I replicate the models using variables in which I aggregate the distance between party dyads using: a) all 56 CMP categories; b) the seven CMP policy areas (i.e., international relations, liberal democracy, political organization, economy, welfare, morality and culture, interest groups); c) Lowe and co-authors' definition of CMP issue scales (Lowe et al., 2011); and d) a separate aggregate measure for positional and valence issues.

To test whether coalition parties are more likely to send coalition appeals to opposition parties than opposition parties are (*cost of governing hypothesis* H2), I use an interaction between whether the party is in government and whether their target is. I measure whether a party or a target is currently in a coalition government using the Comparative Parliamentary Democracy Data Archive (Andersson et al., 2014). There have been numerous studies reporting that when parties have never (or hardly ever) been in office, the so-called *niche* or *challenger* parties, employ different strategies from the 'mainstream' parties which frequently alter between being in government and in opposition (Abou-Chadi, 2016; Adams et al., 2006; De Vries and Hobolt, 2012; Hobolt and de Vries, 2015; Klüver and Spoon, 2016a,b; Meguid, 2009; Spoon, 2011; van de Wardt et al., 2014). I therefore distinguish between parties in government (value of 0), parties in opposition (value of 1) and parties in opposition that have never been in government (value of 2).

Schumacher et al. (2015) refined this argument by proposing that experience with office is key. I therefore also control for whether a party or its target has experience of being in government by counting the number of years in government relative to the total number of years in parliament. I also control for the number of months after new elections, using information from the Comparative Parliamentary Democracy Data Archive (Andersson et al., 2014). Table 5.2 gives an overview of the operationalization and descriptive statistics of the variables in my analyses.

Table 5.2: Operationalization and Descriptive Statistics of Variables

Continuous Variables	**Operationalization**	**Mean (SD)**	**Min. - Max.**
Coalition Appeals (DV)	$\frac{positive\ words_{ij} - negative\ words_{ij}}{positive\ words_{ij} + negative\ words_{ij}}$	0.80 (0.28)	-1.40 - 2.20
Size	Polled Vote Share	10.31 (8.68)	0.67 - 36.67
Ideology	$\Sigma\lvert P_{i,k,t} - P_{j,k,t}\rvert)$	63.68(28.67)	19.54 - 154.30
Experience	Years Coalition Participation / Years in Parliament	0.24 (0.29)	0.00 - 0.79
Months after New Cabinet	Months after Elections	17.37 (12.16)	1.00 - 47.00
Categorical Variable			
Coalition Participation	Coalition Party (0), Opposition Party (1), Opposition Party - No Government Experience (2)		
	Coalition Party		4,840 (24%)
	Opposition Party		3,168 (15%)
	Opposition Party - No Government Experience		8,481 (41%)

5.4 Method of Estimation

Investigating whether and to whom parties make coalition appeals requires a method that accounts for dyadic data (see Figure 5.2). In different strands of literature, distinct ways to model dyadic data are used. In International Relations, for example, network models, such as Exponential Random Graph Models (ERGM) or Generalized Bilinear Mixed Effects (GBME) models (for an overview of both approaches, see Hunter et al., 2012) are typically used. In Communication Science and Psychology conversely, Actor-Partner-Interdependece Models (APIM) (Kenny et al., 2006; Mancosu and Vezzoni, 2017) are generally used. Given that I am interested in whether and to whom parties send coalition appeals, I employ the APIM. These models can be estimated with a multilevel model (see Kenny et al. (2006) for the theoretical proofs). An additional advantage of these latter models (APIMs) over network approaches such as ERGMs or GBMEs is that they can account for times-series and interactions between two variables. I therefore estimate an APIM using a multi-level approach. This approach explicitly accounts for non-independent hierarchical observations: information about parties - e.g. a party's stance in the polls - (level 1) is clustered within dyads (level 2) per coalition period (level 3).

To account for time and dyad-specific dynamics, I estimate a random-intercept multilevel model with month-year fixed effects. To warrant this model specification, I calculated the Intraclass Correlation (ICC) to establish the variation in coalition appeals within and between party dyads. The value of 0.51 is just high enough to justify a random intercept, since all ICC's over 0.50 should be modeled using a random intercept (Kenny et al., 2006). Comparing the model with a random intercept to one without showed that there is a significant intercept variation. This indicates that there is substantial variation in the values of

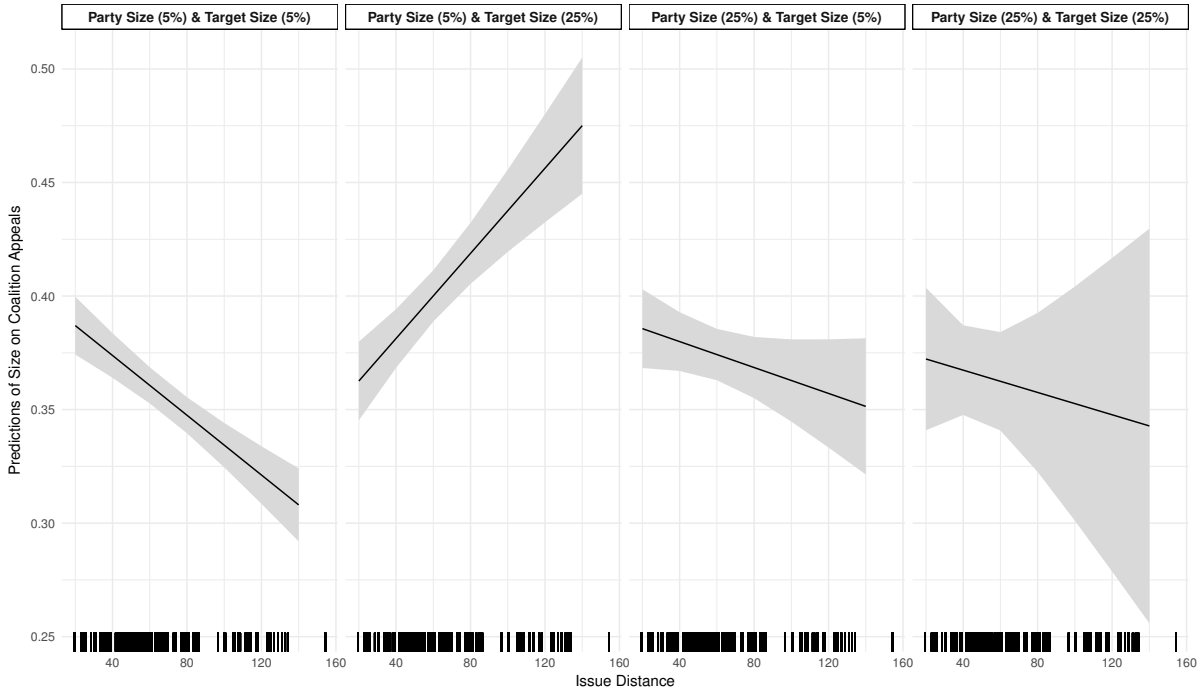
coalition appeals between party dyads.[6]

5.5 Do Parties Send Coalition Appeals?

To test H1, whether parties make coalition appeals to potential coalition partners, I estimated a three-way interaction between party's and target's size as indicated by opinion polls and issue distance. Figure 5.5 visualizes the effect of the party's and the target's size on coalition appeals for different levels of issue distance between the party and their targets (see SI 3.B for the full models). The left two-panels of Figure 5.5 show the predicted effects of size for different levels of issue distances when the party itself is a small party (i.e. has 5% of the votes, corresponding to approximately 7 seats out of 150). In the most left panel, the predicted effect of small party and small target size on coalition appeals is displayed over different levels of issue distance. The downward line shows that when both party and target are of small sizes, the more issue distance, the less positive coalition appeals they make. The decrease from an average value of 0.39 when parties are close to 0.31 when parties are most distanced is a small decrease. The standard deviation of coalition appeals is 0.22, meaning that a decrease of 0.08 is approx. a third of the standard deviation. The second to the left panel demonstrates the effect when the party is small, but the target has substantial size (25% of the votes corresponds to approximately 36 seats out of 150, which typically makes you the biggest party in the Dutch context). The upward going line from a value of 0.36 when party and target are close to 0.48 when they are most distanced (difference of half a standard deviation) indicates that if a party is small, they are likely to make appeals to bigger parties even if they are further away. The two right-side panels demonstrate the effect of size on coalition appeals when the party is a large party with 25% of the votes. Both panels show a downward going line respectively from 0.38 and 0.39 to 0.34 and 0.35, illustrating that the larger the issue distance, the less positive parties become when making coalition appeals. Yet, the difference over the values of issue distance is substantively small. In general, Figure 5.5 demonstrates that size and ideology jointly matter for coalition appeals - i.e. provide support for the flirting hypothesis. In addition, it shows that it is important to look how the size of the party interacts with the size of the target. Depending on the size of the party and the target, issue distance can be more or less important. Specifically, issue distance becomes less important for small parties sending appeals to bigger parties, in all other cases, issue distance decreases the likelihood to make positive coalition appeals.

