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The government we deserve: do Dutch ministerial appointments respond to individualization and party-decline?

A study into ministerial selection in Dutch government cabinets in 1977-2017

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Picture: Houses of Parliament, Hofvijver, The Hague
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https://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bestand:Den_Haag,_het_Binnenhof_diverse_RM_met_de_Hofvijver_op_de_voorgrond_foto8_2015-08-05_18.56.jpg

Abstract

This thesis performs a descriptive analysis of all ministerial appointments in Dutch cabinets between 1977-2017 in order to understand find out whether societal macro-developments such as individualization, party decline and party system fragmentation influence the preference of political parties and prime ministers for the type of experience of their ministers during government formation. Although it finds no support for this theorem, this thesis does contribute to the literature by expanding previous work into the type of ministers that take seat in Dutch government. As such, it finds that while political experience dominated up to 2002, it seems to be on its retour.

This thesis attempted to find causal relationships between ministerial expertise and individualization and party decline. This analysis did not provide any usable results due to multicollinearity between the predictor-variables, but may provide some avenues for further research.

Keywords:

Ministerial selection, multiparty government, cabinet government, government formation, principal-agent approach, party decline, party system fragmentation.

Wordcount: 20.818

Acknowledgement & Foreword

This thesis started as result of pure curiosity after the Dutch general parliamentary elections of 2017. As result of the new coalition-agreement, the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food quality was reinstated, five years after it had been merged with the Ministry of Economic Affairs. This move struck me as odd, and as I embarked on a journey to find out more about this secretive process that is called 'government formation', I found out that relatively little had been written about how those taking office after government formation actually are selected.

This curiosity is the same that once made me choose for the HBO-bachelor journalism: I wanted to study the world around me. But when I finished, I felt that I knew how to write, but still barely was able to scratch the surface of what makes our environment the way it is. The desire to get a better understanding of society and the mechanisms and philosophies behind it drove me to Nijmegen University.

Five years of journalism-education taught me how to observe the mechanisms of power. Two years of education gave me the theoretical background to begin to understand the foundations of the 'big world', half a year of internship with the Netherlands Embassy in Georgia allowed me for to take a peek into the kitchen of politics. Now, basically one-and-half year after the topic sprouted from my mind, this thesis represents the result of my research, and the finale to this phase of my learning-curve. It proved to be almost as tedious as the process of coalition formation itself: you never really get what you want.

Unfortunately, I was not able to find an answer to the questions underlying this thesis. Yet, I hope that this thesis will prove that I can do what is needed to get me what I want, and what motivated me to add another three years of education to my resumé: a master-degree in Political Science at the Radboud University Nijmegen. Writing this thesis taught me a lot, both about myself as well as the field of Political Science and I believe that my experiences during my time at Radboud University have been an indispensable contribution to my skillset.

Finally, I want to use this place to thank those who have patiently and tirelessly supported me during writing this thesis: first and foremost my thesis-supervisor Monique Leyenaar, who encouraged me to think outside the box, but also quite often had to slow me down when I my plan went all over the place. This thesis would also not have been possible without the help of the *Parlementair Documentatie Centrum* attached to Leiden University, who provided me with biographic data of over 235 individual ministers, free of charge. I would also like to thank my parents, who supported me through the entire period, even though I suddenly left for Georgia for a half year; My former co-students, who were never unwilling to answer a question; And last but not least Afstudeerbegeleider.nl for helping me out on such a short notice when I was stuck.

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1. Introduction

'The Profession of Government Minister in Western Europe', the seminal work by Jean Blondel and Jean-Louis Thiebault, (1991) was one of the first integral studies into the background of government ministers in European cabinet governments. It found that most ministers in Europe were accomplished parliamentarians with a long track record in their own party. This finding also reaffirmed the classical characterization of one of the key functions of political parties as, amongst others, breeding grounds of the next political and executive elites (Blondel & Thiebault, 1991).

As the second decade of the 21st century comes to a close, this role may not be as self-evident anymore. The position of political parties in society and politics has been the focal point of much scholarly work. Political parties have not been spared of the effects individualization had on the mass organizations in Western societies (Van Biezen, Mair & Potguntke, 2011). Party system fragmentation (Mair, 2002), Europe-wide declining party membership (Delwit, 2011) and macro-processes such as personalization (Rahat & Shaefer, 2007), mediatization (Strömbäck, 2008), the rise and institutionalization of populist challenger parties (Chairamonte & Emanuele, 2019), and the battle for voters' attention with those parties (Meijers, 2017) are said to have altered the relevance of political parties in the relation between citizen and state (Gauja, 2013). Indeed, as institution, the political party has undergone a significant transformation and left scholars to ponder over the future of political parties (Van Biezen, Mair & Poguntke, 2011), or even posed the question whether the political party is losing relevance as institution on today's political stage (Mair, 2005).

However, in most European polities political parties still provide most of the executive elite. At the national level, ministers with no partisan background or party-political affiliation are still relatively rare. Indeed, quite some non-partisan government Ministers and even a few Prime-Ministers took office in recent years (Pinto, Cotta & Tavares de Almeida, 2018), but this phenomenon seems to some extent restricted to experts in semi-presidential regimes and caretaker governments.

Nevertheless, if political parties and the role they play in the political process are changing, this may have implications for the government ministers that rule our democracies. Because if political parties are 'losing touch' with society, the bargaining pools with which they enter coalition formation talks may change as well. If on the contrary, political parties are adaptive organizations, able to adapt to the changed way citizens participate in politics, it is to be expected that the candidates they enter elections with changed as well. Even more, the ministerial office itself is also subject to changing demands. The tasks and responsibilities of ministers in member states of the European Union have increased over time: in addition to the classic tasks of managing a department, its officials and civil servants, and addressing issues within their portfolio during cabinet meetings, government ministers now also have duties on supranational level. Furthermore, ministers have to face other trends in society, such as increased scrutiny from media and acceleration in the pace of news-coverage (Vliegenthart, 2016), an increasingly vocal citizenry (Brants & Van Praag, 2017), increased voter-volatility (Rahat & Kenig, 2018), less stable coalitions and the presidentialization of politics (Poguntke & Webb, 2005). These developments may influence the relationships within the executive and between executive and legislative – and thus may lead parties to reconsider the candidates they put forward for these positions after general elections. But does it?

The literature on this topic seems inconclusive. Literature on party change, personalization and personal background of ministers is abundant, but stops short of if and how the aforementioned 'isms' affect the recruitment of government ministers. While Blondel and Thiebault (1991) indicated that democratization and the institutionalization of political parties led to some changes in the biographic background of ministers within the time-span studied by these authors, it remains unclear if the destabilization of the political system in the post-1990s has also altered the staffing of the ministerial

office. There is some evidence that it might have: scholars observed an increase in the number of ministers with a technical background (Bäck, Dumont, Meier, Persson & Vernby, 2009), as well as an increase in ministers with a non-partisan background (Cotta, 2018).

Because the Netherlands, in contrast to the United Kingdom, Ireland and Iceland, lacks constitutional rules barring non-parliamentary non-party candidates from office, political actors have a virtually unlimited pool of candidates of ministerial office. Due to its low electoral threshold and semi-open-list proportional representation system, the Netherlands should be relatively sensitive to the macro-changes mentioned above. Up until now, a study similar to Bäck et al. (2009) has not been carried out in the Netherlands, save for the study by Bakema and Secker in 1988.

In this thesis, I therefore study whether the macro-level changes mentioned earlier and the changed nature of the profession of government minister have had an effect on ministerial selection. I will attempt to do so by observing the development of ministerial selection in Dutch cabinets during 1977-2017, using the following research question:

> *Have macro-level developments such as individualization, personalization of politics, party system fragmentation, mediatization and the changed role of political parties in society, influenced the personal staffing of ministerial posts after elections in the Netherlands in 1977-2017?*

To answer this question, I will assemble a dataset including biographical data on all junior and senior ministers in this time frame. After, I will use this dataset to perform a descriptive analysis, aiming to uncover trends and possible causal relations in the type of experience appointees bring when they are asked to join cabinet.

This effort is structured as follows. The next chapter introduces the theoretical puzzle, provides an introduction into the current academic debate, and explores existing literature to build a theoretical framework. It will then elaborate on the relevant concepts and prevalent theories on government formation and candidate selection in the second chapter, which also introduces hypotheses and expectations. The third chapter presents the methodology used to answer the central question, and provides information on the operationalization of the involved concepts. After, I delve deeper into the gathered empirical data in chapter four with a descriptive analysis. Chapter five, finally, answers the central questions of this work, discusses the hypotheses and results, and suggests future directions of research.

By doing so, this thesis aims to contribute to the existing literature by providing an overview of the changes in the biographical backgrounds of Dutch government ministers over time, and extending the knowledge on the changes in recruitment patterns of government ministers and the changes in the role political parties fulfill in this process.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1 Introduction

If the processes briefly described in the introduction - notably party system fragmentation, declining party-membership, personalization, mediatization and the rise of populist challenger parties – have any effect on the personal staffing of ministerial posts, then this is probably dominantly an indirect effect. Government ministers are never directly elected, but are appointed by other actors. Therefore, effects of the mentioned processes on the type of minister that is installed into office are likely to be expressed as changes in preferences and strategies of those who select them. This chapter will first introduce the history of the profession of government minister, before mapping the position of the government minister in the wider constellation of political actors using the principal-agent approach. Subsequently, I will use that as a starting point to explore the literature for theoretical explanations before arriving at hypotheses to be tested in the next chapters.

2.2. The ministerial office – an overview

The office of government minister is regarded as one of the most prestigious career summits for professional politicians. The concept and interpretation of this office is not homogenous however, and has over time changed in status, significance, and tasks. Although I will probably do not do right to its empirical variety, I will attempt to provide a brief overview of the office below.

The office of government minister has been present in European polities almost uninterruptedly in the past three hundred years, although the composition of cabinet and power-relations within the ruling political elites have changed substantially. Its functions and the way of recruitment however did change. The government minister predates democracy as we know it now and historically operated as individual delegate and adviser to the Monarch - a servant, such as the original Latin word indicates (Andeweg, 2000). According to Blondel and Thiébault (1991), cabinet government came into this world as a result of a combination of the royal families' desire to stay in power, and the increasing demands from nobility and aristocracy to influence government policy. As such, the power of ministers was still largely dependent on the Monarch.

The advent of elected parliaments and universal suffrage changed the power relations between government, parliament and society, and was followed by a change in composition of cabinets. In Monarchic systems, the formal power-relation was clear: a Monarch's cabinet of ministers was primarily there to, with varying degrees of autonomy, advise the Crown, and to execute its demands. Ministers could be fired only by the head of state. As a servant to the Monarch, the prime quality for ministers was loyalty. Monarchs therefore recruited their servants from nobility and circles that had incentives to uphold the Monarchy. Non-formal principal-agent relations may have been connected to upkeeping loyalties and promises to family-members or other historical interest groups. With the gradual process of parliamentarization from the 18th Century onwards, and the transition towards democratization in the decades after, the Monarch as prime principal was gradually traded for the voter as indirect principal.

This also had its influences on the tasks of the office, and those taking seat in it. The rise of the mass-party allowed professional politicians from middle-class origin to establish an expanding foothold in the political arena. Prominent figures with roots in aristocratic or military environments increasingly made way for professional parliamentarians, technocrats and bureaucrats, although aristocrats and veterans were still well represented into the 20th Century (Aberback, Putnam & Rockman, 1981; Bakema & Secker, 1988; Blondel & Thiebault, 1991; Secker, 1994). When political parties gradually took over European parliaments around the turn of the 20th Century, they effectively dominated access to legislative leadership (Aberback, Putnam & Rockman, 1981). This later was followed by

parliamentarization of party leadership. The advent of parliamentarization also meant that the cabinet transformed into a politicized arena, adding (party-)political tasks to ministers' job description.

The latter 'task' is further amplified by increased amount of multi-party governments across Europe. As the majority of European governments are formed from multiparty coalitions, be they minimal winning, minority or surplus majority coalitions, ministers have to navigate between sometimes competing party political interests from the parliamentary factions of the coalition. This task is further complicated by the increasingly complex coalitions due to increased party fragmentation, as fragmented systems tend to produce less stable governments than less fragmented ones (Lupia & Strøm, 2008).

Through time, the ministerial office has also seen a diversification into 'sub-types' of ministers, such as the prime minister, junior minister and ministers without portfolio that co-exist next to the 'ordinary' senior or line minister, although their appearance and use is highly dependent on the institutional set-up and the political culture. Below, I will provide a brief overview of these different specialized functions.

2.2.1 Prime minister

The prime ministerial office evolved in different ways and times in separate parliamentary democracies. Prime ministerial offices have, at least in parliamentary systems, consolidated their position as the most powerful office and are usually filled by the leader of the winning party. Increasingly, prime ministers take the lead in international affairs (Lehne, 2015). With the advent of supranational organizations, the personalization of politics and deparliamentarization, the prime minister have consolidated power resources, allowing them to act increasingly autonomous relative to their political parties and coalition partners (Poguntke & Webb, 2015). Also, parliamentary elections have been increasingly framed as being an election for the next prime minister (Poguntke & Webb, 2015), a trend that was in some nations already apparent in the 1980s (Van den Berg, 1990, Van Griensven, 2016). The top-executives have varying autonomy in making policy, but the prime minister chairs the meetings of the council of ministers and ultimately is – in some polities - able to fire his ministers.

In semi-presidential systems, the prime minister's position depends on the constitutional powers of the president, as she (used from hereon as both female and unspecified gendered pronoun, as done by e.g. Bach & Veit, 2017) is in some cases appointed by the president (France) or by parliament. In these systems, the power of the prime minister largely depends on support from parliament and the amount of conflicts among parties (Passarelli, 2010). In France, the role of the prime minister is more focused at coordination, forming a hub between presidency, deputies and ministers. While in France the policy footprint of the prime ministerial office has historically been quite limited, Portuguese prime ministers are increasingly powerful political actors (Passarelli, 2010). In parliamentary systems, the actual power of a prime minister is to some extent inhibited by the degree of collegiality in the council of ministers (Andeweg, 2000).

Despite the fact that most countries now have a prime minister, the office has fairly diverging origins. In Britain, for example, Robert Walpole (1676- 1745) is often considered the country's first prime minister, after he consolidated key responsibilities to achieve cabinet unity in front of an increasingly vocal parliament, while he still was primarily responsible to the king (Hennesy, 2001). In the Netherlands, in contrast, the office of prime minister was for a long time not an established institution. Rather, since the 1848 constitution, the council of ministers was chaired by one of the line ministers on rotational basis. Initially, this was monthly, but the term was later extended to three months and later a full year (Van den Berg, 1990). By 1922, the temporal image of this chairmanship was abolished, and by 1945 the chair of the council of ministers officially was named 'minister-president', or prime minister. By then, the Prime Minister also officially headed the Ministry of General Affairs

(Van den Berg, 1990) and was thus no longer burdened by the responsibility for an own department. Only by 1983 however, the function of prime minister was included in the constitution.

2.2.2. Line- or regular senior ministers

The job of line-minister is less high profile nowadays than the prime minister, but may still be regarded as the pinnacle of the career of a politician, or an important step towards other high offices (Dowding & Dumont, 2008). As mentioned before, the office has seen a transformation from a more departmental job in monarchic times towards a combined technical and party-political profession in today's multi-party democracies.

As she is selected by and can be fired by prime minister and party-leaders, the line-minister has to navigate between sometimes competing preferences. However, her freedom to choose her own course in this process is to some extend influenced by the importance of the portfolio she holds (Berlinski, Dewan and Dowding, 2007; Bright, Döring & Little, 2015).

Naturally, differences exist between the different polities in the way this office is filled. Dowding and Dumont (2008) identified three different categories that influence the personal staffing: constitutional, party-political constraints, and strategic issues. As for the first category, in the UK, Ireland and Iceland, ministers have to be recruited from parliament, making the pool of ministeriable candidates significantly smaller. The other two are more determined by the particular coalition and environment the actors find themselves in.

2.2.3. Junior ministers

Junior ministers are a less wide-spread phenomenon in Europe compared to prime ministers and are not as ubiquitous. Of all 27 EU-member states and 7 EAA- or candidate-member states, 22 employ junior ministers or similar functions, either named 'State Secretaries, Deputy ministers, Ministers of State, Parliamentary Secretaries or Vice Ministers (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2017). Even states with the same regime type, such as the Netherlands and Denmark, differ from each other in this point. For example, in the Netherlands it is standing practice since 1949 to appoint junior ministers, or Secretaries of State, but Danish ministers have no junior minister at their disposal.

Junior ministers are more common in political systems with a history of multi-party governments. They usually have no voting rights in the council of ministers and do as a rule only attend these meetings when required. They often are responsible for specific sub-portfolios (Dumont and Verzichelli, 2015). In multi-party governments, junior ministers are regularly employed as watchdogs to keep an eye on compliance with the coalition's policy agreements when the participating parties' policy preferences clash (Dumont and Verzichelli, 2015), or the policy distance between the coalition-partners is large.

Junior ministers differ from their senior peers in that they may be pure party agents – yet, in the worst case, they answer to three different masters: party leader, PM or president, and party (Bucur, 2013). In addition, they often carry the responsibility for realizing a specific policy issue. In hierarchic systems, presidents or prime ministers may employ junior ministers to monitor senior ministers (Passarelli, 2010). However, whether they actually function as political mother-in-law may depend on the political culture of a country. For example, Bovend'Eert (1990) found that in the Dutch system junior ministers hardly ever play this role, but do function as communicator between their department and senior ministers of their party. This may be due to the already frequent contacts between council of ministers and faction leaders.

The differences in tasks and role correlate with a different occupational background. De Winter (1991) found that junior ministers are more often parliamentarians and political insiders – a fact that De Winter attributes to the generalist-nature of the occupants of this office: their occupational and

educational backgrounds require a longer 'apprenticeship' in running a department. This is confirmed by the fact that junior ministers with parliamentary background often later reappear as senior minister. Specific appointments and sub-portfolios appointed to junior ministers may also be intended as policy preference signal to other actors.

2.2.4. Minister without portfolio

The last category of ministers I wish to address is the minister without portfolio. This term is troublesome, since it has different definitions and embodies various positions, depending on the polity it is positioned in. It also does not cover the actual meaning of the office: often ministers without portfolio do have a portfolio, but 'share' it with a colleague who is the head of the department (Andeweg, 2000). In countries with frequent multi-party government, such as Spain, Italy, Israël and Estonia, a minister without portfolio can be employed to address a specific policy field (Verzichelli 2008; Real-Dato & Jerez-Mir, 2008; Dowding & Dumont, 2008), although the practice may be constitutionally banned in others, such as Lithuania and Bulgaria (Fettelschoss & Nikolenyi, 2008). However, according to Dowding and Dumont, ministers without portfolio may also be employed by prime ministers to bring more political friends into cabinet (Dowding & Dumont, 2008: 10). In contrast to a junior minister, a minister without portfolio may be allowed to vote in the council of ministers, and enjoy all the constitutional rights, responsibilities and duties of a regular minister, but has no responsibility for an actual department. In formations, they may be employed to satisfy coalition partners policy- or office-oriented concerns, or can be used to signify a government's extra attention to some policy area. In countries with single-party government and presidential systems, this type of minister is rare and sometimes controversial. In Britain, the title implied a honorary function, whereas in the Dutch political arena, a minister without portfolio can signify a special area of concern of the government (i.e. Minister for Development Aid and Minister for Science), be a result of coalition talks, or be a upgraded junior minister (Engels, 1990; Von Hagen & Harden, 1995). The function was formally introduced in the constitution in 1938, and resembled much of the office of a junior minister until 1948. In the years after however, due to the fact that a minister without portfolio has to share the budget with another department, the relation between ministers and ministers without portfolio became controversial (Engels, 1990). However, the function is still in use.

2.3: Ministers in the political universe

2.3.1. Other actors: bureaucracy, parliament and public.

Not only has the political climate changed in the last centuries, governments also expanded their tasks significantly – and consequentially, their size – to unprecedented levels, changing the nature of the departments ministers were supposed to control. According to Aberback, Putnam and Rockman (1981), these dynamics combined created an public-political universe more similar to Weber's prediction of the rise of a new class of professional politicians living from politics and the evolution of the bureaucracy into an expanding state apparatus led by technically trained professional career administrators. The bureaucracy became a force to be reckoned with, because they had more perfect knowledge on the possibilities of policy instruments. Moreover, over the years, civil servants have become political actors in their own right, susceptible to the interests of the interest groups they have entered a 'symbiotic relationship' with, through the arenas of consultative committees. (Aberback, Putnam & Rockman, 1981: 45), and therefore tend to support the status-quo.

2.3.2. Principal-agent approach and ministerial selection

Such macro-changes have changed the power-relationships in the constellation in which ministers operate. In present-day European polities, ministers have to deal with prime-minister, their fellow-ministers, their own political party, parliament, the bureaucracy of their own department, and society

at large. In addition, government ministers have responsibilities on the international stage, amongst others through the Council of the European Union.

As this thesis aims to investigate whether the ministerial office has changed under the influence of the processes mentioned in chapter 1, it is impossible to stop short of investigating whether its relations with the other actors in the political constellation have changed. The principal-agent approach (PA) has been frequently applied to analyze underlying relations in political science (Bäck et al, 2009; Dowding & Dumont, 2009; Kam et al., 2010; Fischer, Dowding & Dumont, 2012; Fleischer & Seyfried, 2015; Bäck, Debus & Müller, 2016), and may be able to shed some light on this question.

The conceptions on where to start with the PA-approach differ. Where Neto and Strøm see the policy process as "a chain of delegation from voters all the way down to civil servants who […] implement public policy" (Neto & Strøm, 2006: 624), Kaare Strøm (2000) earlier took the "parliamentary chain of delegation" in parliamentary systems as vantage point, with the voter as the key principal, which delegates its power to parliament through elections. Parliament then selects a cabinet, in which individual ministers are selected as future agents to delegate executive tasks to. This process includes extensive *ex ante* screening to reduce agency-loss and increase coherence between the policy preferences of principal and agent.

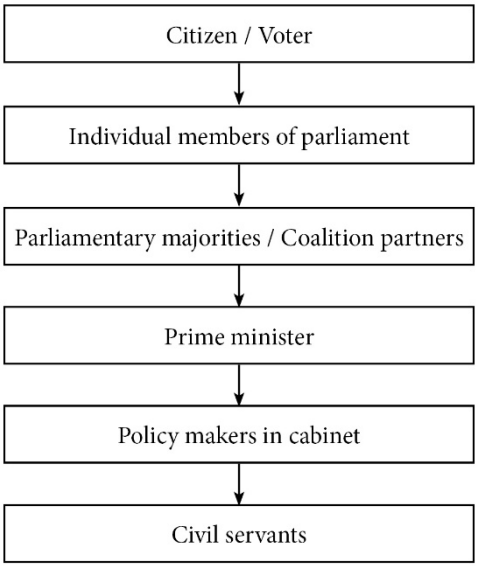


Figure 2.1: Simple "parliamentary chain of delegation": Strøm 2000.

However, the 'flow-chart' of agency-relations and the number of principals influencing ministers varies between the different institutional settings found in European polities. As PA recognizes the importance of the institutional context (Fleischer & Seyfried, 2015), I offer a brief overview of these variations here.

The most notable differences are uncovered by posing the question 'who selects?' and 'who discharges?' In the first case, the most significant contrast is that between parliamentary, semi-presidential and presidential systems. Although pure-type presidential systems are rare in European history, and currently do not exist in Europe at all, for the sake of consistency I will briefly cover this subject here as well. In a presidential system, the head of the executive branch and head of state – the president – is directly elected and selects his own cabinet of ministers. The legislature is controlled by directly elected representatives. The president is either directly elected by the people, or indirectly by peoples' representatives such as an electoral college, and as such has an own source of legitimacy, being the agent of the people. Key for 'pure' presidential republics is the mutual independence of legislative and executive branches, which have their own electoral basis of authority. The government is selected by and solely responsible to the president, although constitutional arrangements may limit the president's powers (Passarelli, 2010; Elgie, 2015), or require the upper chamber of the legislature to reject or confirm the government before it can be sworn in.

Some systems mix elements of both presidential and parliamentary systems. Save for the few cases that can be considered hybrids, such as Switzerland (Shugart, 2005), most can be classified as semi-

presidential regimes. This term, coined by Duvenger (1980) describes systems in which presidents coexists next to a prime-minister heading a cabinet of minister. Here, the concept of dual-responsibility is key; both parliament and presidency have to support a government (Passarelli, 2010), while presidency and parliament are still to some extent mutually independent. However, in this situation, parliament can remove a government by a vote of no-confidence. A large proportion of the new constitutions in former Communist countries and Africa can be characterized as this subtype (Shugart, 2005), although many of those initially came to light as fully presidential regimes (Elgie, 2015).

The semi-presidential category lacks internal consistency however. While Duvenger devised a three-fold sub-categorization of presidents with a primarily symbolic function, all-powerful presidencies, and regimes in which power is shared between presidency and parliament, Shugart (2005) proposed a two-fold distinction. Here, the difference between premier-presidential and president parliamentary systems are the president's and parliament's powers to dismiss a prime minister and cabinet, as well as the degree of influence a president has in the appointment of prime-ministers and other members of cabinet (Shugart and Carey, 1992 as cited in Protsyk, 2005). In the latter, the president is constitutionally allowed to nominate prime-ministers and line ministers to be approved by the legislature, but cannot dismiss them – thus, after investiture, they become someone else's agent. In president-parliamentary regimes, presidents have the power to both appoint and discharge prime minister as well as line ministers. While in the former case the president is formally weaker, the non-concurrent election cycle of the president backs up the legitimacy claim of the presidential office, increasing the president's bargaining power (Protsyk, 2005). Moreover, presidents may exercise some informal influence over ministerial appointments.

2.3.3. Who selects? Selection and dismissal

In the majority parliamentary and semi-presidential systems, the prime-minister decides over the composition of cabinet. She is – mostly – *the formateur,* the person who leads coalition formation negotiations after election, and has the power to dismiss and replace ministers. In some states, this is done in consultation with the head of state, be it monarch or (in)directly elected president. This means that the legislature rarely elects the executive directly (Strøm, 2000), although in some parliamentary systems the assembly does elect the prime minister, or has to approve the cabinet by investiture vote. However, in most European polities having no institutional mechanisms in place seems to be rule rather than exception (De Winter, 1991; Strøm, 2000).

That having said, the prime-minister is not the only actor of importance in these systems. Even when she is party-leader, she still often has to share the power to select with others (Fleischer & Seyfried, 2015). Save for possible constitutional limitations, she has to deal with the demands of her own political party and constituency. Even more, the type of coalition government plays a role. A distinction should be made between intermediate cabinet reshuffles and appointments after general elections: in the latter, the prime minister-to be has to take the preferences of her future-coalition partners in consideration, and thus, even extra-parliamentary parties may play a role (Fleischer & Seyfried, 2015). In single-party government, the prime minister has a relatively high degree of independence in her choice of ministers (Bäck, Dumont, Meier, Persson and Vernby, 2009). However, this type of governments is relatively less common in Europe, with the notable exceptions of Great-Britain and Spain (Müller & Strøm, 2003) and some Scandinavian states such as Sweden (Strøm, Bergman & Müller, 2010), as single-party majority government is often associated with majoritarian electoral systems. Coalitions composed of two or more political parties make up the largest share. In these cases, the PM has to negotiate the personal staffing of her cabinet with delegations of coalition parties, be they parliamentary or extra-parliamentary, a process that has received increased scholarly attention (Fleischer & Seyfried, 2015; Bright, Döring & Little, 2015). Due to the say party-leaders have in ministerial selection, the agency-relationship between cabinet minister and prime minister is

more complex (Dowding & Dumont, 2008). Also, party systems with more political parties tend to produce less stable governments.

However, for the principle-agent approach, the power to discharge a minister is also relevant. Of course, a minister can end his or her own term. Parliament also has considerable power: through a vote of no-confidence the parliament can, depending on the institutional context, either send one single minister or an entire cabinet home. Usually just the threat of such a measure is enough to get a government minister to resign. Generally, also the prime minister has the power to dismiss a minister, but in practice she has to share this power with the leadership of a minister's own political party – although the latter does not always enjoy this power formally (Bright, Döring & Little, 2015). In semi-presidential regimes and some parliamentary-monarchies, this decision has to be made in discussion with the head of state (Dowding & Dumont, 2008). In some cases, such as the Netherlands, the prime minister formally lacks the power to dismiss a minister.

Table 2.1: Who selects?

System	Power to select	Power to dismiss minister
Presidential republic		
'pure' presidential	President	President
Semi-presidential		
Premier-presidential	Prime-minister President (informal)	Parliament Prime-minister
President-parliamentary	President Prime minister* Coalition partners**	President, Parliament
Parliamentary system		
Multi-party government	Prime-minister to be Coalition partners	Parliament / Coalition partners Prime Minister
Single-party government	Prime-minister to be	Prime minister Parliament (majority)

* In case of 'cohabitation', the prime-minister may have a large influence on ministerial appointments (Neto & Strøm, 2006).

** Depends on the number of political parties involved in government formation, the constitutional arrangement, and whether or not the president's / prime-minister's political party has a majority in parliament..

Other actors, such as the public, party factions and media, may play an significant interaction role in the decision to sack a minister, especially when they hold important portfolios (Berlinski, Dewan & Dowding, 2007; Bright et al., 2017). However, these actors only act indirectly, by putting pressure on president, prime minister, party leader or parliament.

2.3.4. Problems of agency

The principal-agent approach assumes that principals appoint agents they deem most fit to carry out their preferences. Yet, agency-problems may arise, as principals have incomplete information on the preferences and skills of their candidate-agents. Strøm, Müller and Smith (2010) identify three reasons why this process of delegation may fail: preference divergence, uncertainty and opportunism. Preference divergence implies that principal and agent may have varying or opposed preferences with regards to the rewards that result from controlling the executive branch, and the fact that these rewards are scarce. These rewards can be policy preferences, future electoral advantage or office benefits (Strøm, Müller & Smith, 2010).

Secondly, uncertainty is a multi-explicable term: it may refer to party leaders not fully understanding the relationship between in- and output of the political system: of how the policy instruments at their disposal work, and may or may not achieve the preferred political outcome. Party leaders may also

face uncertainty about exogenous political crises, the skills and preferences of the candidates for the ministerial office, and how voters may respond to decisions.

Finally, Strøm, Müller and Smith define the problem of opportunism as the situation "when coalition partners use uncertainty to derive private gain at the expense of others" (2010: 520).

Selecting an agent thus implies a leap of faith for the principal, as agency loss lurks. This issue can partially be mitigated by ex-ante screening, and ex post 'sanctions'. Screening of (voting) behavior before installment provides the principal with information on preferences and skills of a candidate, and allows her to select an agent matching her preferences (Strøm, Müller & Smith, 2010). Coalition agreements can also act as an ex-ante safeguard, but are usually not legally binding – an principal is thus also prone to deliberate betrayal. Moreover, Andeweg (2000) points out, ex ante screening is based on the assumption that candidate's preferences do not change over time – and this assumption is often false. Ministers may "go native"(2000: 391), aligning their preferences with the department they work on as result of role socialization, or have other reasons to divert from the principal's course. Ex post 'punishments' such as recall, reshuffle or denying reselection are more effective according to Andeweg, but the former two of these options are rarely used.

Because this thesis is about ministerial selection after general elections, ex-ante checks are most of our concern, although principals have some methods to adjust their agent's behavior in between elections as well (Andeweg, 2000). It is however good to keep ex-post in our minds as well.

However, the nature of the ministerial office and considerations in selecting candidates to fill it are very much dependent on the role played by political parties. The role of political parties has changed dramatically in the past five decades however, as will be described more into detail in the next paragraph.

2.4 Changes in context

Besides these changes in the ministerial office, also the wider societal and political context changed substantially. Political sociology research noted that the declining voter-turnout levels and related phenomena observed across established democracies may be rooted in underlying cultural developments (Armingeon & Schädel, 2015; Gray and Caul, 2000; Norris, 1999). It is undeniable that both the constituencies as the nature of politics have changed radically since World-War II. Below, I will outline some developments in both voters and the vote, before continuing towards how these changes affected political actors, and how this may have trickled down into the ministerial selection process.

2.4.1. Individualization

One of the major developments in the societies of post-World-war-II West has been the progressing individualization. This term has been used in multiple ways. Armingeon and Schädel (2015) refer to Beck, describing individualization as 'processes of declining societal integration and social control' (Armingeon & Schädel, 2015, p. 2). This process includes declining membership of civil society organizations such as trade unions, declining relevance of social institutions such as family and religion. In many European states, these institutions were part of social pillars, with their own elites and media. These networks used to provide voters with cues and motivated political participation, thus lowering the decision-costs associated with voting.

However, in an individualized society, elite-provided cues are less potent. This increases the decision-costs of voting and other political behavior. This effect is alleviated by education, but not everyone has equal access to education. Therefore, especially the lower social strata are less politically active, according to Armingeon and Schädel (2015). Gray and Caul (2000) found indeed that the decline of unions and labor parties have increased the costs of mobilization. Whereas previously Verba (1978, as

cited in Gray and Caul, 2000) claimed that electoral participation in Europe was relatively unaffected by the social position of voters, the decline of mobilization through trade unions and political parties uncovered increasing inequality. The process of individualization also weakened the solidarity ties that supported the networks and voluntary activity associated with the traditional mass-parties (Etzioni, 1995, as cited in Whiteley, 2011). Citizens went on to pursue private desires, rather than the common good (Gauja, 2013), although Van Dam (2011) contends that individualization and depillarisation rather is a transformation of mode of social organization.

The process of individualization coincided with other sociologic trends. For example, Pippa Norris (1999) points towards Inglehart's (1997, as cited in Norris, 1999) theory of post-materialism. Changes in values of citizens in post-industrial societies made them more critical towards traditional established hierarchical institutions of authority, such as police, media, government and church in the decennia following the second world war. The institutions typical for representative government, such as political parties, followed the same fate. Rahat and Kenig (2018) note that in many countries this process was accompanied by a surge in voting for 'anti-party parties'.

Second, Gauja (2013) and Whiteley (2011) refer to the increased value of time. According to Whiteley, the increasing wealth of the advanced industrial democracies made their citizens 'increasingly time-poor' (2011: 22), due to longer working hours, and increased female participation at the job-market. This decreased citizens' likeliness to participate in party-related voluntary activities.

Third, these developments took place against the backdrop of large demographic changes in the post-industrial democracies. Mair (2008) notes that working class constituencies, which long supported labor- and socialist mass parties, have declined, diminishing the relevance of 'social class' as a predictor of voting behavior. Due to secularization, also the relevance of religion declined. The previously rather distinct electorates of mainstream parties became more mixed and less cohesive. This motivated political parties to search for a broader base, causing them to become more 'catch-all'. According to Mair, this changed political competition, as stable alignments increasingly made way for 'ad-hoc constituencies' (2008: 220).

The developments mentioned above have been interpreted in the party literature as connected to party decline, as the weakened party-society links had far-reaching effects on the organizations and collective identities that once substantiated the theories surrounding political participation and involvement. Due to individualization, citizens now partially depend on different political organizations, such as interest groups, or employ different kinds of (political) action to pursue their goals (Gauja, 2013; Whiteley, 2007). Also, citizens increasingly based their vote on issues, leadership and personality instead of partisan loyalties (Dalton & Wattenberg, 2000). This in turn also affects voters demands and expectations towards political leaders.

In his treatise of the future of representative democracy, Mair (2008) also points out that the 'value' of the vote may have changed. He notes that the previously sometimes fierce ideological polarization between political parties has diminished. Bell (1960) and Lipset (1963) already declared that the old days of adversarial and extreme politics were over, and had been replaced by less antagonistic and pragmatic politics instead. Even so-called anti-system parties have moderated their approach to fit in the democratic narrative. The dominant model is no longer challenged. To Mair, it appears that the value of the vote has declined due to multiple factors: the aforementioned lost ideological polarization, the programmatic convergence of both left and right-oriented mainstream parties, and internationalization. In addition, the increasingly complex matter of policy-making makes it increasingly hard for voters to understand the policy alternatives. Also Kriesi (2008) blames institutional changes for reducing the value or power of the vote.