[6]The distribution of the dependent variable as displayed by Figure 5.3 alludes to a two-stage process, where parties decide whether or not to send an appeal (i.e. a value of zero or non zero) and if they decide to send a signal, than the tone becomes important. I have explicitly modeled this process, by first estimating the effect of coalition potential on the dichotomous decision to mention a target. Out of the 20,426 observations, parties made an appeal to another party in 57% of the observations (total of 11,600) and did not mention one in 43% of the observations (total of 8,826 observations). In the second step, I used the continuous variable for the 11,600 observations in which a party mentioned a target. Because this yields the same results as estimating the effect for the continuous variable coalition appeals on the entire data set, I present the results of the continuous variable for all 20,426 observations in the results section.

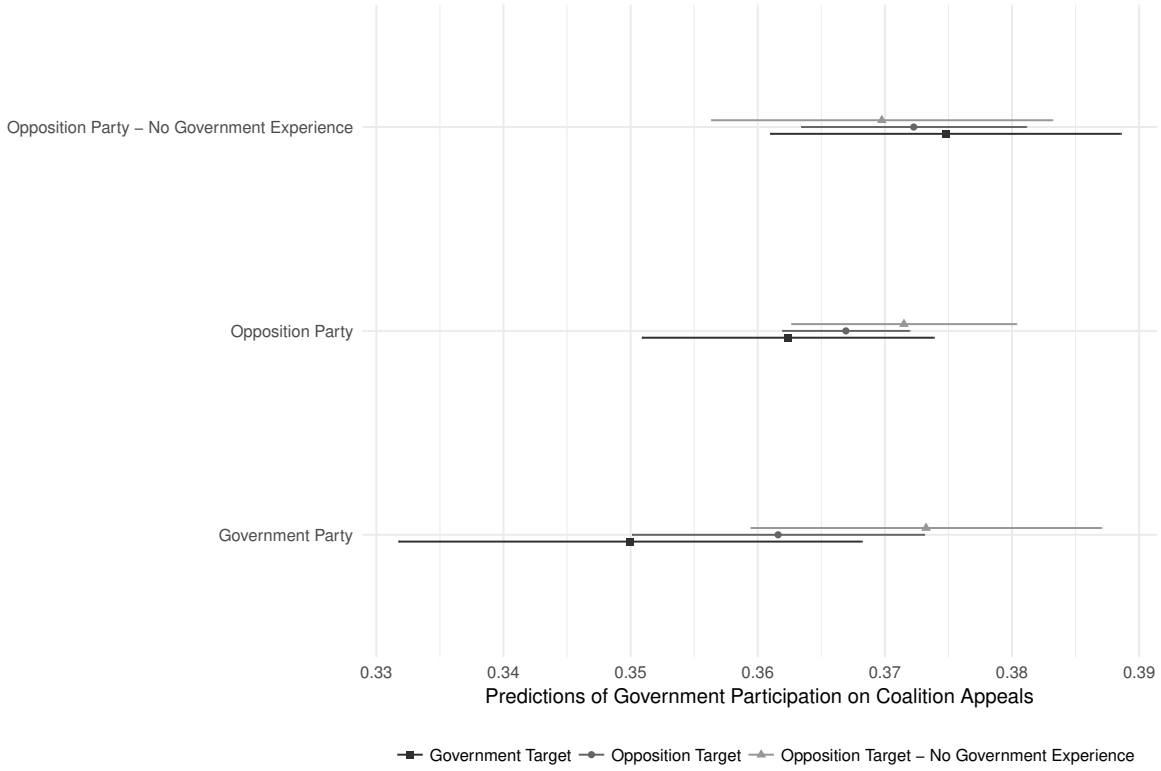
Figure 5.5: Predicted Effect of Coalition Potential on Coalition Appeals (H1)



Note: The solid lines demonstrate the predicted effect and the shaded areas show the 95% confidence intervals around the predicted effect. Positive values indicate that parties make positive coalition appeals to their targets, whereas negative values indicate the reverse.

To test my second hypothesis, whether government parties make more coalition appeals to opposition parties than opposition parties do towards opposition parties, I estimated an interaction between whether the party is in government; in opposition; or in opposition with no government experience; and whether the target is in government; in opposition; or in opposition with no government experience. Figure 5.6 demonstrates the predicted effects for government participation on coalition appeals. The figure shows that government parties (lowest row in Figure 5.6) differentiate the tone of their coalition appeals between government targets and opposition parties, with being most positive towards targets that have never been in government. This happens, for instance, when the Dutch Social Democrats (PvdA) are in government and send coalition appeals to the Socialist Party (SP). Opposition parties, however, do not really differentiate their tone of coalition appeals between government and opposition parties, regardless of government experience. So, Figure 5.6 only shows partly support for the second hypothesis: government parties send more coalition appeals to opposition parties. Yet, opposition parties also send more appeals to opposition parties. I therefore only find partial support for the second hypothesis.

Figure 5.6: Predicted Effect of Coalition Participation on Coalition Appeals (H2)



Note: The points demonstrate the predicted effect and the lines show the 95% confidence intervals around the predicted effect.

5.6 Robustness Checks

There are several alternative explanations for my findings. To address these, I report briefly the robustness checks that are discussed in detail in the SI. Note that the robustness checks with alternative operationalizations of variables and model specifications are discussed respectively in the Data & Measurement Section and the Method of Estimation Section.

First, the argument that parties use the parliamentary debate to scout a potential coalition partner relies on the assumption that parties plan ahead and think of their future possible partner(s). To substantiate this claim, SI 3.A presents a case study of Party Congresses of Dutch parties.[7] By reading all the speeches of the Christian Democrats (CDA), Conservative Liberals (VVD), Social Demoncrats (PvdA), Progressive Liberals (D66), the Greens (GL), and the Socialists (SP) between 1994 and 2012 (N=165), I qualitatively as-

[7] I thank Gijs Schumacher for sharing this data.

sessed whether parties talk about other parties in the context of possible coalition partners. Looking at what these parties actually saying during these congresses, I have also used the key words *coalitie* (coalition) and *kabinet* (cabinet). These words are respectively used in 50 and 118 speeches. I have read all these speeches, 121 in total (75%). Typically, parties use the word cabinet to refer to the current coalition government, and use the word coalition for multiple goals. This could be the coalition in the European Parliament, their preferred coalition, the possible coalitions based upon the electoral result or the current coalition government. When opposition parties use the word cabinet, their usually explaining how or why the current coalition government takes the wrong road ahead, whereas government parties typically refer to themselves when using this word. For instance, the Socialist party leader Jan Marijnissen in 2007 mentioned the Cabinet Balkenende IV when explaining that even though the Dutch economy was growing strong, the current coalition government did not spend attention to the one in ten households that live in poverty ("*De economie draait als 'n tierelier maar aan de armoede van één op de tien huishoudens gaat het kabinet voorbij*"), whereas party leader De Graaf of the D66 during their time in the 'purple' coalitions (1994-2002) used the word cabinet to express how much this cabinet has achieved, because the coalition parties think of the 'greater good' rather then their own ideology ("*Paars is een gewoon kabinet, geen wonderkabinet, dat hebben we altijd gezegd. Maar ook een gewoon kabinet kan veel bewerkstelligen als de ideologie aan de kant wordt gezet. Een nieuw en beter belastingstelsel, nieuwe taken voor defensie, effectievere ontwikkelingssamenwerking, een begin van milieubeleid en eindelijk een echt mestbeleid.*"). When parties, however talk about other parties and use the word coalition or cabinet, it is typically to indicate with whom they would prefer to coalesce. When the coalition government Balkenende I fell after only 86 days due to internal conflict within the new party List Pim Fortuyn, party leader Jan Peter Balkenende said in 2002 at the party congress of the Christian Democrats that the Conserverative Liberals their preferred new coalition partner was ("*... het beste met de VVD worden voortgezet*"), because the Social Democrats' manifesto was an attempt to come closer to them, but was not as vigorous as the situation needed ("*Als ik kijk naar het manifest dat de PvdA in aanvulling op haar verkiezingsprogramma heeft uitgebracht, dan zou ik dat willen typeren als een stap in onze richting, maar vervolgens ook twee stappen achteruit*"). At the same time, party leader of the PvdA Wouter Bos said at the party congress in 2003 that they strategically aimed their arrows at the Christian democrats as coalition partners during the campaign ('*wij in de campagne hadden ingezet op een coalitie met het CDA*"). Also, during these congresses, parties speak of the possibility to coalesce with new partners or parties they are working with at the local level. For instance, Labour Party Chairman Van Hulten discussed in 2007 their strategic position vis-a-vis the Socialist Party by stating that taking up a position in office without the Socialist Party would be a deathblow ("*Een PvdA in de regering met de SP in de oppositie, dat is de doodsteek voor onze partij*").

Party leader of the Greens Halsema said in 2006 that if they were in the position to negotiate or sit at the negatiotion table, the Social Democrats would always be a part of their ideal coalition ("*Je krijgt de PvdA er gratis bij*"). Hence, at these congresses, where parties talk about their future, they broaden their horizons and discuss which parties would be ideal coalition partners. SI 3.A shows more evidence for the fact that parties discuss their future coalition partners.

Secondly, in the time period of investigation, the Netherlands has seen different types of government: a minority government between 2010 and 2012 formed by the CDA and the VVD supported by Wilders' Freedom Party, a temporary government (Balkenende III) formed by the CDA and the VVD to prepare the 2006 elections, and majority governments between 1998 and 2006, and 2006 till 2010. It might be that the type of government – i.e. minority, majority or temporary coalition government – drives the results. In SI 3.E, I demonstrate the results for each cabinet separately. This did not alter the results.

Third, Schumacher et al. (2015) make the argument that it is not necessarily whether a party is currently in government or opposition, but that their experience in government matters for the strategy parties choose. I therefore estimate an interaction between government experience of the party and of the target, presented in SI 3.F. The analysis demonstrates that the more experience parties have with being in government, the more positive their appeals to inexperienced parties – i.e. a similar trend as shown by Figure 5.6: government parties send more coalition appeals to opposition parties without government experience. Simultaneously, the analysis demonstrates that if targets are very experienced with being in government, parties with little experience are more likely to send positive coalition appeals to them than experienced parties are. So, this alternative measure does not alter the results.

5.7 Discussion

Do parties flirt for coalition participation? My analyses of 20,426 party dyads in the Netherlands between 1998 and 2012 demonstrates that on average, parties do flirt: parties send coalition appeals to parties that can potentially be their coalition partner based on their issue distance and their sizes – i.e. the two most important indicators for coalition formation (Martin and Stevenson, 2001). Existing studies on PECs and coalition signals show that parties frequently explicitly state to coordinate their strategies (Blais et al., 2006; Bowler et al., 2010; Golder, 2005, 2006; Gschwend et al., 2017, 2016). My finding suggest that parties also strategize about future coalition partners in a more implicit way: the use the parliamentary debate to scan coalition potential. Parties positively mention other parties if they are ideologically closer and if their size complements their own during parliamentary debates. I theorized that parties do so to lower post-electoral formation costs. Knowing whether parties think alike and care for the same issues

makes post-electoral bargaining easier. Parties have to make less compromises if they think alike. This not only lowers search costs, but also enforcement costs, as parties that care for the same issues do not need to 'keeping tabs' (Thies, 2001) on each other. This is in line with the argument that parties aim to lower post-electoral bargaining costs and employ strategies to accomplish this (Golder, 2005, 2006; Gschwend et al., 2016; Kayser, 2003; Schleiter and Tavits, 2016; Strøm and Swindle, 2002; van der Velden and Schumacher, 2015). My study illustrates how parties explore potential to join forces before informing the voters on their coalition preferences.

Also, my finding that parties send coalition appeals underlines the importance of the legislative debates to understand party behavior. Parties seize the opportunity during the parliamentary debates to learn from what other parties state and use this to their own advantage. What they convey during this debates is a strategic consideration aimed at a certain goal (Martin and Vanberg, 2008; Proksch and Slapin, 2012). Parties are likely to use this information to craft their own strategies, for instance by changing their electoral platform, and simultaneously anticipate the behavior of the other parties. Thereby, my study also contribute to the recent studies that call for studying parties' interdependent behavior (Böhmelt et al., 2016; Williams, 2015). My results demonstrate that parties react to one another.

Moreover, my finding that coalition parties are more likely to send coalition appeals to opposition parties substantiates the claim that it is important to study the life cycle of a coalition to understand coalition formation (Martin and Vanberg, 2007, 2011; Strøm, 2008; Strøm et al., 2008). Oftentimes, coalition partners are not able to continue their cooperation, because some or all of the parties in the coalition have become much less popular. Nowadays, parties can rely on multiple sources of information that notifies them on their performance, such as polling data and more and more, the public's preferences via social media (Barbera, 2014; Barbera and Rivero, 2014). When parties receive cues that they themselves or their coalition partner(s) will face losses at the next election, they are likely to start looking around in search of a new future coalition partner. Therefore, coalition formation

Finally, my results that parties use the debate to screen potential coalition partners sparks questions about parties representative role in democracies. Coalition government has become the norm in Western Europe (Andersson et al., 2014), meaning that parties cannot avoid coalition formation and accompanied policy compromises. Because parties are no longer only responsive to voters, but also to other parties to increase their chances of being in office. Is responding to other parties beneficial for representation or does it jeopardize representation? This would be an important avenue for further research.

Chapter 6

Summaries

6.1 English summary

Political "Frenemies"'

Party Strategies, Electoral Competition & Coalition Cooperation

The overwhelming majority of governments formed after elections have been coalition governments, in which two or more parties cooperate. Parties, therefore, have to target their message to both the electorate and the possible future and/or current coalition partner(s). Oftentimes the preferences of voters and future and/or current coalition partner(s) do not align. This places political parties between a rock and a hard place. On the one hand, parties aim to represent their voters and to implement the policy pledges. On the other hand, parties have to account for the policy preferences of their coalition partner(s) and end up compromising some of their policy pledges. The Dutch Social Democrats (PvdA) have been fiercly punished during the most recent Dutch elections: They lost 29 of the 38 seats the party used to have. Media and pundits attributed this loss to the fact that the PvdA gave in too much of their principles to appease their coalition partner the Liberal Conservatives (VVD). Simultaneously, the Cabinet Rutte II, consisting of both the PvdA and the VVD, was the first coalition government since 1998 to not terminate due to conflict. The PvdA might have traded-off the pledges they made towards their voters in favor of stability in the coalition. Parties in a coalition government need to weigh whether being friends with their coalition partner(s) is more beneficial than being enemies. The result of this trade-off, also referred to as the coalition dilemma, is decisive for their communication strategy. The current literature explaining changes in party

communication does not account for these trade-offs coalition government participation brings. In this thesis, I therefore pose and answer the question *how past coalition participation and future coalition considerations influence parties to change their communication*.

Political parties have multiple goals in mind when crafting their communication strategy. They want to gain votes (i.e. vote-seeking goals), as well as participate in a coalition government (i.e. office-seeking goals). Being in office yields cabinet portfolios. These are important to augment a party's influence on public policy (i.e. policy-seeking goals). Seldom are parties able to propose a strategy that accommodates all goals. Hence, parties have to trade-off vote-, office- and policy-seeking goals. In my dissertation, I argue that how parties trade-off vote,office and policy is determined by the so-called coalition dilemma (see Chapter 2). Moreover, I propose in Chapter 2 that to explain political parties' communication strategies, we have to refine our current theories and empirical strategies. First of all, I state that our current explanations should consider government participation as an important reason for parties to change their communication. Especially, because coalition participation changes how parties weigh their goals. Parties in a coalition government cannot only listen to the voters, but they also need to make sure not to alienate their coalition partner(s). Second, I argue that to understand party communication strategies, we should study inter-party responsiveness instead of assuming all parties making independent decisions. For example, in Germany, parties oftentimes send coalition signals, indicating to voters that if those parties gain a majority, they aim to coalesce. In order to send these coalition signals, parties have to cooperate and align strategies. Third, I pose that in order to understand how the coalition dilemma affects party communication, we should broaden the scope of party communication. While most studies have looked at parties' manifesto's, there is a multitude of documents in which parties propose policy alternatives. These other documents are important because the trade-off between the party's goals might have changed over the course of the electoral cycle and that will be reflected in these documents. In Chapter 3, Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 I refine the existing theories, use novel data and innovative empirical strategies to answer how past coalition participation and future coalition considerations influence parties to change their communication.

In Chapter 3, I investigate how party communication in-between election periods changes. On an almost daily basis, opinion polls update political parties on their virtual performance - have they gained or lost seats in the polls? Do parties change their communication based on this information? And do coalition government and opposition parties respond similarly to this information? These are the central questions I answer in this chapter. I conduct automatic text analysis using >20,000 press releases issued by Dutch political parties between 1997 and 2014. Using quantitative methods, I demonstrate that both coalition government and opposition parties do not alter their communication based on gains or losses in the polls.

Opposition parties, however, do respond to gaining (losing) seats in the actual elections: losing seats leads them to change their platform. Coalition government parties seem to not care about vote goals when they craft their press releases. The results of Chapter 3 thus show that coalition government and opposition parties weigh their goals differently when they decide on their communication strategy.