2.4.2. Personalization

As mentioned above, individualization had as one of its effects that voter preferences and personal attributes of the candidates standing for office gradually supplanted party loyalty. Elections gradually became more focused on persona and issues. This process of personalization, or presidentialization of European politics has troubled many scholars. The term 'presidentialization' was introduced by Poguntke and Webb (2005), and later reformulated by Samuels and Shugart (2010, as cited in Elgie & Passarelli, 2019). While Samuel and Shugart use to term in relation to studying the specific impact of the constitutional aspect of presidentialization on presidentialization within political parties, Poguntke and Webb use it to describe a broader development (Elgie & Passarelli, 2019): to them, presidentialization is a process of political systems becoming more 'presidential' without changes to the formal structure. They see this as three different effects: increasing leadership power resources, leadership autonomy, and personalization of the electoral process. The introduction of the concept has caused quite a stir in the academic community, with Keith Dowding even calling for the term to be "expunged from the political science vocabulary" (Dowding, 2012: 617). However, it appears that it is here to stay.

Rahat and Kenig (2018) confirmed the three dimensions of personalization, and found that there were some connections to a decrease in 'partyness'. Remarkably, they also found that personalization was less strong in individualized countries compared to less individualized ones. Rahat and Kenig found evidence indicating that political parties adapt their communication strategies to the changed situation. The cause of personalization has been linked to the decline of political parties (Mair, 2008; Rahat & Kenig, 2018), to the increased visibility of ministers due to their influential role in the European parliament and other international politics (Kriesi, 2008), to mediatization (Strömbäck, 2008; Brants & Van Praag, 2006) and to increased leadership autonomy. Rahat and Kenig (2018) also found that party decline preceded personalization, but that the latter may have reinforced the former.

2.4.3. Changes in party system and governance

In the same period, the role political parties perform in society transformed as well. Decline in membership and turnout, and increased voter volatility is observed throughout Europe (Delwit, 2011). There is no consensus about how exactly these changes relate to the macro-developments in society, and whether the changes in political parties preceded or followed those.

The developments in the late 1980s contributed to increasing evidence that the thesis of 'frozen party alignments' by Lipset and Rokkan was no longer applicable. Instead, scholars concluded that political parties are increasingly 'disconnected' from society (Dalton & Wattenberg, 2000), leading to a vivid debate on whether political parties are declining, or adapting themselves to a changed landscape (Rahat & Kenig, 2018; Dalton, Farrell & McAllister, 2010; Mair 2008b).

Dalton and Wattenberg (2000) noted that political parties still fulfill a few of the roles that they were said to perform, as in the triple framework set out by Key (1964, as paraphrased by Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000); parties in the electorate, parties as organizations, and parties in government. Dalton and Wattenberg found that while political parties had to accept competition in their functions vis-à-vis the electorate and the party-society link has indeed weakened, they still are relevant in government. While 'partyness' in society has diminished, the 'partyness' of the party in government has remained roughly at the same level. Political parties still dominate the legislative and executive. Non-partisan legislative and executive actors appear to be increasing (Cotta, 2018), but partisan politicians still dominate.

This change in party-society relationship has most notably been addressed by Katz and Mair (1995, 2009) in their treatise of the Cartel Party. Whereas in the age of the mass party and later the catch-all party political parties still relied on large numbers of volunteers and donations in order to launch

campaigns and survive elections, the cartel party has moved towards the state, and increasingly relies on state funding. The role of the public has come to resemble that of an 'audience democracy', Katz and Mair (2009) claim: competition between parties is increasingly focused on 'spectacle, image, and theatre' (2009: 755) and less on differences in policy. As cartel parties aim to receive funding from the state, they look less towards the grassroots of the party for funding, and neglect the difference between members and non-members. As the previously distinct constituencies have become mixed up, political leaders of cartel parties now need to appeal to media and wider electorate, and thus support within the party has become less important. According to Mair (2008), political parties still recruit leaders, but do so less and less from amongst the ranks of their own organization.

On the other hand, differences in the policy preferences of mainstream-parties from both left and right seem to be of less importance than their shared ambition for office, Mair (2008) notes. As the cartel party's dependency on state resources has increased, entering office is of vital importance. As such, a party's candidate no longer needs to represent the grassroots of the party, but primarily needs to attract sufficient voters to reach office.

The organization of political parties has changed accordingly. Dalton and Wattenberg (2000) note that parties increasingly centralized their staff and resources at the national level, and enlist more professionals such as analysists, communication experts and strategists. This also narrows down the diversity in the pool of possible candidates for office, as the party now is made up from career politicians.

The convergence and professionalization of mainstream parties has left voters on the flanks disappointed, and the changed values and modes of political participation of voters have facilitated the emergence of new political parties that more often focus on single issues (Kriesi, 2008; Müller-Rommel 2002). Populist movements, who claim to pursue a more direct link between voter and elite, have gained ground as well (Kriesi, 2008). The rise of these new parties has led to increased party system fragmentation (Chiaramonte & Emanuelle, 2019; Dalton & Wattenberg, 2000) which in turn causes increased inter-party competition (Strøm, 1990a; 1990b). According to the spatial theory, the presence of those new 'challenger' parties has forced mainstream parties to shift their positions on several issues, especially after the former achieve electoral success (Meijers, 2017). These new parties have challenged the mainstream parties for a seat in government, sometimes successfully. On the other hand, Adams (2012) notes that while party elites do indeed shift their policy positions due to changes in rival's election promises, the electorate largely seems ignorant to it.

The increase in the number of parties, and the corresponding fragmentation of the electoral landscape has also increased the need to form coalitions, most notably in the European nations that do not have a history in single-party minority governments, or do not feature a majoritarian system.

2.4.4. The media: facilitator and political actor

The media have been both facilitator and actor in the changed relationship between society and political elite. With the advent of individualization and the disintegration of the classic socio-economic groups, mass media started to assert a different role. This process has been called mediatization (Brants & Van Praag, 2017; Vliegenthart, 2016; Strömback, 2008): media moving towards the center of the social process and creating a media-constructed public sphere. Strömbäck (2008) describes four phases of mediatization: first, mass media become to constitute the most important source of information and communication between citizen and political actors and institutions. In the second phase, media have become more independent of political actors and are governed by 'media logic': media now make their own judgement on what messages match with their own norms, values, format and audiences. According to Strömbäck (2008), this phase also includes professionalization of the journalistic profession, and therefore triggers political actors to increase the resources aimed at influencing the public relations and news management. In the third phase, media have become so

independent that the other actors have to adapt to the media, and political actors cannot longer expect to be accommodated by the media. Journalists ideas about reality have become more important than those of politicians. In the fourth phase, political and societal actors internalize media logic and the predominant news values, and it thus becomes a part of the governing process. Here, Strömbäck no longer speaks of *adaptation*, but *adoptation (*2008: 240). This fourth phase also blurs the distinction between when political actors are in campaign mode and when they are in their governing mode; this is described as 'permanent campaigning' (Strömbäck, 2008, citing Blumenthal, 1980). Strömbäck also connects the professionalization of politics, political campaigning, and 'going public' to the strategies arising in response to this phase.

His model matches to some extent with those of other scholars. Personalization seems to coincide with the rise of mass-media, and this goes most prominently for television. According to Dalton and Wattenberg (2000), television has changed the way election campaigns are executed. Politicians present themselves to the public in a more personal way. Dalton and Wattenberg believe that the response to mediatization also reinforced the decline of political parties as the focus of media was put more on the personality of a politician, than the party behind her. Dalton and Wattenberg also contend that media have contributed to a centralization and professionalization of political parties. Due to the changed communication between political parties and voter, political parties needed political consultants, media analysts and public opinion specialists to increase their impact on the viewer (Dalton & Wattenberg, 2000). Brants and Van Praag (2017) note that an increase in personalization in media has been discussed frequently, but has not been empirically proven yet, although there appears to be a slight tendency to more focus on party leaders. Kriesi (2008) states that voters influence their representatives between elections too, and that as a result, political actors have become engaged in a constant struggle for the attention of the public, what Kriesi has named 'dynamic representation' (2008: 150).

However, Brants and Van Praag (2017) doubt whether it is possible to speak of a 'media logic' nowadays. In response to their earlier publication, they note that due to the empowering influence internet and social media have had on the general public, the notion of 'media logic' is no longer applicable. Yet, they doubt whether it can be replaced by a 'public logic', as the public is still very fragmented and volatile. Brants and Van Praag acknowledge that countries may differ in their transformation into media logic due to different media, political and broadcasting systems, but claim that all countries will eventually get there.

Vliegenthart (2016a) contends that 'mediatization' as a process is measurable, and instead addresses some other changes: according to him, media have increased attention for opinion polls and what he calls 'the horse-race-frame'. Secondly, he addresses the 'crisisisation' (2016: 51) of media reporting: the increased tendency of outlets to define developments in politics or society as a crisis. Finally, he notes that social media has increased the 'velocity' of reporting; social media functions as a direct medium between voter and politician, but also between media and politician. Politicians may benefit from social media, and can use it also as information-tool. However, Vliegenthart et al. (2016) find that parties in a multiparty government-coalition are more responsive to media coverage, and trigger parliamentary questions. In turn, media seem to follow the political agenda more in political activities such as drafting bills and passing legislation (2016: 296).

2.5. Hypotheses: Consequences for candidate selection

How then do these processes impact candidate selection? The image sketched above shows that both the sources from which political parties can select their candidates have changed, as well as the range of tasks and skills candidates need to fulfill the tasks and objectives set by their principals. Also the conditions in which actors, political parties and prime ministers, decide on who will get into cabinet have changed. As we can assume that political parties will attempt to balance between attractiveness and skill of a candidate, and take the moves of their competitors and the public opinion into

consideration when making decisions (Adams, 2012), this may have influence on the type of agent these actors can and wish to have.

As individualization, personalization and mediatization change the preferences of the voters, these processes may impact candidate selection in multiple ways. For starters, because of individualization and the increased impact of media reporting, the importance of issues and the person of the candidate has increased. This affects the expertise, characteristics and skills a candidate should possess, such as media-attractiveness, and the ability to reduce complicated matters to clever sound-bites that will resonate with the audience. Assuming that political parties aim to achieve office, and want to return in office after the next elections, they are therefore inclined to select a candidate that fits well with the public, to maximize their vote-appeal. As mentioned before, these candidates increasingly are not recruited through the party, but by the party (Kriesi, 2008). It is therefore likely that political parties will select candidates that are well-known, visible, are skilled in parliamentary (televised) debate, have good communicative skills and yet also have a clear link with the political party.

H1: As individualization progresses, the chance that a minister has political experience or experience in high political office increases.

In an individualized society, voters are bereft of cues, which increases the costs associated with casting a vote. Voting for someone you know decreases these costs. It may therefore pay off for political parties to recruit well-known candidates with a good reputation, such as city mayors, former ministers and professors.

H2: As individualization progresses, the chance that a ministers has experience in high-visibility professions, such as former ministers, city mayors, media-professionals, professors and judges, increases.

The transformation of political parties from mass-parties, to catch-all parties and finally cartel-parties implies that the way candidates for executive office are selected changes accordingly. The classical mass-parties were more policy-oriented, and due to the sheer size of volunteers involved, the talent pool was bigger and more varied. Cartel-parties attract more professionals to deal with media and the volatile voters. The talent pool of political parties therefore becomes smaller, and will have less diverse backgrounds. As cartel-parties become shed their mass-party skin, and become more office-oriented and less embedded in society, they also attract more career-politicians that climb fast in the party's ranks.

H3a: As parties' embeddedness in society decreases, the chance that ministers have a background in social organizations decreases.

H3b: As parties' embeddedness in society decreases, the chance that a minister has only political experience increases.

H4: As parties' embeddedness in society decreases, the share of ministers in cabinet with a short party-political career increases.

Rahat and Kenig (2018) note that highly personalized politics are likely to create instability in the party system, as voters may switch vote each time a new leader enters the political arena. Therefore, it may be unattractive for office-aspiring parties to re-elect former ministers to office. Since, due to personalization, the position of the (vice-)prime minister becomes more powerful, the political skills of other ministers are less relevant. Thus, political parties may decide to appoint more ministers with little prior party-political experience.

H5: As parties' embeddedness in society decreases, the chance that a minister has previous experience in office decreases.

The other described developments, such as party system fragmentation and the subsequent growth of the number of parties in the polity and the appearance of populist challenger parties changed the playing field in which political parties compete for the voters' assent. The presence of populist challenger parties is often an indicator of anti-party sentiments (Rahat & Kenig, 2018), and electoral success of populist challenger parties has caused mainstream parties to shift their positions (Meijers, 2017; Adams, 2012). The presence of populist parties increases the likeliness of conflict, which in turn may increase turnout at the polls (Kriesi, 2008). It is therefore in the interest of mainstream parties to field capable candidates, who master their portfolio, know the political game and can triumph over their populist peers in front of the camera.

H6: In the presence of populist challenger parties, the chance that a minister has a 'politico-specialist' profile increases.

In contrast, mainstream parties may also adopt the anti-establishment stance of their populist challengers, and thus refrain from sending political veterans into their campaign.

H7: In the presence of populist challenger parties, the chance that a minister has a technocrat or outsider profile increases.

Due to increased party system fragmentation and the subsequent increased number of parties competing for the voter's approval, coalition formation becomes an increasingly tedious task. As both the future prime minister as the participating political parties enter office with the intention to prevent cabinet failure, it is important that intra-coalition conflict is avoided. Ex-ante controls are limited, thus in order to predict candidate's behavior, political parties may be inclined to appoint candidates who have a long track-record in party-political circles. As coalitions with more partners are more likely to experience conflict, this especially goes for the more complex coalitions.

H8: In coalitions with more coalition partners, the chance that ministers have party-political experience is higher.

In coalitions in some polities, junior ministers are assigned as 'watchdogs' to senior ministers of a different party color (Dumont & Verzichelli, 2014). As in more complex coalitions prime minister and party leadership need more resources to keep their coalition partners in check, it is more likely that politically experienced junior ministers of a different party color are assigned, as their primary task is not of a technical nature. Bäck, Debus and Müller (2016) found that the policy distance – the potential gap in policy preferences and ideologies - between prime minister and future minister is of importance for ministerial selection. Accordingly, if the policy distance between actors in a coalition is smaller, the number of junior ministers is probably lower, and the need for ministers with party-political experience is lower. In case of more coalition partners, the gap between prime minister and minister is probably higher, and thus the need for political experts increases.

H9: In coalitions with more coalition partners, the number of junior ministers with political experience is larger.

H10: The share of ministers with a party political background is smaller and the number of junior ministers is lower when the policy distance between the coalition partners is smaller.

Finally, mediatization has changed the way politics works. The shift to Strömbäck's fourth phase of mediatization ('media logic' and subsequently 'constant campaigning'; Strömbäck, 2008) puts additional demands to the agent of both political party and prime minister. Appearance has gained importance, and so has the ability of policy makers and holders of executive office to deliver fast and fitting statements. We may assume that political parties aim to be re-elected to government, and that prime ministers at least want to avoid cabinet collapse. As a result, the former aim for ministers that have media-political skills that can be employed to achieve a good image in the media and good

results at the polls, as they probably take in consideration that incumbent parties are likely to be punished at the next elections. Thus, political parties may put forward candidates that have previously had experience with both the executive office and the media. The prime-minister, in contrast, may want to avoid ministers with a high public profile as they may become direct competitors to her, and instead aims for ministerial candidates with the skills to successfully execute the cabinet's policy plans.

H11: As mediatization progresses, the share of ministers with a background in local or regional political office is higher.

Using the hypotheses above, I hope to shed some light on this relatively unexplored part of the ministerial-selection subfield. In the next chapter, I will elaborate on the methodology used to test the hypotheses mentioned above, before exploring the data in chapter 4.

3. Methodology

From the literature review eleven hypotheses were deducted to express the possible effects that individualization, party decline, party system fragmentation, and mediatization may have on ministerial selection. Although the theoretical framework provides many exiting avenues for future research, due to time- and operational constraints, I will test only eight of those.

Initially, I embarked on this thesis with the intention to analyze the gathered data and uncover causal relations using statistical methods. However, due to recurring multicollinearity between the main explanatory variables in the model, I could not get my model working to gather sufficient reliable statistical evidence to do so. In order to still provide some insight into the object of study, I therefore made the descriptive part of this thesis more substantive.

As a result, this chapter discloses the methodology that was employed in my initial effort, as well as the approach to the descriptive part. The first section concerns the research approach, followed by sections on the contents of the data collection, and operationalization of the hypotheses mentioned in the previous chapter. The final part of this chapter will elaborate on the research methods I employed for both the descriptive and the analytical part.

3.1 Research approach

The macro-processes described in the previous chapters may influence ministerial selection in quite diverging ways. A good way to find evidence for the hypotheses would be a series of case-studies to trace the underlying causal mechanisms (Gerring, 2008). Unfortunately, government formations are usually shrouded in secrecy (Fleischer & Seyfried, 2015; Klein & Umut, 2016), and internal diaries and reports recorded during formations are often made public only decades later (Van Baalen & Van Kessel, 2016). Moreover, low numbers of case studies are unable to produce statistical evidence needed for generalizations (Ylikoski, 2018). This, and the fact that the more recent government formation processes remain a black box, forces me to resort to large-N studies, and choose causal effect over causal pathways. Large-N approaches allow for tests involving alternative explanations for the research outcome, and for tests with multiple hypotheses, thus improving the value for generalizations. If an effect is found, case studies may shed light on how the mechanisms work in detail – or dismiss the correlation as a spurious one (Gerring, 2008).