Chapter 4 examines the conditions under which coalition government parties converge or diverge their election manifesto. In this chapter, I analyze 3,766 election manifesto's of 11 Western European countries where coalition governments are the norm in the period 1960 till 2013. Based on the statistical analyses I conduct, I conclude that government parties stick together when inter-party cooperation works. This is reinforced by familiarity between two coalition parties and by the absence of inter-party conflict. Second, government parties stick together when they are popular. Conversely, coalition partners drift apart because of conflict or predicted electoral losses. These findings of Chapter 4 underpin the critique I voiced in Chapter 2, where I stated that we should study parties' inter-responsiveness.

In Chapter 5, I delve deeper into the possibility that parties cooperate to achieve their goals. I theorize that parties' use their tone of voice to send signals to other parties. By speaking positively about another party, the party flirts and sends the signal that they think alike and therefore would cooperate well together. Talking negatively signals the opposite. I argue in this chapter that parties use the debates to explore potential coalition partners. Empirically, I test my expectation using the Dutch parliamentary debates between 1998 and 2012. I conduct automatic text analysis to subtract parties' tone of voice. The results of the statistical analyses show that (1) parties oftentimes flirt with eachother; and (2) parties mainly send these positive signals to parties that are realistically potential coalition partners. That is, parties that are ideologically close and have sufficient electoral support. These results indicate that parties are future-oriented when it comes to coalition partner(s) and adjust their strategies to increase their own chances of coalescing with them.

Hence, using a variety of quantitative methods, my dissertation shows that the coalition dilemma alters how political parties trade-off votes, office and policy goals. Which of the goals prevails is reflected in their communication strategies and therefore in the policies they propose and implement once in a coalition government.

6.2 Nederlandse samenvatting

Politieke "Concullega's"

Partij Strategieën, Verkiezingsstrijd & Regeringsdeelname

De overgrote meerderheid van de regeringen die na de verkiezingen gevormd wordt, is op basis van een coalitie tussen twee of meerdere partijen. Dit betekent dat partijen hun boodschappen moeten afstemmen op zowel de kiezer als op mogelijke toekomstige en/of huidige coalitie partner(s). Vaak willen de kiezers en de toekomstige en/of huidige coalitie partner(s) niet hetzelfde en dit brengt politieke partijen in een lastig parket. Enerzijds willen zij hun kiezers vertegenwoordigen door het beleid dat zij tijdens de campagnes hebben beloofd in te voeren. Anderzijds moeten zij rekening houden met de wensen van hun toekomstige en/of huidige coalitie partner(s). De Partij van de Arbeid (PvdA) werd bijvoorbeeld fiks afgestraft tijdens de verkiezingen in 2017. De partij verloor 29 van de 38 zetels die zij daarvoor hadden. In de media werd dit verlies met name toegeschreven aan het feit dat de PvdA teveel naar 'de pijpen van de Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie (VVD) had gedanst' en dus de eigen beloftes niet na was gekomen. Tegelijkertijd was het kabinet Rutte II, waarin zowel de PvdA als de VVD deelnamen, het eerste kabinet dat sinds 1998 niet voortijdig gevallen is. De PvdA zou dus de overweging gemaakt kunnen hebben om stabiliteit van de regering boven de beloftes aan hun kiezers te verkiezen. Partijen moeten telkens afwegen of ze liever 'vriendjes' met hun coalitie partner(s) willen zijn of dat zij de strijd zullen aangaan ten gunste van de kiezers. Op basis van de uitkomst van deze overweging, die ook wel het *coalitie dilemma* genoemd wordt, passen zij hun boodschap aan. De huidige literatuur die probeert te verklaren wanneer politieke partijen hun communicatie aanpassen houdt doorgaans echter geen rekening met het coalitie dilemma. In dit proefschrift ga ik daarom in op de vraag *hoe voormalige coalitie deelname en toekomstige coalitieoverwegingen de communicatie strategieën van politieke partijen beïnvloeden*.

Wanneer politieke partijen hun communicatie strategieën opstellen, hebben zij meerdere doelen voor ogen. Zij willen zowel graag zoveel mogelijk stemmen binnenhalen tijdens de verkiezingen (*vote-seeking goal*), als in aanmerking komen voor de coalitie regering (*office-seeking goal*). Het 'pluche' levert namelijk ministersposten op. Ministers zijn verantwoordelijk voor het opstellen van beleid, waardoor de partij die de ministerspost bezit een grotere invloed heeft op het voorgestelde beleid (*policy-seeking goal*). Zelden kunnen politieke partijen een strategie opstellen waarbij alle drie de doelen - *vote-seeking, office-seeking and policy-seeking goals* - tegelijkertijd behaald worden. Partijen moeten dus altijd keuzes maken welke van de drie doelen op dat moment het zwaarste weegt. In mijn proefschrift beargumenteer ik dat de

afweging tussen deze drie doelen wordt beïnvloed door het zogenaamde coalitie dilemma (zie Hoofdstuk 2). Bovendien stel ik in Hoofdstuk 2 dat om de keuzes van de politieke partijen die zich in een coalitie dilemma bevinden te kunnen begrijpen, we de bestaande theorieën en onderzoeksstrategieën moeten aanpassen. Allereerst is het belangrijk om regeringsdeelname als serieuze verklaring van communicatie verandering te erkennen. Door regeringsdeelname verandert de afweging tussen de drie algemene doelen die partijen hebben. Zij hebben immers niet langer alleen rekening te houden met wat de kiezers willen, maar om te kunnen blijven regeren, moeten partijen hun boodschap ook op de coalitie partner(s) afstemmen. Ten tweede is het belangrijk om de keuzes die partijen maken niet als onafhankelijke keuzes te beschouwen, maar deze als onderling afhankelijke keuzes te analyseren. In Duitsland is het bijvoorbeeld erg gebruikelijk dat politieke partijen stembusakkoorden sluiten en dit de kiezer gedurende de campagne tijd mee te delen. Om een stembusakkoord te kunnen sluiten, dienen partijen met elkaar te overleggen en samen te werken. Dit betekent dat de booschap die een partij uit afhankelijk is van de afspraken die zij met de andere partij heeft gemaakt. Ten derde concludeer ik dat als we willen begrijpen hoe het coalitie dilemma partij communicatie beïnvloedt, het onvoldoende is om slechts de communicatie kort voor de verkiezingen te analyseren. Niet alleen omdat partijen vaker beleidsalternatieven voorstellen dan gedurende de campagne, maar vooral omdat de achterliggende doelen waarom zij bepaalde beleidsvoorstellen doen kan veranderen over de loop van de regeringstermijn. In Hoofdstuk 3, Hoofdstuk 4 en Hoofdstuk 5 werk ik iedere voorgestelde aanpassing zowel op theoretische gronden uit, alsmede gebruik ik nieuwe data bronnen en analyse methoden om veranderingen in partij communicatie te kunnen duiden.

In Hoofdstuk 3 onderzoek ik hoe partij communicatie gedurende de regeringstermijn verandert. Op regelmatige basis zien politieke partijen middels opiniepeilingen hoe zij er virtueel voorstaan - hebben zij zetels gewonnen of verloren in de peilingen? Geeft deze informatie aanleiding voor partijen tot het veranderen van hun boodschap? En reageren regerings- en oppositiepartijen op dezelfde manier op deze informatie? Dit zijn de centrale vragen die ik in dit hoofdstuk beantwoordt. Ik analyseer 20.000+ persberichten van Nederlandse politieke partijen in de periode 1997 tot 2014 middels automatische tekstanalyse. Met behulp van statistische analyses laat ik zien dat zowel regerings- als oppositiepartijen hun communicatie in persberichten niet veranderen op basis van winst of verlies in de peilingen. Oppositiepartijen reageren echter wel op verlies van zetels in de verkiezingen: zij veranderen hun boodschap na verlies in de verkiezingen. Voor regeringspartijen lijkt het doel stemmen winnen niet mee te wegen voor hun communicatie strategie in persberichten. De resultaten van Hoofdstuk 3 geven dus aan dat regerings- en oppositiepartijen andere doelen laten meewegen wanneer zij besluiten over wat zij willen communiceren.