Some authors did indeed employ quantitative approaches in an effort to tie the complex process of ministerial selection to other phenomena of political science. Fleischer and Seyfried (2015) departed from the vantage point of 'bargaining pools' of ministeriable candidates, using cables of the German news agency Deutsche Welle to create a database of candidates in those pools. Subsequently, the authors employed a conditional logit model to trace any causal effects. However, in many European polities the formation process is so closed-off that a complete overview of the total number of candidates cannot be given. Heppell (2014) and Kam et al. (2010) also employed a similar talent-pool oriented approach, which was enabled by the fact that as a rule British ministers are recruited from parliament. Studies into ministerial selection are less numerous in countries where the possible 'talent pool' is largely unknown until the day of its candidates' appearance in government. Bäck, Debus and Müller (2016) employed the approach of Kam et al. (2010) by defining the pool of potential ministers as 'politicians who gave at least one speech in parliament' (Bäck, Debus & Müller, 2016). Although this approach includes, depending on the political system it is situated in, more than just members of parliament, it still systematically excludes those who have no political experience and are recruited from outside the political realm. The older study by Bäck et al. (2009) attempted to use ministerial selection as an indicator of power shifts within the executive-legislative dimension to investigate the effect of European integration on the balance of power between the executive and legislative branches of government, and employed a multinominal logit model in their efforts. They retained from defining

a talent-pool, but instead investigated actual appointments. Creating 'portfolio-year' as unit of analysis, the authors created a sample of sufficient size to make causal inferences.

As said earlier, due to time- and operational constraints, I limit myself to testing eight of the eleven hypotheses that were formulated in the previous chapter. I will compare changes in the type of ministers that enter office in the Netherlands to indicators of individualization, party decline and party system fragmentation, using a dataset with the biographical data of all the junior and senior ministers that were appointed after general elections to government cabinets between 1977-2012. First, the descriptive analysis will indicate whether there are clear trends in ministerial selection in the Netherlands in 1977-2012, and thus extend earlier research done by Wilma Bakema and Ineke Secker (1988) and Hans Daalder (Daalder & Hubée-Boonzaaijer, 1971, as cited by Bakema & Secker, 1988). Second, by comparing the selected ministers to the trends mentioned above, this thesis uses a quantitative approach to provide insights in whether there is a causal relation between these processes.

3.2 Data

The biographical data on government ministers was collected and provided by the *Parlementair Documentatie Centrum* from Leiden University. Since its establishment in 1974 by professors Nico Cramer and Hans Daalder, this center studied the social origin of parliamentarians and the overall functioning of the Dutch parliamentary system. The data was delivered in the form of PDF-files containing information on professional, party, political and other positions, descriptions of legislative and executive activities, personalia, education, marital status, social background and other facts. In total, such files on 240 individuals were received, and merged into a dataset.

These files cover over 360 ministerial appointments in 14 governments led by five different prime ministers (from the first government of Prime Minister Dries van Agt in 1977, until the second government of Prime Minister Mark Rutte in 2012). This time frame was selected because it represents crucial points in Dutch post-depillarization political history (Dekker & Ester, 1996). The disintegration of the segregated religious and ideological communities came to a close: the word 'ontzuiling' (meaning de-pillarization) was first included in the Van Dale-dictionary in 1976 (Van Dam, 2011). This period brought great societal changes for the Netherlands, as it includes the process of 'depillarization' and 'de-ideologization', as well as both economic prosperity and crisis. From a political point of view, the early years of this period are marked by the merger of the confessional parties into the dominant *Christen Democratisch Appèl* (CDA), and the emergence of the liberal *Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie* (VVD) as a serious governing party, and the introduction of state-subsidies for political parties (Pierre, Svåsand & Widfeldt, 2000) - thus emblematic of the transition towards mass- and cartel-parties. The cabinets of prime minister Kok signify the first governments in which no confessional parties were involved, and the selected period also saw the rise of Green and populist challenger parties challenging the old party-families. Finally, the European Union also matured during this time, as in 1979, the first direct elections to the European Parliament were held.

The unit/event of analysis is *ministerial appointment*. This is because according to the theoretical framework laid out in the previous chapter, individualization, party decline, party system fragmentation and mediatization influence the actors who decide on who should fill the ministerial office. Thus, every appointment is an event in which the actors have to reconsider their preferences and goals, and which candidates fits those goals best. Although the appointee, with her skills, social background and preferences is the result of the event, it is the event itself in which considerations play a role. Also, by using *appointments* as unit of analysis rather than ministers themselves, this thesis does justice to the changing nature of expertise: a candidate for ministerial office who has experience as either junior or senior minister, has also gained political and/or technical experience in office (Bakema & Secker, 1988; Bäck et al., 2009). This also means that the same individual may appear in multiple data-points.

Some (forms of) ministerial appointments are excluded. Firstly, Prime Ministerial 'appointments' are excluded, as the Prime Minister is usually the formateur. Also, the formateur is, depending on the institutional rules, either appointed by parliament or by the Head of State. In practice, this person is usually the head of the largest political party and therefore falls within a different selection-rationale than regular ministerial appointments. Cabinet reshuffles are excluded as well, as these are likely to be informed by different preferences than appointments after general elections (Fleischer & Seyfried, 2015). Also outgoing (care-taker) cabinets after a government-breakup are not included, as these in general tend to be continuations of the previous cabinet with some minor changes: the third cabinet of Prime Minister Van Agt (1982) and the third cabinet of Prime Minister Balkenende (2006-2007) fall in this category. As such, the dataset includes a total of 307 observations. The data is therefore considered cross-sectional. This number also allows for generalizations.

The collection of data was limited by the fact that the PDC was unwilling to disclose more due to personal constraints, and the fact that data for the independent variables for more recent years is partially currently still unavailable. Nevertheless, the dataset covers over 35 years of recent political history, covering twelve cabinets and six political parties in different coalition-combinations.

3.3 Operationalization

From the previous chapter, 11 hypotheses were deducted (see paragraph 2.5, page 17-20).

Table 3.1: Hypotheses to be tested

H1	As individualization progresses, the chance that a minister has only political experience increases.
H2	As individualization progresses, the chance that a minister has experience in high-visibility professions, such as former ministers, city mayors, professors and judges, increases.
H3a	As party-decline increases, the chance that a minister has a background in social organizations decreases.
H3b	As party-decline increases, the chance that a minister only has political experience increases.
H5a	As party-decline increases, the chance that a minister has previous experience in office decreases.
H5b	As party-decline increases, the chance that a minister has no previous experience in (party-political) office decreases.
H6	In the presence of populist challenger parties, the chance that a minister has a 'politico-specialist' experience increases.
H7	In the presence of populist challenger parties, the chance that a minister has either technocrat or outsider experience increases.
H8	In coalitions with more coalition partners, the chance that a minister has party-political experience is higher.
H9	The chance that a junior minister has only political experience increases when party-system fragmentation increases.

From the initial eleven hypotheses, I will only test hypotheses H1 up to and including H9, with the exception of H4, thus excluding the length of party-membership, mediatization and the last two coalition-related hypotheses. The reason for this is that each of these hypotheses would require calculating additional variables. As the mediatization-hypothesis will not be tested separately, I will also not include a variable for mediatization.

3.3.1. Dependent variable

As the hypotheses treats different aspects of experience of appointed ministers, the dependent variable is layered. Following Bakema & Secker's (1988) approach, experience is ultimately formulated in a four-category nominal aggregated variable 'experience' (aggrexp), that describes the previous (relevant) expertise of the appointee at the moment of inauguration. In this variable, it should be noted that 'technocrat' here is different from the concept usually employed in comparative political science: when a minister is technocrat, she is not necessarily non-partisan - in contrast to the definition employed by for example Costa Pinto and Cotta (2018). This because of the Dutch practice of making candidate-ministers party member just before inauguration (of which instances were observed in i.e.

Van Baalen and Van Kessel (2016)). Instead, a technocratic minister is characterized by possessing technical experience relevant for her department, and having no prior political experience.

Table 3.2: Model for defining experience.

		Political experience	
		Yes	No
Relevant technical Experience	Yes	Politico-specialist	Technocrat
	No	Politician	Outsider

Source: Bakema & Secker, 1988.

However, to avoid losing the richness of the provided data, and to be able to test hypotheses that do not fall into the four-fold categorization above, I also include a descriptive dependent variable (prevexp). This categorical variable contains information on the field in which the minister, either junior or senior, has obtained her latest work-experience before appointment. This variable can take either the values 'party-political', 'parliamentary (national, provincial, local, or European)', 'previous national executive office', 'previous regional executive office', 'previous local executive office' 'bureaucracy', 'social or labour organizations', 'judiciary', 'police', 'agriculture', 'corporate', 'education', 'media', 'military & intelligence', 'religious professions', 'finance', 'diplomacy', 'senate (Upper House of parliament)', 'healthcare' and 'city major'. This descriptive dependent variable then feeds into the four-category dependent variable above through answering three questions. First: Does the appointee have technical experience? Second: Is the experience relevant for the office of the appointee? And finally: Does the appointee have any previous political experience?

3.3.2. Independent and context variables

As the attempt to analyze the data using a multinomial logit analysis failed, the main part of this thesis was transformed into a descriptive analysis of the available data. The variables in this paragraph were used both as independent variables in the initial set-up, and as context variables later. Finally, this paragraph adds some extra context variables.

Individualization

Individualization is a tricky concept to describe using hard data. The process of individualization has been described as the 'emancipation of the individual' (Van Dam, 2011), as a process in which individual citizens become less attached to groups, and more to private interests (Gauja, 2013). As such, it would imply a loss of social embeddedness, and an increase in individualized action. In their research into social divides in political participation, Armingeon and Schädel (2015) employed an composite measure 'social integration' by scoring respondents' answers to European Social Survey-questions such as 'lives with a partner'; 'is a member of a trade union', 'attends church at least once a month', 'feels close to a political party' and 'meets with friends […] once a month' (Armingeon & Schädel, 2015: 12). However, the European Social Survey (ESS) only dates back to 2002, and thus does not cover our dataset. Another good source would be the Dutch *Nationaal Kiezersonderzoek* (NKO), executed by the *Stichting Kiezersonderzoek Nederland* (SKON), which dates back to 1971. However, not all data is publicly available (yet). As an alternative, the Dutch statistics bureau (Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek) has data on church membership and trade union membership for the time frame of this thesis. *Documentatiecentrum Nederlandse Politieke Partijen* from Groningen University holds data on membership of political parties 1978-2019. Therefore, an composite variable can be created out of these data, as theory expects that with the rise of individualization, all these will go down (Armingeon & Schädel, 2015). Including only these three data may seem a bit narrow considering the wide range of indicators of declining social capital that Robert Putnam pointed out in Bowling alone (2000), but all these three indicators are closely connected with expressing political and ideological beliefs and goals, and thus well suited for our goal.

From these three datasets, a composite variable can be constructed, using the value for 1977 as reference; i.e. the mean of the indexes of church membership, trade union membership and membership of political parties. However, as these numbers concern *absolute* numbers, they need to be corrected for population growth.

$$X_{individualization} = \frac{(X_{church\ membership} + x_{trade\ union\ membership} + x_{membership\ political\ parties})}{Population} * 100$$

The individualization variable is then transformed into an index using the year 1977 as reference.

Party decline

Party decline is less a fleeting concept than individualization. Many scholars see the dwindling membership numbers of political parties as a suitable indicator of party decline (Delwit, 2011; Van Biezen, Mair & Potguntke, 2011). Nevertheless, Rahat and Kenig (2018) claim that party decline cannot be expressed by solely using declining membership as variable. Instead, they use a set of twelve indicators (2018: 29) to describe party change. However, they only use a starting (1966) and ending point (2015), and thus neglect the within-case variance of The Netherlands. Also, creating a variable out of twelve indicators for 12 elections may be a bit of a long shot for this thesis. However, expressing party membership as a function of turnout instead provides useful information, as it indicates how many of the politically engaged population was willing to enter a more intimate relationship with a political party. As this variable increases when the total membership of parties increases, the name 'party decline' is less suited, and therefore this variable is named *party embeddedness in society*.

$$X_{partyembed} = \frac{\Sigma\ party\ membership}{Votes\ cast\ during\ election} * 100$$

Presence of populist challenger parties

Hypotheses 6 and 7 pivot around the presence of populist challenger parties. A binary variable is used to indicate the presence of populist challenger parties in parliament. The definition of 'populist challenger party' employed here is based on a combination of definitions used by Meijers (2017), and Armingeon et al. (2017). Meijers uses the definition of De Vries and Hobolt (2012) who define a challenger party as a party with no government-experience. However, as the Dutch multi-party system includes multiple political parties that have never participated in government, a further distinction is required, as in the Dutch multiparty-system, many parties do fall under this definition of 'challenger' but cannot be classified as populist. Armingeon et al. (2017) combine Lane, McKay and Newton's (1997) definition of ultra-right parties with Cas Mudde's (2007) definition of right-wing populist parties; parties with an explicit pro-nativist, -authoritarian (as in pro-law and order (Mudde, 2014) and -populist program. Combined with Meijers' definition, a populist challenger party is thus a populist party with no previous government experience, including right-wing parties that have an pro-nativist, -authoritarian and -populist program. In addition, it should be noted that Armingeon et al. do not register parties with less than 2% of the vote. Due to the low threshold of the Dutch party system, $1/150^{th}$ of the votes cast, I will here define 'presence' as having at least one seat in parliament.

The *presence of populist challenger parties*-variable could be either coded as a binary variable or a continuous variable. The Comparative Political Data Set-data (CPDS) (i.e. Armingeon et al. 2017) on populist parties allows for a continuous approach, but would require creating a more complicated aggregated variable. Thus, for now, I will stick with a binary variable, in which 0 = no populist challenger party in parliament, and 1 = populist challenger party parties have more than 1 seat in parliament.

Coalition partners

Hypothesis 8 is concerned with the number of coalition partners. To test this, an independent ratio variable *number of coalition partners* is created, starting from 1 (as governments without parties do not occur in the time-frame chosen). PDC-data is used for this variable.

Party system fragmentation

H9 discusses the effect that party system fragmentation may have on ministerial experience. Therefore, the variable *party system fragmentation* will be created. For this, I use Rae's (1968) *legislative fractionalization of the party system* used by in the CPDS-codebook Armingeon et al. (2017) for the Netherlands. This variable is calculated as follows:

$$rae\_leg = 1 - \sum_{i=1}^{m} s_i^2$$

With number of parties *m,* party seat share *s* for party *i*. Rae's legislative index has a value range of 0 (minimal fractionalization) and 1 (maximal fractionalization). The data used to compute this variable is also borrowed from the CDPS-dataset made by Armingeon et al. (2017).

3.3.3. Additional descriptive variables

In addition to the variables above, the dataset includes variables to discern the gender of the appointee (with 0 for 'male' and 1 for 'female'), the portfolio (with 1 for 'Foreign Affairs', 2 for 'Home Affairs', 3 for 'Finance', 4 for 'Justice', 5 for 'Education and Science', 6 for 'Agriculture', 7 for 'Social Affairs and Labor', 8 for 'Defense', 9 for 'Social Housing and Spatial Planning , 10 for 'Infrastructure, Waterways and Public Works', 11 for 'Economic Affairs', 12 for 'Culture', 13 for 'Public Health and Milieu', 21 for 'Development Aid', 22 for 'Metropolitan policy', 23 for 'Administrative renewal and Kingdom Affairs', 24 for 'Youth and Family', 25 for 'Living, neighborhoods and Integration', 51 for the minister without portfolio for 'Science', and finally 52 for 'Immigration policy and Integration, likewise without portfolio) to which the minister was appointed, and a variable to indicate whether the appointee was reappointed (0 for 'no', 1 for 'yes', 2 for 'Yes, but different portfolio' and 3 for 'Yes, but after longer period, or promotion from junior minister to senior minister'). These titles do not match the official names fully, but are rather an approximation, as in the Netherlands, the number of portfolios is not fixed. Also, portfolios frequently merge and separate as result of election promises or coalition agreements. For the sake of clarity, ministers without portfolios can also be merged into one subclass.

3.3.4. Control variables

Although large-N studies cannot be fully exhaustive in uncovering confounding variables, some events and variables should be kept in check in order not to distort the image. The problem with having *ministerial appointments* as unit of analysis is that *ministerial appointments* cannot be expected to be fully independent from each other. Studies indicate that experiences with ministers during preceding cabinet tenures influence their possible re-election (Bäck et al., 2009; Bäck & Debus, 2017). An election leading to a change in prime minister or change in governing parties is also likely to lead to a complete replacement of all incumbent ministers. A control variable for cabinets (*cabinet*) may therefore be useful. This is a categorical variable, with:

Table 3.3: Values for variable *Cabinet* with corresponding data

Value	Description	In Office:	Elections in:
1	Cabinet Van Agt I	1977-1981	1977
2	Cabinet Van Agt II	1981-1982	1981
3	Cabinet Lubbers I	1982-1986	1982
4	Cabinet Lubbers II	1986-1989	1986
5	Cabinet Lubbers III	1989-1994	1989
6	Cabinet Kok I	1994-1998	1994
7	Cabinet Kok II	1998-2002	1998
8	Balkenende I	2002-2003	2002
9	Balkenende II	2003-2006	2003
10	Balkenende IV	2007-2010	2006
11	Rutte I	2010-2012	2010
12	Rutte II	2012-2017	2012

Source: Parlementair documentatie centrum (PDC), 2018.

Also, when a cabinet-crises leads to new elections, this may be a deliberate move of a political party to gain a better position after elections (Andeweg, De Winter & Debus, 2011). On the other hand, political parties may want to distance themselves from the 'mess' made by the previous government, and opt for ministers with a different experience-background. Therefore, it is wise to control for 'elections after government breakup', using a binary variable *Formed after government breakup*, with value 0 for 'no government breakup' and 1 for 'government breakup'. Cabinets Van Agt I, Lubbers I, Lubbers III, Balkenende II, Balkenende IV and Rutte I and Rutte II were formed after a government breakup, and Van Agt II, Lubber II, Kok I and Kok II were not. In this case, I have decided to treat the resignation of the second government cabinet led by prime minister Wim Kok as 'no government breakup' as Kok II resigned followed the publication of a report on the Srebrenica-massacre, yet had only 29 days to go until the general elections and remained in place as caretaker government until then.