Hoofdstuk 4 bestudeert onder welke omstandigheden regeringspartijen een overeenkomend verkiezingsprogramma voorstellen of juist voor een verkiezingsprogramma kiezen dat ver uiteenloopt. Ik analy-

seer in dit hoofdstuk 3.766 verkiezingsprogrammas uit 11 West Europese landen met een coalitieregering in de periode 1960 tot 2013. Op basis van statistische analyses concludeer ik dat regeringspartijen zich als een team opstellen wanneer zij een aangename samenwerking hebben genoten. Dat wil zeggen, regeringspartijen stellen een meer vergelijkbaar verkiezingsprogramma op als zij samen populair zijn en als ze al vaker samen (goed) hebben samengewerkt in een coalitie. Als dit niet het geval is, zijn regeringspartijen niet populair bij de kiezer of zijn de regeringspartijen in een conflict verzeild geraakt, dan stellen regeringspartijen een verkiezingsprogramma op zodat zij meer gemeen hebben met een eventuele toekomstige regeringspartner. Met de bevindingen van Hoofstuk 4 onderbouw ik mijn eerdere kritiek op de huidige literatuur over politieke partijen dat het belangrijk is om de keuzes van politieke partijen in samenhang te bestuderen.

In Hoofdstuk 5 ga ik dieper in op de mogelijkheid die partijen hebben om samen te werken om hun doelen te bereiken. Ik stel dat door middel van positief of negatief over elkaar praten tijdens parlementaire debatten, politieke partijen signalen zenden. Een andere partij het hof maken is een teken dat zij het samen eens zijn en dus goed zouden kunnen samenwerken in een coalitie. Negatief praten over een andere partij signaleert het tegenovergestelde. Ik betoog in dit hoofdstuk dat politieke partijen het parlementaire debat gebruiken om uit te vinden met welke partij zij het beste een coalitieregering zouden kunnen vormen. Ik test deze stelling door de Nederlandse parlementaire debatten in de periode 1998 tot 2012 middels automatische tekstanalyse te analyseren. De statistische analyses tonen dat (1) politieke partijen elkaar regelmatig het hof maken; en (2) dat partijen voornamelijk erg positief praten over partijen waarmee het ook mogelijk is een coalitie te vormen. Dat wil zeggen, partijen die eenzelfde ideologische standpunten voorstaan en partijen die voldoende steun van de kiezers hebben. Deze resultaten geven aan dat partijen lang voor de verkiezingen al bezig zijn met mogelijke coalitieformaties, en, vervolgens ook strategieën opstellen om de eigen kansen te vergroten om met de voorgenomen coalitiepartner(s) de regering te vormen.

Middels verschillende statistische analyses laat mijn proefschrift dus zien dat het coalitie dilemma verandert hoe politieke partijen de verschillende doelen die zij willen behalen afwegen. Dit heeft consequenties voor de verkiezingsprogramma's die zij opstellen en dus ook voor het uiteindelijke beleid dat regeringen zullen uitvoeren.

Bibliography

Abou-Chadi, T. (2016). Niche Party Success and Mainstream Party Policy Shifts – How Green and Radical Right Parties Differ in Their Impact. *British Journal of Political Science 46*(2), 417–436.

Achen, C. (2000). Why Lagged Dependent variables Can Suppress the Explanatory Power of Other Independent Variables.

Adams, J. (2012, jun). Causes and Electoral Consequences of Party Policy Shifts in Multiparty Elections: Theoretical Results and Empirical Evidence. *Annual Review of Political Science 15*(1), 401–419.

Adams, J., M. Clark, L. Ezrow, and G. Glasgow (2004). Understanding Change and Stability in Party Ideologies: Do Parties Respond to Public Opinion or to Past Election Results? *British Journal of Political Science 34*(4), 589–610.

Adams, J., M. Clark, L. Ezrow, and G. Glasgow (2006). Are Niche Parties Fundamentally Different from Mainstream Parties? The Causes and the Electoral Consequences of Western European Parties' Policy Shifts, 1976–1998. *American Journal of Political Science 50*(3), 513–529.

Adams, J. and L. Ezrow (2009). Who Do European Parties Represent? How Western European Parties Represent the Policy Preferences of Opinion Leaders. *The Journal of Politics 71*(01), 206–223.

Adams, J., L. Ezrow, S. Merrill, and Z. Somer-Topcu (2012). Does Collective Responsibility for Performance Alter Party Strategies? Policy-Seeking Parties in Proportional Systems. *British Journal of Political Science 43*(01), 1–23.

Adams, J., L. Ezrow, and C. Wlezien (2016). The Company You Keep: How Voters Infer Party Positions on European Integration from Governing Coalition Arrangements. *American Journal of Political Science 60*(4), 811–823.

Adams, J., A. B. Haupt, and H. Stoll (2008). What Moves Parties?: The Role of Public Opinion and Global Economic Conditions in Western Europe. *Comparative Political Studies 42*(5), 611–639.

Adams, J. and S. Merrill III (2009, mar). Policy-Seeking Parties in a Parliamentary Democracy with Proportional Representation: A Valence-Uncertainty Model. *British Journal of Political Science 39*(03), 539.

Adams, J. and Z. Somer-Topcu (2009). Policy Adjustment by Parties in Response to Rival Parties' Policy Shifts: Spatial Theory and the Dynamics of Party Competition in Twenty-Five Post-War Democracies. *British Journal of Political Science 39*(04), 825–846.

American Political Science Association (1950). A Report of the Committee on Political Parties: Toward a More Responsible Two-Party System. *American Political Science Review 44*(3), 303–306.

Andersson, S., T. Bergman, and S. Ersson (2014). The European Representative Democracy Data Archive, Release 3. Technical report.

Armingeon, K., L. Knöpfel, D. Weisstanner, and S. Engler (2014). Comparative Political Data Set I: 1960-2012.

Askham-Christensen, J. (2012). *The Logic of Political Competition and Government Responsiveness in Parliamentary Systems*. Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark.

Asp, K. (1983). The Struggle for the Agenda: Party Agenda, Media Agenda, and Voter Agenda in the 1979 Swedish Election Campaign. *Communication Research 10*(3), 333–355.

Axelrod, R. M. (1984). *The Evolution of Cooperation*. Basic Books, Inc., Publishers.

Bäck, H., M. Debus, and P. Dumont (2011). Who gets what in coalition governments? Predictors of portfolio allocation in parliamentary democracies. *European Journal of Political Research 50*(4), 441–478.

Bakker, R., C. de Vries, E. Edwards, L. Hooghe, S. Jolly, G. Marks, J. Polk, J. Rovny, M. Steenbergen, and M. A. Vachudova (2012, nov). Measuring party positions in Europe: The Chapel Hill expert survey trend file, 1999-2010. *Party Politics 21*(1), 143–152.

Barbera, P. (2014). Birds of the Same Feather Tweet Together: Bayesian Ideal Point Estimation Using Twitter Data. *Political Analysis*, mpu011–.

Barbera, P. and G. Rivero (2014). Understanding the Political Representativeness of Twitter Users. *Social Science Computer Review 33*(6), 712–729.

Bardi, L., S. Bartolini, and A. H. Trechsel (2014). Responsive and Responsible? The Role of Parties in Twenty-First Century Politics. *West European Politics 37*(2), 235–252.

Bartolini, S. and P. Mair (2001). Challenges to Contemporary Political Parties. In L. Diamonds and R. Gunther (Eds.), *Political Parties and Democracy*, pp. 326–43. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Bawn, K. and Z. Somer-Topcu (2012). Government versus Opposition at the Polls: How Governing Status Affects the Impact of Policy Positions. *American Journal of Political Science 56*(2), 433–446.

Beck, N. and J. N. Katz (1995). What to do (and not to do) with Time-Series Cross-Section Data. *The American Policital Science Review 89*(3), 634–647.

Bendor, J., D. Diermeier, D. A. Siegel, and M. M. Ting (2011). *A Behavioral Theory of Elections*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Benoit, K., P. Nulty, K. Watanabe, B. Lauderdale, A. Obeng, P. Barberá, and W. Lowe (2016). Package 'quanteda': Quantitative Analysis of Textual Data.

Berkowitz, D. and D. B. Adams (1990). Information Subsidy and Agenda-Building in Local Television News. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly 67*(4), 723–731.

Bischof, D. and M. Wagner (2017). What makes parties adapt to voter preferences? The role of party organisation, goals and ideology. *British Journal of Political Science*, 1–14.

Blais, A., J. H. Aldrich, I. H. Indridason, and R. Levine (2006). Do Voters Vote For Government Coalitions?: Testing Downs' Pessimistic Conclusion. *Party Politics 12*(6), 691–705.

Böhmelt, T., L. Ezrow, R. Lehrer, and H. Ward (2016). Party Policy Diffusion. *American Political Science Review 110*(02), 397–410.

Bowler, S., J. A. Karp, and T. Donovan (2010). Strategic coalition voting: Evidence from New Zealand. *Electoral Studies 29*(3), 350–357.

Brambor, T., W. R. Clark, and M. Golder (2006). Understanding Interaction Models: Improving Empirical Analyses. *Political Analysis 14*(01), 63–82.

Brandenburg, H. (2002). Who Follows Whom?: The Impact of Parties on Media Agenda Formation in the 1997 British General Election Campaign. *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics 7*(3), 34–54.