An useful additional control variable is *political party*, as organizational, historical and cultural factors of a political party may influence the preferences of party officials. For example, the results of a merger influenced CDA (*Christen Democratisch Appèl*) party politics for quite some time, forcing party leadership to select ministers of all the different precursors (Van Baalen & Van Kessel, 2016; Joustra & Van Venetië, 1989). Also, parties may differ in preferences from each other. Thus, the categorical variable 'Party affiliation' is added, including the CDA-precursors ARP, KVP and CHU. Parties that have not taken seat in government are not included in the model. As such, this coding covers all current ministerial appointments in the dataset, and leaves room for more.

Although economic crisis has been mentioned as an predictor for selecting ministers with technocratic experience in some European polities (e.g. Marangoni & Verzichelli, 2015; McDonnell & Valbruzzi, 2014, for the case of Italy), I will not include such a variable in order not to risk the workability of the model for now.

3.4. Research method

First, I analyzed the biographical data of ministers provided by the PDC to uncover any trends over time, of which the results can be found in chapter 4. Second, to test the hypotheses I used a statistical approach. Because the hypotheses use a categorical dependent variable, the assumption of linearity is violated. While logistic regression solves this issue, logistic approaches can only handle dependent variables with two categories. As the dependent variable 'aggregated experience' has four categories, this is not possible. Multinomial logistic regression is suitable for testing dependent unordered categorical variables with k>2 categories (Long, 2007 & Long, 2009), and therefore I believe that a multinomial logit regression best suits the data. Multinomial logistic regressions are increasingly

common in political science literature (Bäck et al. 2009; Henjak 2010; De Moura Palotti & Costa Cavalcante, 2018). Therefore, I have used this approach in this thesis.

To test the hypotheses, I will have to test the effects of six independent variables on two formulations of the dependent variable. First, I will test the effect of these independents separately using a multinomial logistic regression. After, I will test whether including all independents contributes to a stronger model.

As multinomial regression models are based on 'normal' logit models, they depart from the same standard formula for a logistic regression (see equation 1). Expanding it, we arrive at a more complicated model involving a categorical variable for the dependent and multiple explanatory and control variables (see equation 2).

Formula 1

$$\mathrm{P}(Y\ ) = \frac{1}{1 + \ e^{-(\beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i})}}$$

Formula 2

$$P(Y\ ) = \frac{1}{1 + \ e^{-(\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \cdots + \beta_n x_n)}}$$

As multinomial logistic regression can work with both categorical as continuous independent variables, it works for all hypotheses in this thesis. In this case it is also to be preferred above other estimation techniques such as conditional logistic regression, as that models the predictor-coefficients conditionally based on membership of the cases to chosen data, instead of the attributes of the independent (Long & Freese, 2001).

Multinomial logit regression has only a limited amount of assumptions, in contrast to other models such as Ordinary Least Squares. Yet, to successfully perform a multinomial logit regression, some key assumptions need to be satisfied. However, literature on which assumptions these are exactly, and how to test them, seems still somewhat scarce. Using multiple sources, I found the following assumptions: (1) assumption of independence of observations within the dependent variable (Leard, 2018); (2) non-perfect separation. In addition, following Schwab (2002), the number of cases should be larger than at least 10 for every independent variable included (Starkweather & Moske, 2011). According to Field (2014), also linearity (in the sense of linearity between a logit-variant of the outcome variable and all continuous explanatory variables in the model) (3) is assumed, as well as the assumption of no multicollinearity (4). Finally, we need to check the data for outliers and other influential cases that might distort the data.

As I attempted to run this analysis, I found persistent multicollinearity within the predictor variables. Despite my efforts to deal with this multicollinearity, I did not manage to get the model operational. Therefore, the contribution of this multinomial to answering the research question was minimal. For those interested, the attempt can be found in Appendix 1.1.

4. Data description: A closer look at the Trêveszaal's frequenters

This chapter describes the gathered data in detail, and will set out to uncover trends in order to provide some insight into the processes described by the hypotheses. As such, we will gather more knowledge on those regularly visiting the *Trêveszaal* (roughly translated 'Hall of truces'): the place where the Dutch council of ministers meets (Van den Berg, 1990).

4.1. General overview

At a first glance, the data appears to provide a slightly different result than Bakema & Secker's (1988) survey; in the period under study, 49 percent of all ministerial appointees have a politico-specialist profile, whereas 34 percent is politician, and 13 percent is technocrat. The remaining 4 percent is outsider. Therefore, by adding the percentage politico-specialist to that of the technocrats, we can conclude that 62 percent of the appointees has technical knowledge on her or his field at the time of appointment. In similar fashion, the share of ministers in the sample that possesses political experience is 82 percent. Bakema and Secker found that in their sample, around 80 percent of the ministerial nominations were candidates with some substantive knowledge on their portfolios. However, 70 percent could be considered politically skilled as well. But both authors also note that after 1967, the group of ministers with (predominantly) political experience has grown larger than the share of ministers with technical experience.

The data in this study appears to point in that direction as well, as seen in the tables below. However, some issues should be taken into consideration while comparing the data of this thesis with those gathered by Bakema and Secker. For starters, this figure includes both junior and senior ministers, and does not distinguish between first-appointees and those who entered office for a second tenure. In addition, the sample of this thesis does not involve prime ministers, as prime ministerial selection is rather a result of (un)written parliamentary procedures. Also, it must be noted that the method of measurement of 'political experience' possibly overstates the qualitative degree to which the appointees actually have these skills to their availability.

To mitigate these issues, we can also observe the cases in which ministers were appointed for the first time, and cases of senior ministerial appointments separately. At first appointment, the share of technocrats is higher, and politico-specialists is lower: of the 195 first-time cases, 21 percent can be classified as technocrats, 32 percent as politico-specialists, versus 42 percent 'pure' politicians. Thus, it can be said that 53 percent of the 'fresh' ministers is well-acquainted with their field of work at the moment they enter office, versus 48 percent that are either outsiders or pure politicians.

Expanding on the survey of Bakema & Secker, we could divide the observations in 20-year time periods: 1967-1986 (Bakema & Secker's last covered period), 1986-2002, 2002-2012. As such, the data could be interpreted as an extension of Bakema and Secker's survey. It appears that the trend of increasing numbers of politically skilled ministers reached its apex in the 1986-2002 period, before plummeting in the 2003-2012-period. This decline is largely caused by the dwindling percentage of 'pure' politicians, and the increased amount of outsiders and technocrats, and may be connected to the arrival of populist parties. This development is also visible when only the profiles of entrants are observed.

Table 4.1: All cases, per time-period, percentages

	Politico-specialist	Politician	Political Total	Technocrat	Tech-total	Outsider	N
1977-1986	50,0	32,2	82,2	13,3	63,3	4,4	90
1986-2002	50,0	41,0	91,0	9,0	59,0	0,0	100
2003-2012	46,6	29,7	76,3	17,8	64,4	5,9	117
							307

Table 4.2: First appointments only, percentages:

	Politico-specialist	Politician	Political Total	Technocrat	Tech-total	Outsider	N
1977-1986	35,6	39,0	74,6	18,6	54,2	6,8	59
1986-2002	28,8	57,6	86,4	13,6	42,4	0,0	59
2003-2012	31,2	31,2	62,4	27,3	58,5	10,4	77
							195

Table 4.3: Senior ministers only, percentages:

	Politico-specialist	Politician	Political Total	Technocrat	Tech-total	Outsider	N
1977-1986	50,0	37,5	87,5	10,0	60,0	2,5	40
1986-2002	49,1	35,8	84,9	15,1	64,2	0,0	53
2003-2012	46,2	30,8	78,5	20,0	66,2	1,5	65
							158

Table 4.4: Junior-ministers only, percentages:

	Politico-Specialist	Politician	Political Total	Technocrat	Tech-total	Outsider	N
1977-1986	50,0	28,0	78,0	16,0	66,0	6,0	50
1986-2002	51,1	46,8	97,9	2,1	53,2	0,0	47
2002-2012	46,2	25,0	71,5	15,4	61,6	13,5	52
							149

When comparing the different cabinets within this time-frame (Figures 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3), it is visible that especially the first two cabinets of Prime Minister Lubbers consist of a relatively small share of pure-type politicians, which also goes for the first and second cabinet led by Prime Minister Balkenende in 2002 and 2003. However, these two cabinets may contain outlier cases compared to the rest of the data. The first cabinet of Prime Minister Balkenende has an unusual large share of technocrat- and outsider ministers compared to the previous two cabinets headed by Prime Minister Kok. This should be mainly attributed to the participation of the populist LPF-party, which was founded only three months before the general elections of May 15th, 2002. After party leader Pim Fortuyn was murdered at May 6th, 2002, the party won a landslide victory. As a result, LPF entered cabinet with CDA and VVD. Besides that such a rapid rise to power had not been witnessed before in Dutch political history, this party also brought relatively many unexperienced senior and junior ministers into cabinet. When this cabinet fell only 87 days after it took office, it was mainly the LPF-element that was swapped with executives from the more politically-experienced D'66-party.

4.2 Into depth: reappointments and departments

When comparing the data to previous research in more detail, a few additional observations must be made. The relative over-representation of politically skilled candidates in the data may be due to differences in measuring political expertise versus technical expertise. While Bakema & Secker define technical experience as 'previous experience in occupations which are closely related to the content of the portfolio [to which the minister has been appointed]' (Bakema & Secker, 1988: 159), political

expertise is ‘usually indicated by prior training in parliament’. However, as political skills are not exclusively gained in the national parliamentary arena, it appears a bit arbitrary to label for example city majors as ‘outsiders’. Therefore, this thesis also treats relevant experience in the municipal council or provincial assembly – as well as in the executives of both levels of governance – as political expertise.

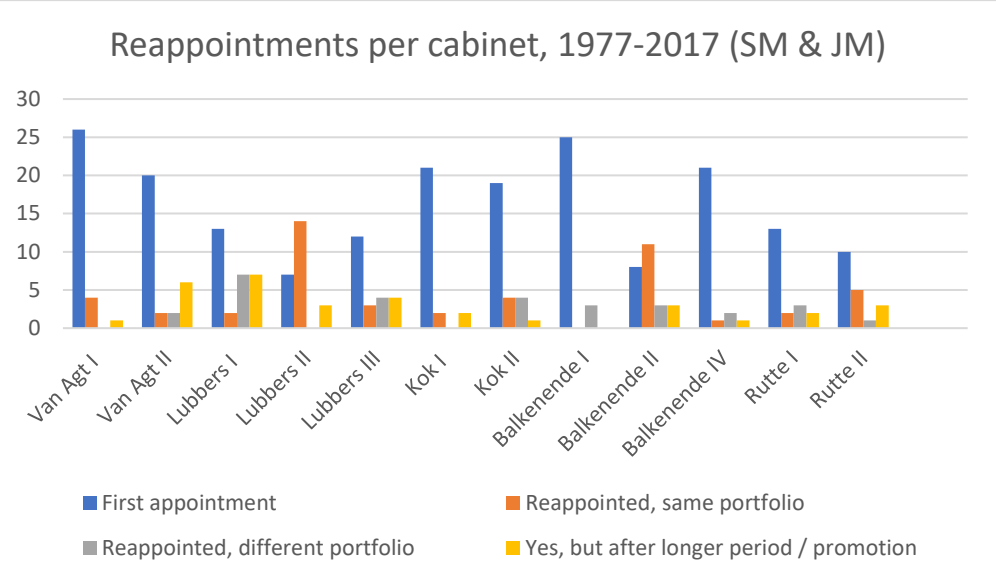
Bakema and Secker found in 1988 that when a minister is reappointed, three out of four times she will be reappointed to the same position as before. Using the sample in this thesis, it is hard to say whether this still holds; out of the 74 reappointments amongst senior ministers (47 percent), 27 returned on the same department in a consecutive cabinet, 18 were put on a different portfolio, and in 29 cases, it was on the same portfolio, but after some years, or after an promotion from junior to senior minister. Therefore, it is safe to say that in case of reappointments the majority of the appointees return to their previous post. When junior and senior ministers are taken together, a similar image appears. Of the 307 cases, in 195 were first-appointments. The remaining 37 percent of the cases involved reappointments, with 17 percent (51 cases) of the appointees directly returning to their previous post, and another 10 percent (32 cases) active at their previous post either after some time or in a different rank. Only 9 percent involved appointments at different ministries.

When we divide reappointments over all the different cabinets, two cabinets stand out in terms of high amount of reappointments: that of CDA-prime minister Lubbers, and the second cabinet of CDA-prime minister Balkenende (Figure 4.1). Both account for a large share of the total amount of reappointments, with 14 and 11 reappointments respectively. Save for these two cabinets, the share of first-time appointees is higher than the amount of ministers with previous experience in office. Also, the ratio ‘first appointment/total’ seems to decline in every consecutive cabinet with the same prime minister: e.g.: The second cabinets of Prime Minister Van Agt, Kok and Rutte all have less first-time appointees than their previous cabinets.

Table 4.5: Reappointments: Frequency and percentages.

Reappointment	Frequency	Percentages
First appointment	195	64
Reappointed	50	16
Reappointed, but to different portfolio	29	9
Reappointed, but after prolonged period, or as promotion from junior to senior minister	33	11

Figure 4.1: Reappointments per cabinet



The different types of ministers are not equally divided amongst the different departments. From the graph below, it becomes obvious that politicians are often appointed at portfolios such as Public Health & Environment, Infrastructure, Waterways and Public Works, Economic Affairs and Defense. The portfolios of Finance, Education and Justice seem to be the domain of technocrats and politico-specialists. When we filter the data for first-appointments, this image persists: Foreign Affairs and Justice are dominated by politico-specialists, while politicians have the upper hand in Agriculture, Defense, Infrastructure, Public Health and – to a lesser extent – Social Housing and Spatial Planning. Education and Home Affairs seem balanced, while Justice and Finance are dominated by nominees with sufficient technical knowledge, the latter to a lesser degree. The portfolio of Culture should be ignored, as it only contains four cases before it was merged with Education in 1994.

Figure 4.2: Aggregated experience for both junior and senior ministers, per cabinet.

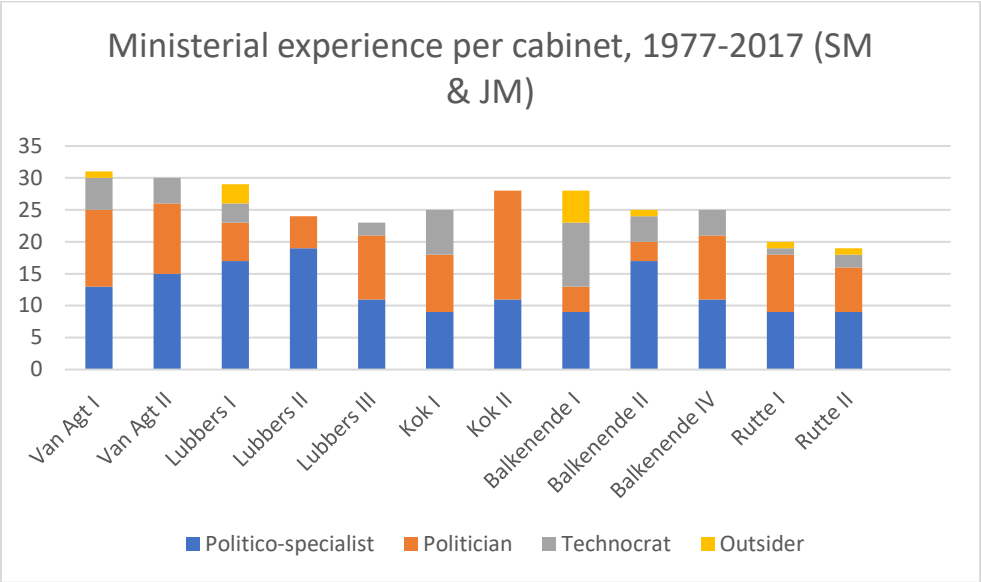


Figure 4.2b: Political versus technical knowledge per cabinet

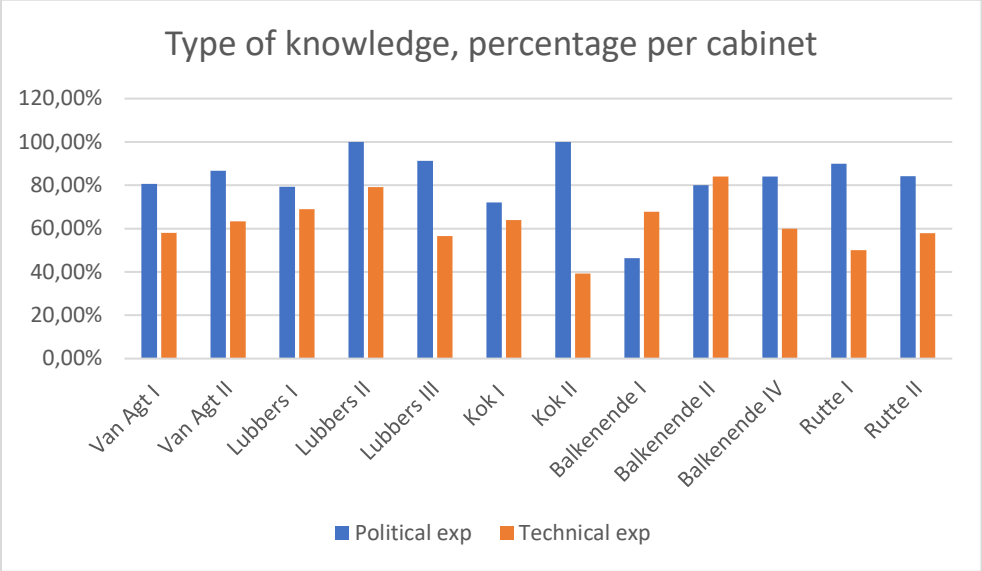


Figure 4.3: Aggregated experience for senior ministers only, per cabinet.