Browne, E. C. and M. Franklin (1973). Aspects of Coalition Pay-offs in European Parliamentary Democracies. *American Political Science Review 67*(2), 453–469.

Budge, I. (1994, jan). A New Spatial Theory of Party Competition: Uncertainty, Ideology and Policy Equilibria Viewed Comparatively and Temporally. *British Journal of Political Science 24*(04), 443.

Budge, I., L. Ezrow, and M. D. McDonald (2010). Ideology, Party Factionalism and Policy Change: An integrated dynamic theory. *British Journal of Political Science 40*(04), 781–804.

Budge, I. and D. Farlie (1983). *Explaining and Predicting Elections: Issue Effects and Party Strategies in Twenty-three Democracies*. Unwin Hyman.

Cahill, C. and J. Adams (2015). Do Governing Coalition Partners Converge on Their Issue Positions? An Analysis of the Chapel Hill Expert Survey Data from 16 European Party Systems, 2006-2010.

Carroll, R. and G. W. Cox (2011, sep). Shadowing Ministers: Monitoring Partners in Coalition Governments. *Comparative Political Studies 45*(2), 220–236.

Clark, M. (2009). Valence and electoral outcomes in Western Europe, 1976–1998. *Electoral Studies 28*(1), 111–122.

Cox, G. (2006). The Organization of Democratic Legislatures. In B. R. Weingast and D. Wittman (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Economy*, pp. 141–61. Oxford University Press.

Cranmer, S. J., B. A. Desmarais, and E. J. Menninga (2012). Complex Dependencies in the Alliance Network. *Conflict Management and Peace Science 29*(3), 279–313.

Daalder, H. (1992). A Crisis of Party? *Scandinavian Political Studies 15*, 269–88.

Daschmann, G. (2000). Vox Pop & Polls: The Impact of Poll Results and Voter Statements in the Media on the Perception of a Climate of Opinion. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research 12*(2), 160–181.

De Nooy, W. and J. Kleinnijenhuis (2013). Polarization in the Media During an Election Campaign: A Dynamic Network Model Predicting Support and Attack Among Political Actors. *Political Communication 30*(1), 117–138.

de Swaan, A. (1973). *Coalition Theories and Cabinet Formation*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

De Vries, C. E. and S. B. Hobolt (2012). When dimensions collide: The electoral success of issue entrepreneurs. *European Union Politics 13*(2), 246–268.

De Winter, L., A. Timmermans, and P. Dumont (2000). Belgium: On Goverment Agreements, Evangelists, Followers, and Heretics. In W. C. Müller and K. W. Strom (Eds.), *Coalition Government in Western Europe*, pp. 300–355. Oxford University Press.

Decker, F. and V. Best (2010). Looking for Mr. Right? A Comparative Analysis of Parties' 'Coalition Statements' prior to the Federal Elections of 2005 and 2009. *German Politics 19*(2), 164–182.

Döring, H. and P. Manow (2015). Parliaments and governments database (ParlGov): Information on parties, elections and cabinets in modern democracies.

Downs, A. (1957). *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York, NY: Harper and Row.

Drummond, A. J. (2006). Electoral Volatility and Party Decline in Western Democracies: 1970–1995. *Political Studies 54*(3), 628–647.

Ecker, A. and T. M. Meyer (2015). The duration of government formation processes in Europe. *Research & Politics 2*(4), 1–9.

Electoral Reform Society (2010). The UK General Election 2010 In-depth. Technical report.

Erikson, R. S., M. B. Mackuen, and J. A. Stimson (2002). *The Macro Polity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Erikson, R. S., P. M. Pinto, and K. T. Rader (2014). Dyadic Analysis in International Relations: A Cautionary Tale. *Political Analysis 22*(4), 457–463.

Erikson, R. S. and C. Wlezien (2012). Markets vs. polls as election predictors: An historical assessment. *Electoral Studies 31*(3), 532–539.

Esser, F. and J. Strömbäck (2014). *Mediatization of Politics. Understanding the Transformation of Western Democracies*. Palgrave Macmillan UK.

Fagerholm, A. (2015). Why Do Political Parties Change their Policy Positions? A Review. *Political Studies Review 14*(4), 1–11.

Falco-Gimeno, A. (2014). The use of control mechanisms in coalition governments: The role of preference tangentiality and repeated interactions. *Party Politics 20*(3), 341–356.

Falcó-Gimeno, A. and I. H. Indridason (2013). Uncertainty, Complexity, and Gamson's Law: Comparing Coalition Formation in Western Europe. *West European Politics 36*(1), 221–247.

Fernandes, J. M., F. Meinfelder, and C. Moury (2016). Wary Partners: Strategic Portfolio Allocation and Coalition Governance in Parliamentary Democracies. *Comparative Political Studies 49*(9), 1270–1300.

Fortunato, D. (2015). Legislative Review and Party Differentiation in Coalition Governments.

Fortunato, D. (2017). The Electoral Implications of Coalition Policy-Making. *British Journal of Political Science*, 1–35.

Fortunato, D. and J. Adams (2015). How voters' perceptions of junior coalition partners depend on the prime minister's position. *European Journal of Political Research 54*(3), 601–621.

Fortunato, D. and R. T. Stevenson (2013). Perceptions of Partisan Ideologies: The Effect of Coalition Participation. *American Journal of Political Science 57*(2), 459–477.

Franklin, C. H. (1991). Eschewing Obfuscation? Campaigns and the Perception of U.S. Senate Incumbents. *American Political Science Review 85*(4), 1193–1214.

Franklin, M. N. and T. T. Mackie (1983). Familiarity and Inertia in the Formation of Governing Coalitions in Parliamentary Democracies. *British Journal of Political Science 13*(3), 275–98.

Geer, J. G. (1996). *From Tea Leaves to Opinion Polls. A Theory of Democratic Leadership*. Columbia University Press.

Golder, M. and J. Stramski (2010, jan). Ideological Congruence and Electoral Institutions. *American Journal of Political Science 54*(1), 90–106.

Golder, S. N. (2005). Pre-electoral coalitions in comparative perspective: A test of existing hypotheses. *Electoral Studies 24*(4), 643–663.

Golder, S. N. (2006). Pre-Electoral Coalition Formation in Parliamentary Democracies. *British Journal of Political Science 36*(02), 193–212.

Green, J. and S. B. Hobolt (2008). Owning the issue agenda: Party strategies and vote choices in British elections. *Electoral Studies 27*(3), 460–476.

Green-Pedersen, C. (2007). The Growing Importance of Issue Competition: The Changing Nature of Party Competition in Western Europe. *Political Studies 55*(3), 607–628.

Greene, W. H. (1990). *Econometric Analysis*. Pearson.

Greene, Z. (2016a). Competing on the issues: How experience in government and economic conditions influence the scope of parties policy messages. *Party Politics 22*(6), 809–822.

Greene, Z. (2016b). How Intra-Party Disagreement Determines Issue Diversity in Election Manifestos.

Greene, Z. and M. Haber (2015). Leadership Competition and Disagreement at Party National Congresses. *British Journal of Political Science 46*(3), 611–632.

Greene, Z. and C. B. Jensen (2014). Manifestos, salience and junior ministerial appointments. *Party Politics 22*(3), 382–392.

Grimmer, J. (2010). A Bayesian Hierarchical Topic Model for Political Texts : Measuring Expressed Agendas in Senate Press Releases. *Political Analysis 18*(1), 1–35.

Grimmer, J. and B. M. Stewart (2013). Text as Data: The Promise and Pitfalls of Automatic Content Analysis Methods for Political Texts. *Political Analysis 21*, 267–297.

Gschwend, T. and M. Hooghe (2008). Should I stay or should I go? An experimental study on voter responses to pre-electoral coalitions. *European Journal of Political Research 47*(5), 556–577.

Gschwend, T., M. F. Meffert, and L. F. Stoetzer (2017). Weighting Parties and Coalitions: How Coalition Signals Influence Voting Behavior. *The Journal of Politics*, 000–000.

Gschwend, T., L. Stoetzer, and S. Zittlau (2016). What drives rental votes? How coalitions signals facilitate strategic coalition voting. *Electoral Studies 44*, 293–306.

Hänggli, R. and H. Kriesi (2010). Political Framing Strategies and Their Impact on Media Framing in a Swiss Direct-Democratic Campaign. *Political Communication 27*(2), 141–157.

Harmel, R., U. Heo, A. Tan, and K. Janda (1995). Performance, leadership, factions and party change: An empirical analysis. *West European Politics 18*(1), 1–33.

Harmel, R. and K. Janda (1994). An Integrated Theory of Party Goals and Party Change. *Journal of Theoretical Politics 6*(3), 259–287.