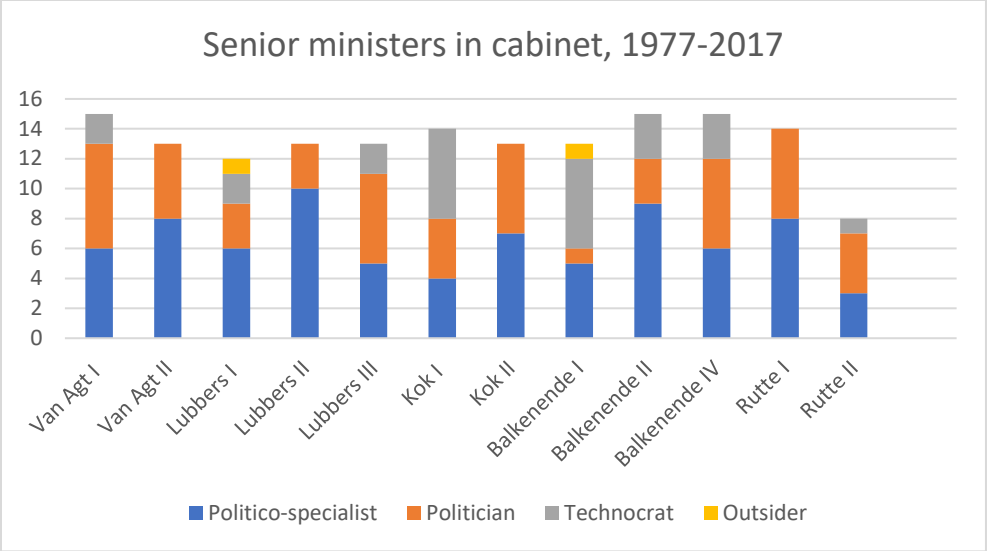


Figure 4.4: Aggregated experience for junior ministers only, per cabinet.

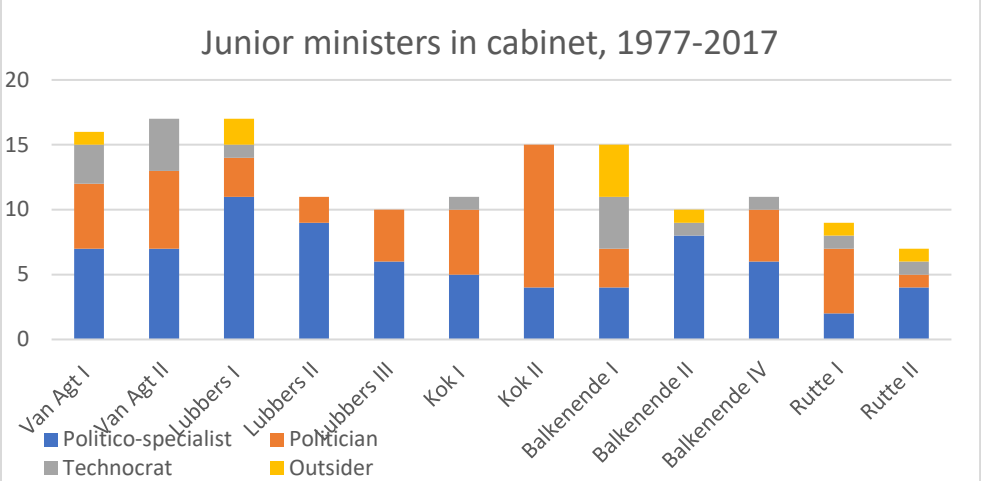
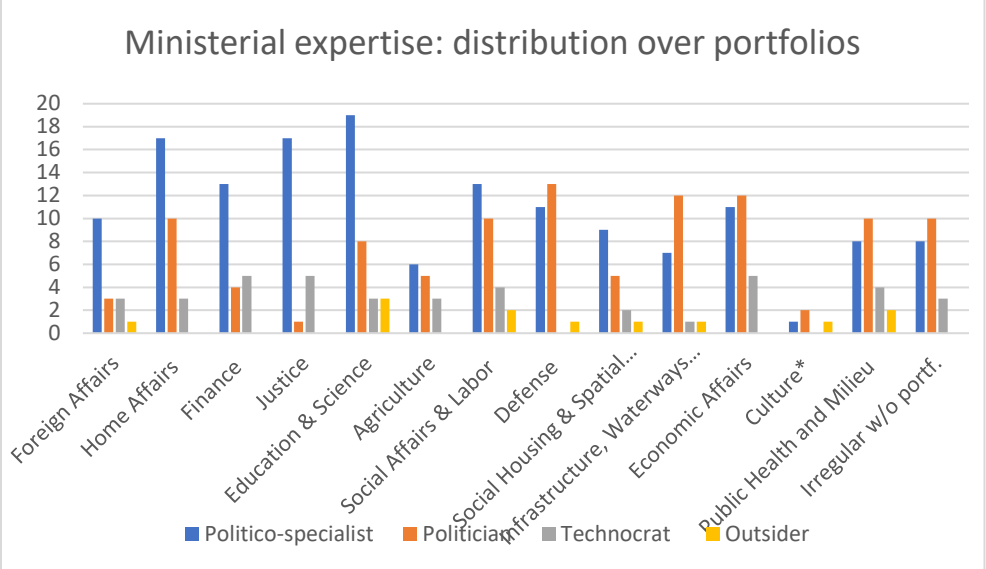


Figure 4.5: Aggregated expertise for ministers, observed per portfolio.



* In 1994, the portfolio of the Minister of Culture was split over other ministerial posts, most notably Education & Science.

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Figure 4.6. Ministerial expertise distributed over different portfolios, in percentages.

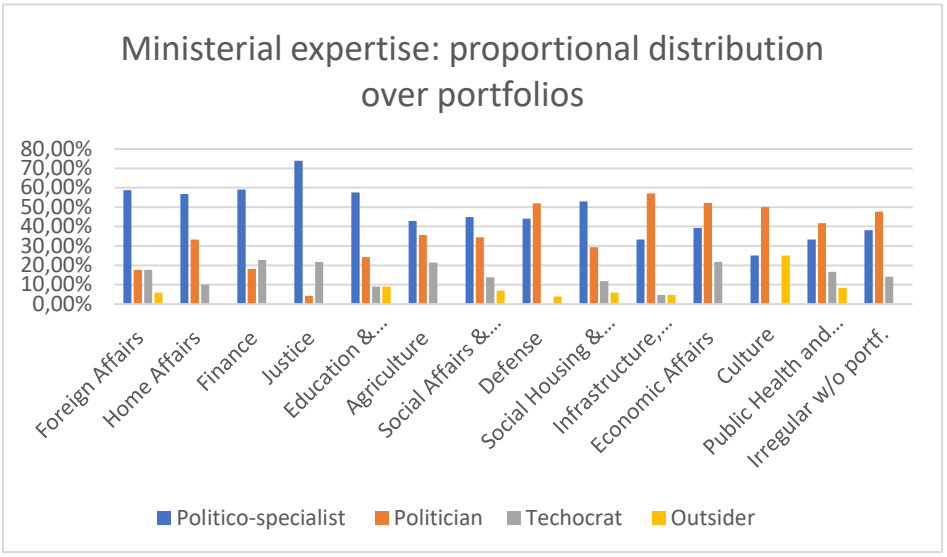


Figure 4.7: types of ministerial expertise at first appointment for junior and senior ministers together, divided per portfolios.

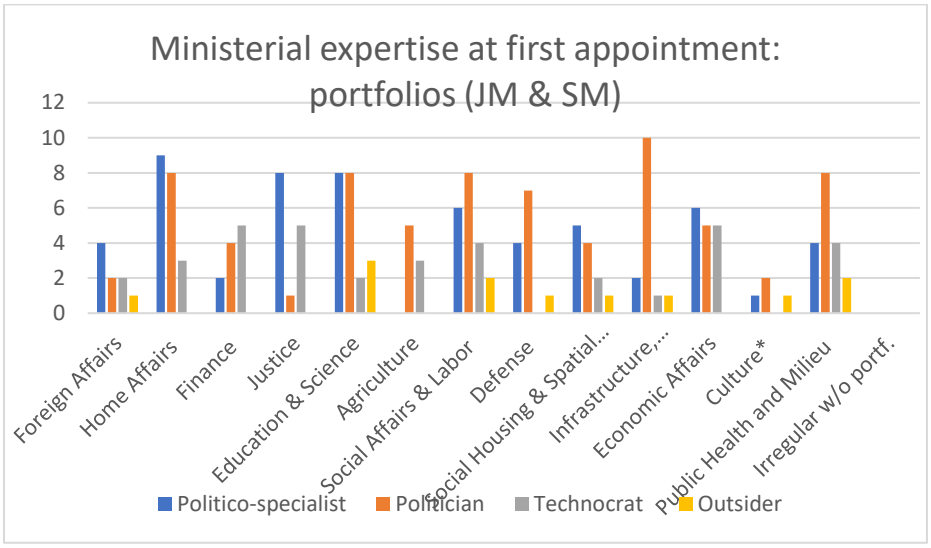
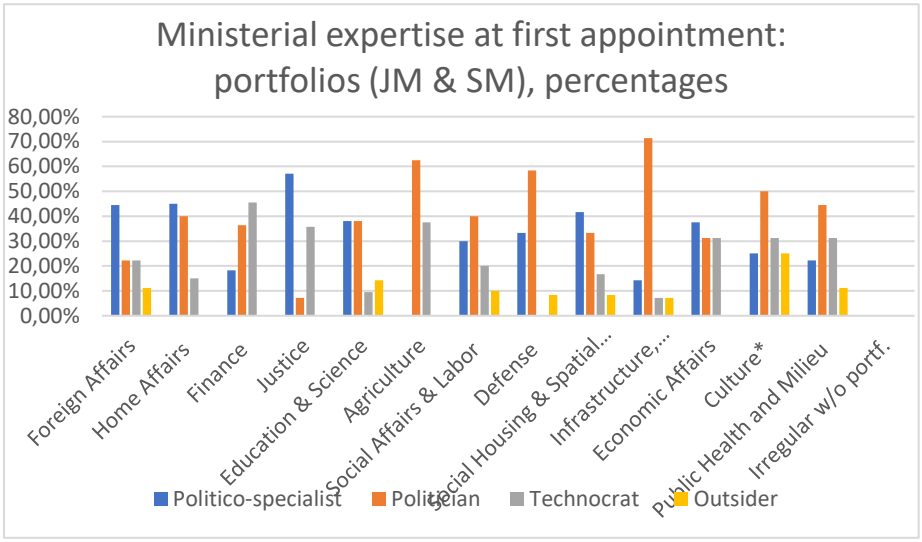


Figure 4.8.: Ministerial expertise at first appointment, for junior and senior ministers together, in percentages. N = 195.



4.3 Differences within parties: gender and reappointments

When we turn our attention to the gender variable, we observe that the presence of female senior and junior ministers does not appear to be linear. In the entire period, there have been 33 female senior and 48 female junior ministers (Figure 4.9). The cabinets led by prime ministers Kok (1994, 1998) and two of the three cabinets of prime minister Balkenende accounted for the largest share of female ministers, both in actual numbers as in percentages. This can be partially be explained by examining the distribution of gender along the lines of party-affiliation. PvdA provided 27 of the 81 female senior and junior ministers in this period, which together comprised 39,1% of all cabinet members fielded by this party in the period. This matches with evidence provided by Van Baalen and Van Kessel (2016) and Leyenaar (2016) who noted that the PvdA-leadership has frequently been under pressure of party-sub-groups to select more female ministers. This pressure was apparently less present during the VVD-PvdA-coalition of 2012-2017, as the number of female executives plummeted back to the average of the pré-1994 period. Other parties are less prone to select female heads, as VVD, CDA and D66 provided respectively 28 percent, 28 percent and 7 percent of the total amount of female ministerial appointments.

Figure 4.9: Female ministers in cabinet, 1977-2012.

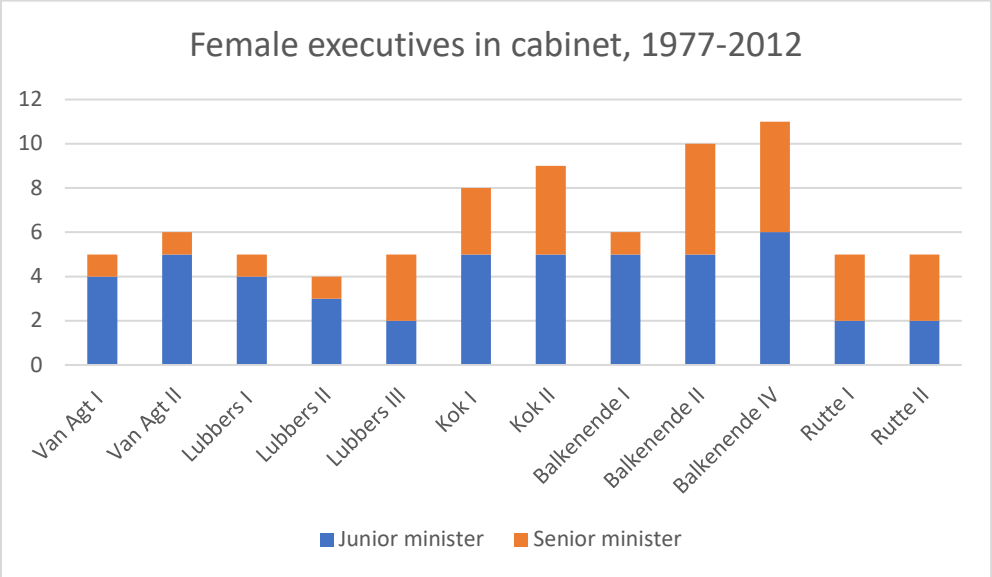
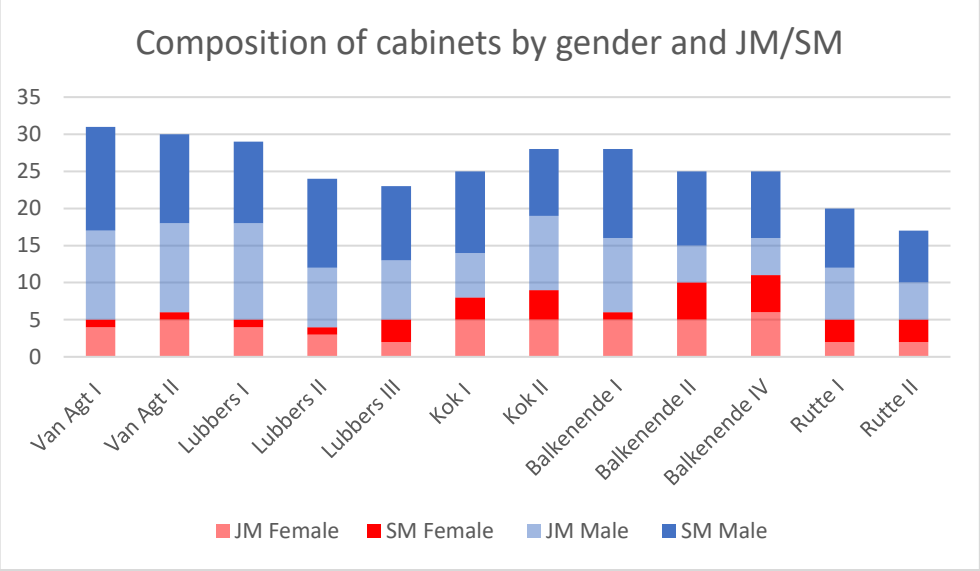


Figure 4.10: Composition of cabinets by gender and type of minister



Upon observing senior and junior ministers separately (Figure 4.10), one notes that this image is reaffirmed: again, PvdA appointed the majority of female junior ministers (38 percent, or 18 cases) – even more than its number of male junior ministers. However, VVD catered more senior female appointees: 33 percent of all female senior ministers belonged to VVD, followed by CDA with 30 percent.

While closer observing the distribution of cases amongst parties, one also discovers that although politico-specialists make up the largest share in all (large) parties, CDA fielded the largest amount of technocrats, whereas VVD appointed relatively more politicians in comparison to CDA and PvdA. Comparison with D66 is tricky, as it contributed only 7 percent, 21 cases in total, to the dataset. Of these, the majority has predominantly political experience (11 cases), with technocrats coming in second. The three ChristianUnion-ministers all have a political-experience profile, while in contrast the right-populist LPF-party selected five technocrats and four outsiders. This may imply that smaller parties, that participate in government less frequently, are more likely to bring politically experienced candidates to the negotiation-table – with the notable exception for non-institutionalized populist parties.

Composing a trivariate-crosstab using the variables for party affiliation (PartyAff), type of expertise (AggrExp) and type of minister (MinType) reveals an interesting statistic amongst appointments for junior ministers: while all roughly 80 percent of the appointees of the mayor parties possess politically-experience (politician and politico-specialist types taken together), CDA seems to value technical expertise higher than its peers. With 64 percent of is appointees being politico-specialists, 74,5% of its appointees are well-acquainted with the matter of their portfolios.

However, this image may be distorted by reappointments, as according to the definition, ministers obtain technical expertise by holding office. An additional crosstab reveals that CDA contributes to 62 percent of all reappointments, and also accounts for 55 percent of all reappointments at different portfolios – adding up to 18 percent of all cases.

When we compare the experience of ministers at first appointment, it appears that CDA comparatively appoints more ministers with political experience, while on the contrary VVD appointed more politico-specialists, and PvdA appears to balance its appointments among politico-specialists (6), politicians (7) and technocrats (5). VVD was the only one to install an outsider-minister. Amongst junior-ministerial appointees, VVD and PvdA installed most politicians (16 and 13 respectively), whereas CDA installed relatively more politico-specialist, and also installed most technocrats (5). However, the differences between the main parties are quite marginal.

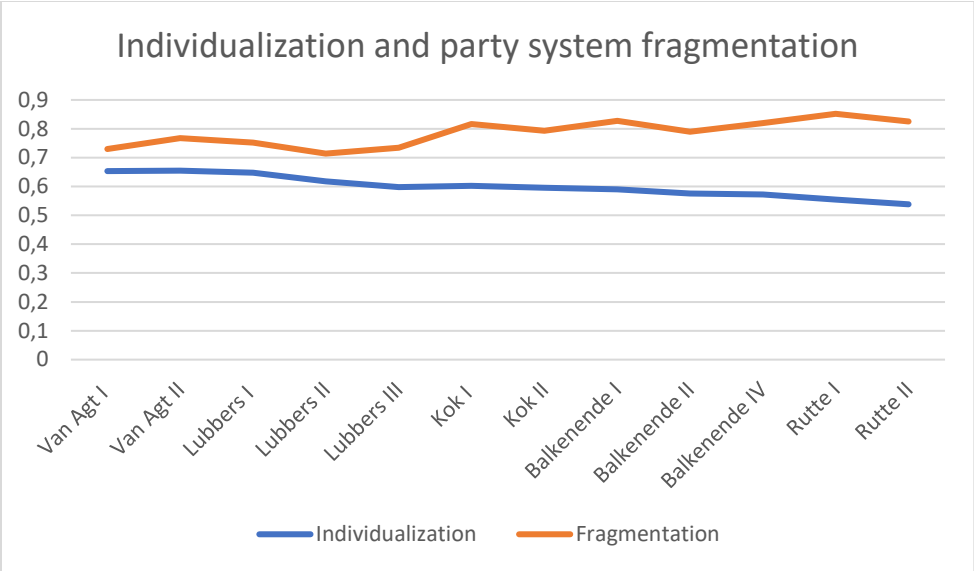
Moreover, the recruitment-pools of Dutch political parties seem to be less diverse than expected: 74 of the 307 appointees were recruited from parliament, and an additional 30 from party-political office. CDA awarded 15 of its party-officials with ministerial postings. Smaller ‘sources’ of appointees are education (15), city mayors (15), business (13), bureaucracy (12). VVD and CDA are more prone to select their candidates from businesses and bureaucracy, while PvdA appears to prefer city mayors. However, these data paint a distorted picture, as the variable for ‘previous experience’ only refers to the profession ministers held directly before they were asked to take seat in office.

4.4 Context-variables and correlations

When we turn towards the context-variables, the compound-variable for individualization shows gradual but steady decline. The fragmentation-variable (from Armingeon et al.’s (2018) CPDS-data set) appears to indicate an increase towards a more fragmented party landscape as well, while the ‘party embeddedness in society’-variable indicates an widening gap between the share of the population willing to commit to party-membership and the amount of citizens voting in elections. This decline has stabilized however, and it seems that there is some recovery during the last two cabinets of

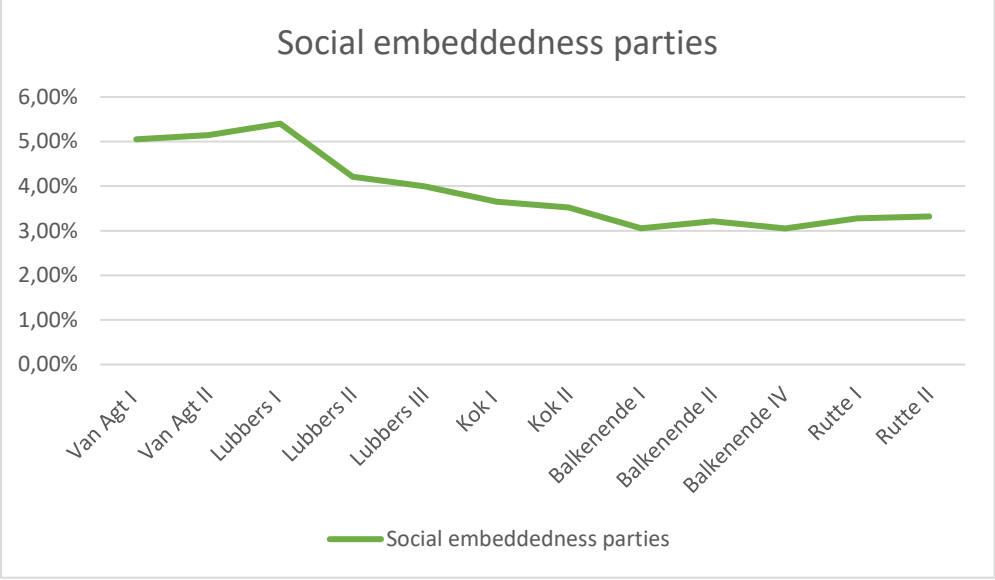
Prime Minister Rutte. The numbers are still low however, and would be even lower if this variable was expressed in share of the population instead of relative to the number of votes cast. The amount of vote cast is overall increasing, be it with some irregular lapses. Nevertheless, these variables appear to embody the processes they are supposed to mimic well.

Figure 4.11: Individualization and party system fragmentation (range 0-1).



Using figures 4.11 (individualization and party system fragmentation) and figure 4.2 and (ministerial expertise divided over cabinets

Figure 4.12: Social embeddedness of political parties (in percentages of cast votes).



However, this may be influenced by the participation of the right-populist LPF in the first cabinet of prime minister Balkenende, where they provided 9 ministers, of which four outsiders, and five classified as technocrats, contributing for 12,5% respectively 33,3% of the total amount cases in their respective categories. Therefore, it is hard to connect any meaningful conclusions to this finding, as rightwing-populist government participation has thus far been an one-off situation. More details about the multinomial logit approach can be found in the appendix.

The variable for the presence of populist challenger parties appears not to be a very useful one: populist parties have had more than one seat in parliament for most of the selected twelve cabinets. Save for the cabinets of prime minister Van Agt, and the second cabinet of prime minister Kok, populist parties were present in parliament. A better measure would be seat-share, as the presence of the CentrumDemocraten was in 1982 still quite marginal and thus could be silenced by *cordon sanitaire*, this was not the case with the rise of LPF and later the Freedom Party (PVV) of Geert Wilders. The latter's support was even essential for the survival of the minority cabinet of prime minister Rutte in 2008.

4.5 Testing hypotheses

As said before, it proved to be hard to get robust results from the multinomial logit model due to violated assumptions and recurring multicollinearity. Therefore, the statistical analysis did not provide the results I aimed for, and did not provide me with reliable data to use to refute or confirm the hypotheses from chapter 2.

Concerning hypothesis H1, I found no evidence that individualism has an significant effect on the chance that a minister has a different experience-profile than the reference category ('politician-profile'), when controlling for the presence of populist challenger parties, party-affiliation, the number of parties in the coalition, party system fragmentation and earlier government breakup. The only significant effect in the model, with an alpha of 0,05, was an effect of presence of populist challenger parties on the aggregated expertise of ministerial appointees. From the output of the multinomial logit analysis, it followed that in the presence of a populist challenger party, the odds of a minister having an technocrat profile relative to an political profile increase. This may be of relevance for providing a statement about Hypothesis 6.

Following Tables 4.1-4.4 and figures 4.2 and 4.11, there appears to be an increase in the number of ministers with political experience that was appointed, which was partially offset by an increase in technical know-how among ministers in the post 2002-period. The cabinets of Prime Minister Kok held the largest amount of 'pure-type politicians'. However, the data contains too few cabinets to be able to discern a trend. Rather, it appears that cabinets led by the same prime minister share similarities in the distribution of expertise-profiles. Other factors may be of influence as well.

With regards to the second hypothesis, the numbers of ministers with direct experience in 'visible' professions is too low to make any trustworthy inferences. This is partially due to the way of measuring previous experience, as only the previous workplace was measured, thus missing anyone who was employed in a different field after the occupation of interest. The total number of city mayors therefore only measured 15, while this could have been larger. In addition, the definition was too vague.

No conclusive answer could be given to the third hypothesis, as the share of ministers with a background in social or labor organizations was to low: only 20 minister had experience in labor organizations, and 12 had experience in employer organizations. It must be noted however that both cabinets of prime minister Rutte did not have any ministers with experience in such organizations.

Also the fourth hypothesis lacks an answer. While the chance that a minister has a politician-profile did decrease instead of increase, it is unclear whether this concerns only accidental correlation or also causation, because it was impossible to test this.

As for the fifth hypothesis, there was no clear linear or other trend towards more reappointments. As said, the second cabinet of prime minister Lubbers and the second cabinet of prime minister Balkenende had the highest number of reappointees, comparatively and in actual numbers.

Although the multinomial logit model did provide an significant effect for sixth and seventh hypothesis, the outcome of this analysis is not trustworthy. The analysis indicated that in the presence of populist challenger parties the odds of a minister falling in the category of outsider or technocrat are significantly higher than the odds of a minister being member of the politician-category, but the binary independent variable for presence of populist challenger parties is multicollinear with cabinets. Moreover, the LPF-party in the first cabinet of prime minister Balkenende makes this cabinet an outlier, as the LPF brought in four outsiders and five ministers of the technocrat-category. However, this result could merit further research, perhaps with a better coded variable for populist challenger parties (such as one that employs a total share of seats in parliament), or with other research methods such as process tracing.

Regarding the 8th hypothesis, the multinomial logit model provided an almost significant effect (0,069) for the odds that a minister falls within the technocrat category relative to the odds that a minister is an politician when a coalition has more coalition partners. However, the effect is still insignificant with an significance interval of 0,05. Also, the number of coalition partners does not exceed three, and a such the data is almost binary in this regard. A closer inspection, using a cross-tabs table, indicates that while there is indeed a difference between cabinets with two and three coalition partners, it is relatively small.

Finally, concerning hypothesis 9, I did not find a relationship between the chance that a junior minister has only political experience and an increase on party-system fragmentation. The largest amount of junior ministers was present during the second cabinet of Prime Minister Kok, but it appears that there is a decline in politician-type junior minsters after, both in absolute as in relative terms.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Summary

This thesis started as an attempt to understand more of what happens in the 'black box' of government formations in multiparty systems. One of the key issues with government formations in multiparty systems is that they are often non-transparent and unpredictable.

To uncover at least some of these mechanisms, I posed the research question mentioned in the introduction:

> *Have macro-level developments such as individualization, personalization of politics, party system fragmentation, mediatization and the changed role of political parties in society, influenced the personal staffing of ministerial posts after elections in the Netherlands in 1977-2017?*

Due to time- and operational constraints I chose to focus on individualization and party-decline, two topics frequently cited to have influenced the prime principal in this thesis, political parties, the most. I created a dataset including descriptive data on all ministers that were appointed to Dutch government cabinets in the period 1977-2017, totaling up to 307 appointments in 12 cabinets. Using a descriptive analysis, I set off to explore the data, before attempting to test my hypotheses using a multinomial logit model.

The descriptive analysis confirmed the observation by Bakema and Secker that the majority of Dutch government ministers has technical experience with the field she or he is appointed to. Although the data did partially confirm Bakema and Secker's (1988) conclusion that the predominantly politically experienced minister was winning ground, it also shows us that with the turn of the century, the Dutch political practice seems to follow the Europe-wide trend towards more technocratic ministers. However, the two cabinets of prime minister Mark Rutte seem to reserve this trend only to the level of junior minister, as senior ministerial appointments are still largely dominated by politically experienced candidates.

As such, the data seem to provide only a few new observations. The image of a cabinet consisting largely of ministers who are both technically and politically seasoned still holds, but from the data, one may deduct that the heydays of the pure-type politician are over. The type of experience of ministers also seems to differ along party-lines: from the descriptive analysis it followed that CDA enlisted most technocrats, and had the largest number of reappointments, whereas PvdA distinguished itself in providing governments with female ministers. Remarkable also was that smaller parties, such as D66 and ChristianUnion (CU) put forward more 'politician'-type ministers than the three large parties.

Moreover, ministerial experience seems to follow separate trends at departmental level, as the 'spending departments' of Public Health, Defense, Economic Affairs, Infrastructure, Waterways and Public works appear to be dominated by politicians, while Foreign Affairs, Finance, Justice and Home Affairs are still the domain of politico-specialists. In this sense, the 'de-technocratisation' of the ministries of Defense and Infrastructure, Waterways and Public Works seem to be continuing in present days as well. In addition, technocrats are common at the departments of Finance, Justice and Economic Affairs.

5.2. Conclusion

The findings of the descriptive and statistical analysis cannot answer the research question affirmatively. I found that while individualization, party system fragmentation and party-decline appear to develop at rather constant pace, these developments do not seem to be correlated with the

type of ministers that was appointed to office. Ministerial experience appears to behave rather random, and the variance couldn't be explained by the model. While the statistical analysis did find some significant correlations for the presence of populist parties and control variables, the model experienced high multicollinearity, due to which any elements necessary to test the hypotheses were not robust, and thus unsafe to use for any statement. The model seemed to indicate that the presence of a populist challenger party may have some effect on the type of minister that is appointed to office, but this may be due to the fact that the populistic LPF-party joined cabinet in 2002 following a landslide victory, only three months after they were founded – and thus had to select their ministers from scratch. More data is needed to clarify whether this finding is more than just cohesion. Also, a different, better fitted model is needed to provide a definite answer to the research question fully.

How then to answer the central question of this thesis? From an argumentative perspective, there is little evidence for any causal relation between the trends and the continuing membership decline amongst political parties or the increasing individualization of society. If political parties react and adapt to these developments by tuning their teams of ministers, I have not been able to find evidence for this, and can therefore reject nor accept the hypotheses.

This means that there are probably other dynamics at play inside the 'black box' of government formation. It appears that the type of minister appointed to cabinet is also to some extent dependent on specific party preferences. This is worrying, as the report by Final Report of the State Commission on the Parliamentary System in the Netherlands (Remkes, 2018) pointed towards an increasing gap between citizen and politics. In the Dutch multiparty proportional parliamentary system, the voter does select his representatives, but has little to no influence on the formation of government, and thus the formation of power (Remkes, 2018). Moreover, the formation negotiations may lead to policy for which there is no majority support amongst the electorate, Remkes notes (2018, p. 42). This influence will diminish even further with the ongoing party system fragmentation, as coalitions with more parties lead to more complicated coalition agreements.

Remkes (2018) connects this lack of influence on the eventual election result – the formation of a government - to increasing citizen disappointment with politics. Other citizen concerns were 'unrealistic promises by politicians' (among 80 percent of the respondents), 'lack of transparent policy making' (60 percent of the respondents) and 'politicians without experience outside politics'(about 40 percent of the respondents) (2018, p. 54). The report of the state commission ends with recommendations for a more personalized electoral system, but with higher thresholds – and minister Ollongren (Home Affairs) seems to agree (Frank Hendrickx, 2019). While this may be good to increase the 'substantive representation' of the voter, this is also likely to encourage further personalization. Together with an increasing fragmented party landscape, government coalitions are likely to contain more political parties, leading to more compromise. Because substantial representation in parliament does not always translate into policy – as we have seen, in the most visible office of representative democracy, the cabinet, other mechanisms seem to be at play. Also, from this thesis it became apparent that small parties are more likely to field politician-type ministers, who are more likely to do unrealistic promises. Therefore, while the goal of Remkes' and Ollogrens proposal is to bring politics and citizen closer to each other, the effect may be the opposite.

What other factors then may influence ministerial selection in multiparty systems? From the descriptive analysis above, it became obvious that these preferences differ from party to party. PvdA fielded the most female ministers, and moreover selected the most city mayors as minister. More interesting is that evidence provided by Van Baalen en Van Kessel (2016) and Leyenaar (2016) indicates that PvdA is susceptible to pressure from inside. CDA on the other hand opted relatively often for ministers with technical expertise on their field, thus with either an technocratic or politico-specialist profiles, while VVD picked comparatively many of its appointees from the business-sector.

Fleischer and Seyfried (2015) argued that political parties select certain candidates to show their interest in a particular portfolio, or to show the voter that they are serious on a particular topic. They also argued that ministerial selection is affected by policy bargains. As such, it could be that a candidate's ideas about a certain policy-issue is more important than her or his expertise.

Another possible factor could be participation in the coalition negotiations. Many of the participants in the negotiations that led to the establishment of the first cabinet of prime minister Rutte later took seat in cabinet (Bukman, 2011). Prime minister Balkenende was known to select his confidants for his cabinet (Van Baalen & Van Kessel, 2016), and anecdotical evidence suggests that this has been done by their predecessors as well (cf. Joustra & Van Venetië, 1989; Van Merrienboer, Bootsma & Van Griensven, 2008). This would imply that personal networks and relations are of higher importance than expertise. Using the current dataset, it could be possible to code for every appointee whether she or he was present during the coalition negotiation-meetings, or whether she or he can be considered a trustee of the prime minister or one of the vice-prime ministers.

5.2. Theoretical contribution

While the thesis did not manage to provide an conclusive answer to the research question, it does provide some interesting observations. A first contribution of this thesis is that it has extended the knowledge about Dutch post-war politics, and as such expanded previous work by Bakema and Secker (1988) and Hans Daalder (Daalder & Hubée-Boonzaaijer, 1971, as cited by Bakema & Secker, 1988). This thesis also expanded Bakema & Secker's research, by exploring the distribution of ministerial expertise among political parties, and attempting to connect the developments found by them to macro-developments.

However, as I have not been able to find compelling evidence that the societal processes at the core of this thesis influence ministerial selection, other factors may be at play.

5.3. Discussion: limitations of current approach and suggestions for future research

Although the descriptive part provided some interesting data, the applied statistical approach did not provide the results expected. As mentioned before, the data is highly multicollinear on multiple variables. This has a couple of reasons: first, the data appear to behave like hierarchical data, with two levels: a level of cabinets, and a lower level of ministerial appointments. Thus, the independent errors are violated.

If we would stick with the current approach, the problem with multicollinearity could be solved in two ways: find other explanatory variables that are less connected to cabinets, or include more cases, and thus more cabinets. The sample size of Bakema and Secker (1988) was for example 423 ministers, covering 747 ministerial appointments (1988, p. 159). As such, their sample is twice the size. Bäck et al. (2009) ramped up their size to 912 cases, using a different unit of analysis.

In addition, the current approach only pays attention to appointment, not time in office. Also, it only considers the demand side of the principal-agent equation: the demands the principal has. However, from the books of Leyenaar (2016) and Van Baalen and Van Kessel (2016) we learn that individuals also turn down ministerial posts when offered. From this perspective, the current approach neglects supply. If supply is going down, party politics may be in even a worse situation that has been observed before, as then apparently political parties are both losing their ideologic appeal and longer viable career alternatives.