Haselmayer, M., T. M. Meyer, and M. Wagner (2015). Who gets into the papers? Media attention to party communication in election campaigns.

Haselmayer, M., M. Wagner, and T. M. Meyer (2017). Partisan bias in message selection: media gatekeeping of party press releases. *Political Communication*.

Helbling, M. and A. Tresch (2011). Measuring party positions and issue salience from media coverage: Discussing and cross-validating new indicators. *Electoral Studies 30*(1), 174–183.

Helfer, L. and P. van Aelst (2016). What Makes Party Messages Fit for Reporting? An Experimental Study of Journalistic News Selection. *Political Communication 33*(1), 59–77.

Hersh, E. D. and B. F. Schaffner (2013). Targeted Campaign Appeals and the Value of Ambiguity. *The Journal of Politics 75*(02), 520–534.

Hill, K. Q. and P. A. Hurley (2002). Symbolic Speeches in the U.S. Senate and Their Representational Implications. *The Journal of Politics 64*(1), 219–231.

Hillygus, D. S. and T. G. Shields (2009). *The Persuadable Voter: Wedge Issues in Presidential Campaigns*. Princeton University Press.

Hobolt, S. B. and C. E. de Vries (2015). Issue Entrepreneurship and Multiparty Competition. *Comparative Political Studies 48*(9), 1159–1185.

Hopmann, D. N., C. Elmelund-Praestekaer, E. Albaek, R. Vliegenthart, and C. H. d. Vreese (2010). Party media agenda-setting: How parties influence election news coverage. *Party Politics 18*(2), 173–191.

Hunter, D. R., P. N. Krivitsky, and M. Schweinberger (2012). Computational Statistical Methods for Social Network Models. *Journal of computational and graphical statistics : a joint publication of American Statistical Association, Institute of Mathematical Statistics, Interface Foundation of North America 21*(4), 856–882.

Jennings, W. and C. Wlezien (2016). The Timeline of Elections: A Comparative Perspective. *American Journal of Political Science 60*(1), 219–233.

Kaplan, N., D. K. Park, and T. N. Ridout (2006). Dialogue in American Political Campaigns? An Examination of Issue Convergence in Candidate Television Advertising. *American Journal of Political Science 50*(3), 724–736.

Katz, R. S. and P. Mair (1994). *How Parties Organize: Change and Adaptation in Party Organizations in Western Democracies*. SAGE Publications.

Kayser, M. A. (2003). Who Surfs, Who Manipulates? The Determinants of Opportunistic Election Timing and Electorally Motivated Economic Intervention.

Kenny, D. A., D. A. Kashy, W. L. Cook, and J. A. Simpson (2006). *Dyadic Data Analysis*. The Guilford Press.

Kleinnijenhuis, J. and J. a. D. Ridder (1998). Issue news and electoral volatility. *European Journal of Political Research 33*(3), 413–437.

Klingemann, H.-D., A. Volkens, J. Bara, I. Budge, and M. D. McDonald (2006). *Mapping Policy Preferences II*. Oxford University Press.

Klüver, H. and J.-J. Spoon (2016a). Challenges to multiparty governments. *Party Politics*, 135406881562739.

Klüver, H. and J.-J. Spoon (2016b). Challenges to multiparty governments: How governing in coalitions affects coalition parties responsiveness to voters. *Party Politics*, 1–11.

König, T., G. Tsebelis, and M. Debus (2010). *Reform Processes and Policy Change: Veto Players and Decision-Making in Modern Democracies*. Springer.

Kriesi, H., E. Grande, R. Lachat, M. Dolezal, S. Bornschier, and T. Frey (2006). Globalization and the transformation of the national political space: Six European countries compared. *European Journal of Political Research 45*(6), 921–956.

Kriesi, H., E. Grande, R. Lachat, M. Dolezal, S. Bornschier, and T. Frey (2008). *West European Politics in the Age of Globalization*. Cambridge University Press.

Laakso, M. and R. Taagepera (1979). The 'Effective' Number of Parties: A Measure with Application to West Europe. *Comparative Political Studies 12*(1), 3–27.

Laver, M. (1998). Models of Government Formation. *Annual Review of Political Science 1*(1), 1–25.

Laver, M. (2003). GOVERNMENT TERMINATION. *Annual Review of Political Science 6*, 23–40.

Laver, M. (2005). Policy and the Dynamics of Political Competition. *The American Political Science Review 99*(2), pp. 263–281.

Laver, M. and E. Sergenti (2012). *Party Competition: An Agent-Based Model*. Princeton University Press.

Laver, M. and K. A. Shepsle (1990). Coalitions and Cabinet Government. *The American Policital Science Review 84*(3), 873–890.

Laver, M. and K. A. Shepsle (1996). *Making and Breaking Governments: Cabinets and Legislatures in Parliamentary Democracies*. Cambridge University Press.

Laver, M. J. and N. Schofield (1990). *Multiparty government:The politics of coalition in Europe*. Oxford University Press.

Leiserson, M. (1968). Factions and coalitions in one-party Japan: An interpretation based on the theory of games. *American Political Science Review 62*, 70–87.

Lipset, S. M. and S. Rokkan (1967). *Party Systems and Voter Alignments: Cross-National Perspectives*. Toronto: The Free Press.

Lowe, W., K. Benoit, S. Mikhaylov, and M. Laver (2011). Scaling Policy Preferences from Coded Political Texts. *Legislative Studies Quarterly 36*(1), 123–155.

Lupia, A. and K. W. Strøm (1995). Coalition Termination and the Strategic Timing of Parliamentary Elections. *The American Political Science Review 89*(3), 648–665.

Mair, P. (2008, jan). The Challenge to Party Government. *West European Politics 31*(1-2), 211–234.

Mancosu, M. and C. Vezzoni (2017). Actor-Partner Interdependence Models (APIM) and Voting Behavior: Methodology and Applications. *Political Psychology*.

Maoz, Z. and Z. Somer-Topcu (2010). Political Polarization and Cabinet Stability in Multiparty Systems: A Social Networks Analysis of European Parliaments, 1945–98. *British Journal of Political Science 40*(04), 805–833.

Martin, L. W. and R. T. Stevenson (2001). Government Formation in Parliamentary Democracies. *American Journal of Political Science 45*(1), 33–50.

Martin, L. W. and R. T. Stevenson (2010). The Conditional Impact of Incumbency on Government Formation. *American Political Science Review 104*(03), 503–518.

Martin, L. W. and G. Vanberg (2004). Policing the Bargain: Coalition Government and Parliamentary Scrutiny. *American Journal of Political Science 48*(1), 13–27.

Martin, L. W. and G. Vanberg (2007). A Robust Transformation Procedure for Interpreting Political Text. *Political Analysis 16*(1), 93–100.

Martin, L. W. and G. Vanberg (2008). Coalition Government and Political Communication. *Political Research Quarterly 61*(3), 502–516.

Martin, L. W. and G. Vanberg (2011). *Parliaments and Coalitions: The Role of Legislative Institutions in Multiparty Governance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Marx, P. and G. Schumacher (2013). Will to Power? Social Democratic Parties at War over Unemployment Policies in Spain, Netherlands and Germany 1975-2010. *European Political Science Review 5*(1), 151–173.

Mattila, M. and T. Raunio (2004). Does winning pay? Electoral success and government formation in 15 West European countries. *European Journal of Political Research 43*, 263–285.

McCombs, M. E. and D. L. Shaw (1972). The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media. *Public Opinion Quarterly 36*(2), 176.

Meffert, M. F., S. Huber, T. Gschwend, and F. U. Pappi (2011). More than wishful thinking: Causes and consequences of voters' electoral expectations about parties and coalitions. *Electoral Studies 30*(4), 804–815.

Meguid, B. M. (2005). Competition Between Unequals: The Role of Mainstream Party Strategy in Niche Party Success. *American Political Science Review 99*(03), 347–359.

Meguid, B. M. (2009). *Party Competition Between Unequals. Strategies and Electoral Fortunes in Western Europe*. Cambridge University Press.

Meyer, T. M. and M. Wagner (2016). Issue engagement in election campaigns: the impact of electoral incentives and organizational constraints. *Political Science Research and Methods 4*(3), 555–571.

Mitchell, D.-G. (2012, apr). It's About Time: The Lifespan of Information Effects in a Multiweek Campaign. *American Journal of Political Science 56*(2), 298–311.

Mohammad, S. M. and P. D. Turney (2013). Crowdsourcing a Word-Emotion Association Lexicon. *Computational Intelligence 29*(3), 436–465.

Monroe, B. L., M. P. Colaresi, and K. M. Quinn (2008). Fightin' Words: Lexical Feature Selection and Evaluation for Identifying the Content of Political Conflict. *Political Analysis 16*(4), 372–403.

Mudde, C. (2004). The Populist Zeitgeist. *Government and Opposition 39*(4), 542–563.