However, the current approach has some other significant shortcomings: it uses input and outcome to decide what happens in the 'black box' of government formation. Instead, actually opening this black box may, by studying biographies, archives, or by interviewing party leaders that select and approach ministers-to-be may provide an actual peak into this black box.

This thesis did however provide interesting directions for future research. The hunch of evidence that the presence of populist parties may have an effect should be investigated further, using more reliable methods. As mentioned, a way to improve this might be by making a continuous variable for presence of populist challenger party, allowing to model this effect in a more reliable manner. Another interesting perspective is provided by the fact that some political parties seem to dominate in certain expertise-types.

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Appendix 1: Multinomial logit model

A1.1 Introduction

As mentioned in chapter 3, I employ a multinomial logistic regression to investigate possible relationships between the dependent variable (experience) and the independent variables, as the dependent variable is categorical.

A1.2 Testing assumptions of the model

The first assumption of the model is that the dependent variable should be a nominal one or ordinal. Arguably, this assumption is satisfied by the fact that AggrExp, the main dependent, is nominal with four categories. Second, the observations should be independent, and the categories on the dependent must be both mutually exclusive and exhaustive. As a case can have only one value on the dependent variable, AggrExp, and this variable contains four categories, these assumptions are met. Also, multinomial logistic models do assume independence of the independent variable, and non-perfect separation (Starkweather & Moske, 2011).

As the multinomial logistic approach does not assume normality, linearity or homoscedasticity, we do not need to control whether the data is distributed normally, or has similar variance. We do need to check however for linearity and independence of errors, as the latter may cause overdispersion (Field, 2014). The second assumption will be tested using a Hausman-McFadden test. The third assumption, linearity, unfortunately cannot be tested using the method proposed by Field (2014: 794), as this method assumes the dependent to be binary – which it is not. The assumption of non-multicollinearity can be tested using the VIF-values of a collinearity test of a regular linear regression (Field, 2014: 324-325).

As SPSS does not have a function that tests for normally distributed errors in a multinomial setting, this should be done using a linear regression. A Durban-Watson test done on the dependent variable 'AggrExp' and the independent variables shows a value of 1,843, which is acceptable. Durban-Watson tests are dependent on data with a natural order, which our variables are not.

To spot multicollinearity, I first create a correlations-table (table A.1) for all variables in the model: aggregated experience (AggrExp), Party embeddedness in society (PartyDecl), Presence of populist challenger party (PopChallParty), the Armingeon et al. (2018) data for Party system fragmentation (Fragment), Aggregate variable for individualism (Individualism), the amount of coalition partners (NumCoalition), the control variable for government breakup before elections (GovBreak) and Party Affiliation (PartyAff). From this table, we learn that Aggregate experience correlates with the variables PopChallParty, Fragment, and Party (faction) Affiliation. This makes sense, since the data was gathered during fixed timeframes: all observations on these variables for ministers appointed during the period of cabinet *x* are similar, as the appointments were done in the same conditions. However, the correlation table also shows some Pearson-values of >0,7, which is an indicator for bias. This is most notably the case with the correlation between Party Decline and Individualism.

Therefore, these variables must be included in a bivariate regression analysis with correlation check to inspect their VIF-values for signs of multicollinearity.

When testing on the dependent variable for multicollinearity, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) is exceptionally large with the variables *Cabinet*, *Individualism*, and to a somewhat lesser extent for *Party Decline* (see table A.2).

Table A.1: Correlations

Correlations

		Aggr. Exp.	Party Decline	Pop. Chall. Party	Party System Fragmentation	Aggr. variable individualism	No. parties in govt	after breakup?	Party Affiliation
Aggregate Experience	Pearson Correlation	1	-,079	,136*	,172**	-,029	,096	-,039	-,124*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,170	,017	,003	,613	,094	,501	,030
	N	307	307	307	307	307	307	307	307
Party Decline variable	Pearson Correlation	-,079	1	-,491**	-,715**	,910**	-,414**	,048	,473**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,170		,000	,000	,000	,000	,397	,000
	N	307	307	307	307	307	307	307	307
Populist Challenger Party	Pearson Correlation	,136*	-,491**	1	,589**	-,576**	,071	,393**	-,344**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,017	,000		,000	,000	,214	,000	,000
	N	307	307	307	307	307	307	307	307
Party System Fragmentation	Pearson Correlation	,172**	-,715**	,589**	1	-,707**	,482**	-,059	-,528**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,003	,000	,000		,000	,000	,306	,000
	N	307	307	307	307	307	307	307	307
Aggregate variable for individualism	Pearson Correlation	-,029	,910**	-,576**	-,707**	1	-,127*	-,207**	,456**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,613	,000	,000	,000		,026	,000	,000
	N	307	307	307	307	307	307	307	307
No. of parties in govt.	Pearson Correlation	,096	-,414**	,071	,482**	-,127*	1	-,523**	-,329**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,094	,000	,214	,000	,026		,000	,000
	N	307	307	307	307	307	307	307	307
Formation after earlier breakup?	Pearson Correlation	-,039	,048	,393**	-,059	-,207**	-,523**	1	,056
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,501	,397	,000	,306	,000	,000		,329
	N	307	307	307	307	307	307	307	307
Party (faction) Affiliation	Pearson Correlation	-,124*	,473**	-,344**	-,528**	,456**	-,329**	,056	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,030	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,329	
	N	307	307	307	307	307	307	307	307

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table A.2: Coefficients[a] with all variables

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-8,023	5,605		-1,432	,153		
	Cabinet appointment was done in	-,080	,101	-,327	-,796	,427	,018	54,819
	Party Decline variable	-53,502	21,690	-,542	-2,467	,014	,064	15,703
	Aggregate variable for individualism	,077	,067	,505	1,144	,254	,016	63,360
	Government formation after earlier goverment breakup?	,071	,141	,042	,501	,617	,442	2,260
	Number of Coalition partners in government	-,327	,183	-,194	-1,788	,075	,260	3,840
	Party System Fragmentation	7,647	2,540	,395	3,011	,003	,179	5,585
	Populist Challenger Party present	,177	,143	,103	1,242	,215	,449	2,225
	Party (faction) Affiliation	-,006	,005	-,082	-1,224	,222	,685	1,460

a. Dependent Variable: Aggregate Experience

Table A.3: Coefficients[a] with normal variables

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-11,586	3,369		-3,439	,001		
	Party Decline variable	-57,123	21,194	-,579	-2,695	,007	,067	15,012
	Aggregate variable for individualism	,123	,035	,805	3,516	,001	,059	17,075
	Government formation after earlier goverment breakup?	,044	,137	,026	,318	,751	,470	2,127
	Number of Coalition partners in government	-,378	,171	-,225	-2,208	,028	,297	3,368
	Party System Fragmentation	6,538	2,122	,338	3,081	,002	,256	3,906
	Populist Challenger Party present	,164	,142	,095	1,158	,248	,456	2,195
	Party (faction) Affiliation	-,006	,005	-,082	-1,222	,223	,685	1,460

a. Dependent Variable: Aggregate Experience

Table A.4: Coefficients[a] with standardized variables

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-2,507	1,492		-1,680	,094		
	Zscore: Party Decline variable	-,488	,181	-,579	-2,695	,007	,067	15,012
	Zscore: Aggregate variable for individualism	,678	,193	,805	3,516	,001	,059	17,075
	Government formation after earlier goverment breakup?	,044	,137	,026	,318	,751	,470	2,127
	Number of Coalition partners in government	-,378	,171	-,225	-2,208	,028	,297	3,368
	Party System Fragmentation	6,538	2,122	,338	3,081	,002	,256	3,906
	Populist Challenger Party present	,164	,142	,095	1,158	,248	,456	2,195
	Party (faction) Affiliation	-,006	,005	-,082	-1,222	,223	,685	1,460

a. Dependent Variable: Aggregate Experience

We find that the control variable 'Cabinet' has a VIF-scores of almost 55, while an VIF of over 10 may be problematic (Field, 2014, p. 325). Also the variables 'Individualism' and 'party decline' have high-VIF scores: 63 and 16 respectively. Moreover, an average VIF-value larger than 1 is an indication for bias – and this VIF-table only has one value smaller than 2. According to Field's same chapter, the tolerance values should not be below 0,1, and values below 0,2 indicate potential problems (Field, 2014, p. 325). According to Field, there is little that can be done against multicollinearity: one might omit variables that are theoretically of less interest, so I here opt to exclude the control variable for 'Cabinet'.

Unfortunately, omitting 'cabinet' does not solve the multicollinearity-issue (Table A.3). Also, rerunning a linear regression to obtain VIF-indicators still yields VIF-values larger than 10. We can try to correct these values by standardizing the multicollinear variables, but this unfortunately did not change much. Field advices to omit variables, yet warns for bias and arbitrariness (Field, 2014: 797). Omitting the control variable 'Cabinet' is theoretically justifiable, as it is not one of the main issues of interest here. Furthermore, its values resonate with 'Individualism' and 'party decline' as ministers appointed during the same cabinet share the same values for the latter two variables.

When we estimate the two variables in separate models however, the VIF-values are acceptable. To obtain additional data, I decided to run four multinomial logit models: one with all variables in it, except for Cabinet; one with all except Cabinet and Individualism; one with all except PopChallParty and Cabinet; and finally one without both explanatory variables and without Cabinet.

All models show significant (with α=0,05) effects for the effect of the presence of populist challenger parties on the odds of having a minister who is technocrat versus a minister who is politician (politician is reference category), and outsider versus politician. Also individualism has a significant, yet smaller effect on the odds of a minister being a technocrat versus a minister being a politician, as well as the odds of having an outsider versus a politician (see table A 1.5). However, as multicollinearity confuses SPSS's analysis, and the multicollinearity causes biased standard errors, it is unsafe to use this data for any statements or conclusions.

From the tables (A 1.5-A 1.7) it becomes clear that the variables for VarPartyDecline and Fragment provide remarkable values for the lower and upper bounds of the confidence interval.

A 1.5: Table for: Effect Individualism & VarPartyDecline on Aggregate Experience. Parameter Estimates

Aggregate Experience[a]		B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B)	
								Lower Bound	Upper Bound
politico-specialist	Intercept	12,440	9,544	1,699	1	,192			
	Individualism	-,077	,098	,617	1	,432	,926	,764	1,122
	VarPartyDecline	37,185	59,872	,386	1	,535	14104816708648210,000	1,535E-35	1,296E+67
	GovBreak	-,263	,381	,477	1	,490	,768	,364	1,622
	NumCoalition	,416	,484	,737	1	,391	1,515	,587	3,914
	Fragment	-10,213	5,993	2,904	1	,088	3,669E-5	2,904E-10	4,635
	Popchallparty	,800	,405	3,909	1	,048	2,225	1,007	4,918
	PartyAff	,023	,013	3,118	1	,077	1,023	,997	1,050
technocrat	Intercept	-38,676	16,649	5,396	1	,020			
	Individualism	,365	,157	5,388	1	,020	1,440	1,058	1,959
	VarPartyDecline	-150,194	89,461	2,819	1	,093	5,908E-66	4,191E-142	83279444968,263
	GovBreak	,420	,615	,467	1	,495	1,522	,456	5,085
	NumCoalition	-,068	,704	,009	1	,923	,934	,235	3,716
	Fragment	11,337	10,600	1,144	1	,285	83854,001	7,951E-5	88431760495774,400
	Popchallparty	1,366	,603	5,129	1	,024	3,921	1,202	12,795
	PartyAff	,007	,021	,126	1	,722	1,007	,967	1,050
outsider	Intercept	-65,778	34,579	3,619	1	,057			
	Individualism	,696	,364	3,647	1	,056	2,006	,982	4,098
	VarPartyDecline	-341,364	215,624	2,506	1	,113	5,594E-149	,000	193795267451545400000000000000000000,000
	GovBreak	,440	1,402	,098	1	,754	1,552	,099	24,248
	NumCoalition	-2,850	1,702	2,804	1	,094	,058	,002	1,625
	Fragment	21,745	17,871	1,481	1	,224	2778319025,705	1,705E-6	45262563240938740000000000,000
	Popchallparty	3,136	1,373	5,215	1	,022	23,015	1,560	339,563
	PartyAff	,005	,035	,023	1	,880	1,005	,939	1,077

a. The reference category is: politician.

A 1.6: Table for: Effect Individualism on Aggregate Experience. Parameter Estimates

Aggregate Experience[a]		B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B)	
								Lower Bound	Upper Bound
politico-specialist	Intercept	8,109	6,648	1,488	1	,223			
	Individualism	-,020	,037	,273	1	,601	,981	,911	1,055
	GovBreak	-,193	,363	,283	1	,594	,824	,405	1,679
	NumCoalition	,222	,368	,365	1	,546	1,249	,607	2,572
	Fragment	-8,997	5,623	2,561	1	,110	,000	2,026E-9	7,560
	Popchallparty	,786	,401	3,835	1	,050	2,194	,999	4,815
	PartyAff	,023	,013	3,054	1	,081	1,023	,997	1,049
technocrat	Intercept	-21,627	13,134	2,712	1	,100			
	Individualism	,124	,066	3,561	1	,059	1,132	,995	1,287
	GovBreak	,007	,594	,000	1	,990	1,007	,315	3,224
	NumCoalition	,630	,550	1,313	1	,252	1,877	,639	5,513
	Fragment	8,283	10,321	,644	1	,422	3955,991	6,492E-6	2410489999236,064
	Popchallparty	1,536	,595	6,664	1	,010	4,646	1,448	14,913
	PartyAff	,011	,021	,261	1	,609	1,011	,970	1,053
outsider	Intercept	-30,400	25,184	1,457	1	,227			
	Individualism	,168	,121	1,918	1	,166	1,183	,933	1,501
	GovBreak	-,625	1,203	,270	1	,603	,535	,051	5,652
	NumCoalition	-,807	1,068	,571	1	,450	,446	,055	3,618
	Fragment	16,347	18,579	,774	1	,379	12573680,279	1,929E-9	819434644422551700000000,000
	Popchallparty	2,806	1,232	5,188	1	,023	16,550	1,479	185,178
	PartyAff	,010	,035	,090	1	,764	1,011	,944	1,082

a. The reference category is: politician.

A.1.7 Table for: Effect VarPartyDecline on Aggregate Experience. Parameter Estimates

Aggregate Experience[a]		B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B)	
								Lower Bound	Upper Bound
politico-specialist	Intercept	5,999	4,352	1,900	1	,168			
	VarPartyDecline	-6,525	22,759	,082	1	,774	,001	6,226E-23	34557067873799928,000
	GovBreak	-,173	,361	,229	1	,632	,841	,414	1,708
	NumCoalition	,172	,361	,228	1	,633	1,188	,586	2,409
	Fragment	-8,133	5,166	2,479	1	,115	,000	1,176E-8	7,329
	Popchallparty	,803	,402	3,989	1	,046	2,231	1,015	4,905
	PartyAff	,022	,013	2,932	1	,087	1,022	,997	1,048
technocrat	Intercept	-5,943	7,641	,605	1	,437			
	VarPartyDecline	38,514	35,310	1,190	1	,275	53250423596073704,000	4,685E-14	6,052E+46
	GovBreak	-,386	,529	,533	1	,465	,680	,241	1,916
	NumCoalition	,825	,546	2,279	1	,131	2,281	,782	6,654
	Fragment	,536	8,475	,004	1	,950	1,709	1,045E-7	27959505,255
	Popchallparty	1,613	,600	7,220	1	,007	5,020	1,547	16,287
	PartyAff	,015	,021	,541	1	,462	1,015	,975	1,058
outsider	Intercept	-7,242	13,320	,296	1	,587			
	VarPartyDecline	46,981	62,626	,563	1	,453	25338509410248937000 0,000	1,249E-33	5,142E+73
	GovBreak	-1,185	1,026	1,333	1	,248	,306	,041	2,285
	NumCoalition	-,506	1,037	,238	1	,626	,603	,079	4,601
	Fragment	3,523	13,760	,066	1	,798	33,878	6,567E-11	17477418681335,656
	Popchallparty	3,041	1,263	5,796	1	,016	20,917	1,760	248,616
	PartyAff	,017	,035	,221	1	,639	1,017	,949	1,089

a. The reference category is: politician.

Table A.7: Effect Individualism on Aggregate Experience. Parameter Estimates

Aggregate Experience[a]		B	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% Confidence Interval for Exp(B)	
								Lower Bound	Upper Bound
politico-specialist	Intercept	5,268	3,364	2,452	1	,117			
	GovBreak	-,179	,363	,243	1	,622	,836	,411	1,703
	NumCoalition	,185	,360	,264	1	,607	1,203	,594	2,438
	Fragment	-7,575	4,661	2,642	1	,104	,001	5,531E-8	4,758
	Popchallparty	,823	,396	4,326	1	,038	2,277	1,049	4,943
	PartyAff	,021	,013	2,842	1	,092	1,022	,997	1,047
technocrat	Intercept	-,285	5,309	,003	1	,957			
	GovBreak	-,492	,504	,952	1	,329	,612	,228	1,642
	NumCoalition	,660	,515	1,641	1	,200	1,934	,705	5,309
	Fragment	-4,069	7,103	,328	1	,567	,017	1,538E-8	18984,632
	Popchallparty	1,531	,597	6,579	1	,010	4,621	1,435	14,882
	PartyAff	,019	,021	,831	1	,362	1,019	,978	1,062
outsider	Intercept	,221	7,767	,001	1	,977			
	GovBreak	-1,286	,964	1,780	1	,182	,276	,042	1,828
	NumCoalition	-,730	,938	,605	1	,437	,482	,077	3,031
	Fragment	-2,948	9,915	,088	1	,766	,052	1,908E-10	14422631,888
	Popchallparty	3,143	1,308	5,776	1	,016	23,173	1,786	300,749
	PartyAff	,021	,036	,334	1	,563	1,021	,952	1,095

a. The reference category is: politician.