Müller, W. C. and T. M. Meyer (2010). Meeting the Challenges of Representation and Accountability in Multi-party Governments. *West European Politics 33*(5), 1065–1092.

Müller, W. C. and K. W. Strøm (1999). *Policy, Office, or Votes? How Political Parties in Western Europe Make Hard Decisions*. Cambridge University Press.

Müller, W. C. and K. W. Strøm (2000). *Coalition Governments in Western Europe*. Oxford University Press.

Nannestad, P. and M. Paldam (2002). The cost of ruling: A foundation stone for two theories. In H. Dorussen and M. Taylor (Eds.), *Economic voting*, pp. 17–44. London: Routledge.

Okun, A. M. (1962). Potential GNP: Its measurement and significance. *Proceedings of the Business and Economics Statistics Section 75*(2), 98–104.

Pellikaan, H., S. L. de Lange, and T. W. van der Meer (2016). The Centre Does Not Hold: Coalition Politics and Party System Change in the Netherlands, 2002-12. *Government and Opposition*, 1–25.

Pellikaan, H., S. L. D. Lange, and T. V. D. Meer (2007). Fortuyn's Legacy: Party System Change in the Netherlands. *Comparative European Politics 5*(3), 282–302.

Petrocik, J. R. (1996). Issue Ownership in Presidential Elections, with a 1980 Case Study. *American Journal of Political Science 40*(3), 825–850.

Plumper, T., V. E. Troeger, and P. Manow (2005). Panel data analysis in comparative politics: Linking method to theory. *European Journal of Political Research 44*(2), 327–354.

Powell, G. B. (2000). *Elections as Instruments of Democracy: Majoritarian and Proportional Visions*. Yale University Press.

Powell, G. B. and G. D. Whitten (1993). A Cross-National Analysis of Economic Voting : Taking Account of the Political Context. *American Journal of Political Science 37*(2), 391–414.

Proksch, S.-O. and J. B. Slapin (2009). Position Taking in European Parliament Speeches. *British Journal of Political Science 40*(03), 587–611.

Proksch, S.-O. and J. B. Slapin (2012). Institutional Foundations of Legislative Speech. *American Journal of Political Science 56*(3), 520–537.

Proksch, S.-o. and J. B. Slapin (2015). *The Politics of Parliamentary Debate. Parties, Rebels and Representation*. Cambridge University Press.

Puglisi, R. and J. M. Snyder (2011). Newspaper Coverage of Political Scandals. *The Journal of Politics 73*(03), 931–950.

Riker, W. H. (1962). *The Theory of Political Coalitions*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Sagarzazu, I. and H. Klüver (2015). Coalition Governments and Party Competition: Political Communication Strategies of Coalition Parties. *Political Science Research and Methods 5*(2), 333–349.

Sartori, G. (1976). *Parties and Party Systems: A Framework for Analysis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Schermann, K. and L. Ennser-Jedenastik (2012, jul). Explaining coalition-bargaining outcomes: Evidence from Austria, 2002-2008. *Party Politics 20*(5), 791–801.

Schleiter, P. and M. Tavits (2016). The Electoral Benefits of Opportunistic Election Timing. *Journal of Politics 78*(3), 836–850.

Schofield, N., A. D. Martin, K. M. Quinn, and A. B. Whitford (1998). Multiparty electoral competition in the Netherlands and Germany: A model based on multinomial probit. *Public Choice 97*, 257–293.

Schumacher, G. (2012). 'Marx' or the Market? Intra-party Power and Social Democratic Welfare State Retrenchment. *West European Politics 35*(5), 1024–1043.

Schumacher, G., C. E. de Vries, and B. Vis (2013). Why Do Parties Change Position? Party Organization and Environmental Incentives. *The Journal of Politics 75*(02), 464–477.

Schumacher, G., M. van de Wardt, B. Vis, and M. B. Klitgaard (2015). How Aspiration to Office Conditions the Impact of Government Participation on Party Platform Change. *American Journal of Political Science 59*(4), 1040–1054.

Sigelman, L. and E. H. Buell Jr. (2004). Avoidance or engagement? Issue convergence in presidential campaigns 1960-2000. *American Journal of Political Science 48*(4), 650–661.

Simon, A. F. (2002). *The Winning Message: Candidate Behavior, Campaign Discourse, and Democracy*. Cambridge University Press.

Somer-Topcu, Z. (2009). Timely Decisions: The Effects of Past National Elections on Party Policy Change. *The Journal of Politics 71*(01), 238.

Spoon, J.-J. (2011). *Political Survival of Small Parties in Europe*. The University of Michigan Press.

Stevenson, R. T. (2002). The Cost of Ruling, Cabinet Duration, and the "Median-Gap" Model. *Public Choice 113*, 157–178.

Stimson, J. A., M. B. Mackuen, and R. S. Erikson (1995). Dynamic Representation. *American Political Science Review 89*(3), 543–565.

Strøm, K. (2008). Communication and the Life Cycle of Parliamentary Democracy. *Political Research Quarterly 61*(3), 537–542.

Strøm, K. W., W. C. Muller, and T. Bergman (2008). *Cabinets and Coalition Bargaining*. Oxford University Press.

Strøm, K. W. and S. M. Swindle (2002). Strategic Parliamentary Dissolution. *American Journal of Political Science 96*(3), 575–591.

Strömbäck, J. (2008). Four Phases of Mediatization: An Analysis of the Mediatization of Politics. *The International Journal of Press/Politics 13*(3), 228–246.

Tavits, M. (2008). The Role of Parties' Past Behavior in Coalition Formation. *American Political Science Review 102*, 495.

Thies, M. F. (2001). Keeping Tabs on Partners: The Logic of Delegation in Coalition Governments. *American Journal of Political Science 45*(3), 580–598.

Tommasi, M., C. Scartascini, and E. Stein (2013). Veto players and policy adaptability: An intertemporal perspective. *Journal of Theoretical Politics 26*(2), 222–248.

Tsebelis, G. (1995). Decision Making in Political Systems: Veto Players in Presidentialism, Parliamentarism, Multicameralism and Multipartyism. *British Journal of Political Science 25*(03), 289–325.

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

van Atteveldt, W. (2008). *Semantic network analysis: Techniques for extracting, representing, and querying media content*. Ph. D. thesis, VU University Amsterdam.

van de Wardt, M., C. E. de Vries, and S. B. Hobolt (2014). Exploiting the Cracks: Wedge Issues in Multiparty Competition. *Journal of Politics 76*(04), 986–999.

Van Den Bosch, A., B. Busser, S. Canisius, and W. Daelemans (2007). An efficient memory-based morphosyntactic tagger and parser for Dutch. *Computational Linguistics in the Netherlands: Selected Papers from the Seventeenth CLIN Meeting*, 99–114.

van der Meer, T. W. G., A. Hakhverdian, and L. Aaldering (2016). Off the Fence, Onto the Bandwagon? A Large-Scale Survey Experiment on Effect of Real-Life Poll Outcomes on Subsequent Vote Intentions. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research 28*(1), 46–72.

van der Velden, M. A. (2014). Polling Results in the Netherlands 1965-2014.

van der Velden, M. A. and G. Schumacher (2015). Drifting Apart or Sticking Together? An analysis of party platform changes in 11 Western European countries.

van Praag, P. (1994). Conflict and Cohesion in the Dutch Labour Party. In D. S. Bell and E. Shaw (Eds.), *Conflict & Cohesion in Western European Social Democratic Parties*. London: Pinter Publishers.

Volkens, A., P. Lehman, N. Merz, S. Regel, A. Werner, and H. Schultze (2014). The Manifesto Data Collection. Manifesto Project (MRG/CMP/MARPOR). Version 2014b. Technical report.

Von Neumann, J. and O. Morgenstern (1953). *Theory of games and economic behaviour*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Walgrave, S. and P. Van Aelst (2006). The Contingency of the Mass Media's Political Agenda Setting Power: Toward a Preliminary Theory. *Journal of Communication 56*(1), 88–109.

Walter, A. S. (2014). Negative Campaigning in Western Europe: Similar or Different? *Political Studies 62*, 42–60.

Warwick, P. (1994). *Government Survival in Parliamentary Democracies*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Warwick, P. V. (1996). Coalition Government Membership in West European Parliamentary Democracies. *British Journal of Political Science 26*(4), 471–499.

Warwick, P. V. (2006). *Policy Horizons and Parliamentary Government*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Weaver, D., M. E. McCombs, and D. L. Shaw (2004). Agenda-Setting Research: Issues, Attributes, and Influences. In *Handbook of Political Communication Research*, pp. 257 – 282. Routledge.

Williams, L. K. (2015). It's all relative: Spatial positioning of parties and ideological shifts. *European Journal of Political Research 54*(1), 141–159.