

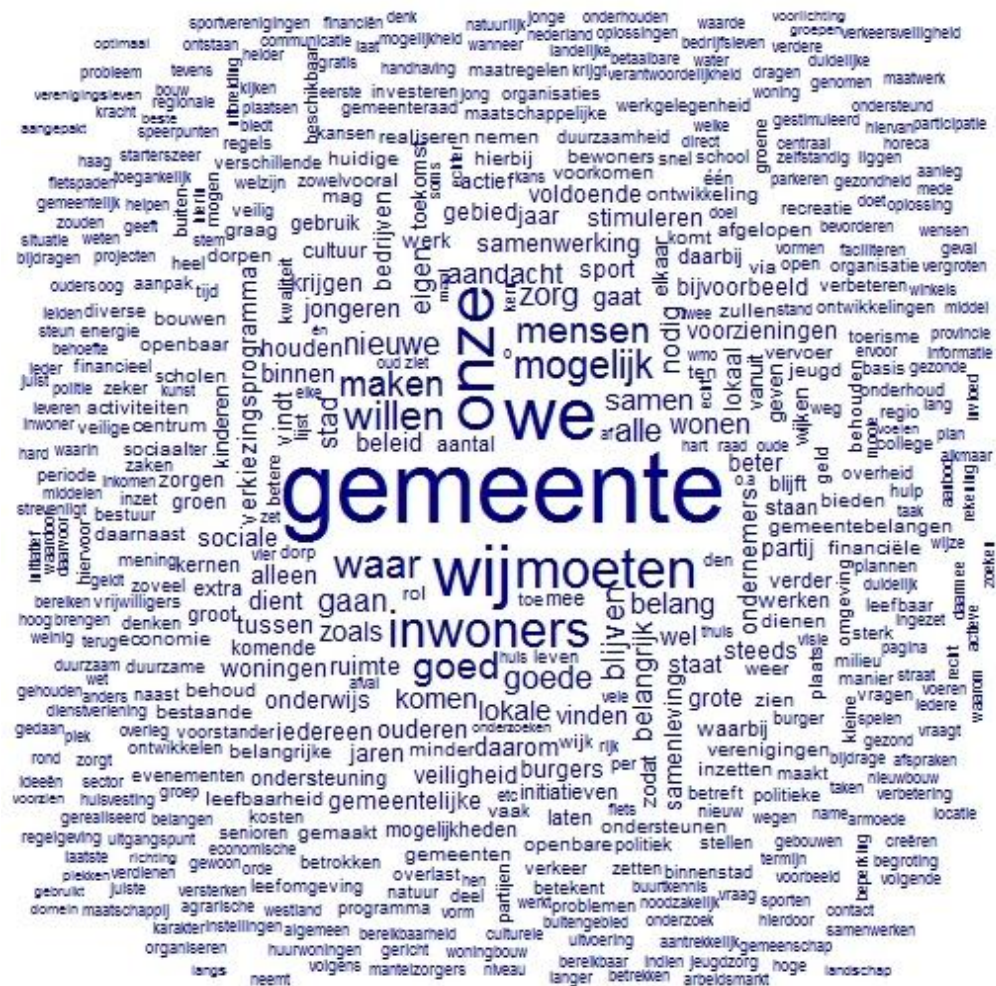
Leiden University

MSc Political Science and Public Administration: Research

MASTER'S THESIS

Going for Government or Opting for Opposition?

Examining the Conditions under which Dutch Independent Local Parties Join the Municipal Coalition



Word cloud of electoral manifestos of independent local parties at the 2018 Dutch municipal elections

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Final version, 29 July 2019

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Abstract

By attracting almost 29% percent of the votes, independent local parties are the winners of the Dutch municipal elections of 2018. However, it cannot be directly inferred that these parties have changed the Dutch local party system. One important aspect of the party system is the competition for government. Yet, we do not know whether the popularity of independent local parties is reflected in participation in the coalition. This thesis is the first study on the chances of independent local parties to enter municipal government. We assume that national coalition formation models do not necessarily fit when they are simply applied to the local context. Therefore, we complement classical literature on coalition formation by identifying distinctive conditions under which independent local parties take part in the coalition. Through quantitative text analysis of the electoral manifestos and multilevel logistic regression models, this thesis finds that party typology is a good predictor of coalition participation. Localist parties are more likely to join the municipal coalition compared to non-localist parties. Protest parties, on the other hand, have relatively lower chances of getting executive power. Finally, the results indicate that independent local parties are more constrained in their search for a coalition when they compete in larger municipalities.

Keywords: Independent local parties, coalition participation, coalition formation theory, local politics, party typology, localism, protest parties

1. Introduction

Political scientists know very little about independent local parties (Boogers & Voerman, 2010, p. 75-76). Independent local parties are defined as political parties that do not have formal links with supralocal parties (Boogers & Voerman, 2010, p. 75). These parties do not stand for elections at higher levels, specifically not at the national level (Otjes, 2018, p. 305). The existence of these parties remains to be seen as a political anomaly (Boogers, 2008, p. 149). This is problematic, because in fact these parties are on the rise. In many European countries, there is a substantial increase of independent local political parties and their electoral support (Reiser & Holtmann, 2008, p. 7). Moreover, in some Western European countries, over the last decades independent local parties have even become ‘an established and stable element in the local political system’ (Reiser & Holtmann, 2008, p. 7).

A remarkable rise of independent parties can also be seen in the Netherlands. In 1990, 13% of the Dutch electorate supported independent local parties, but after the 2002 municipal elections, independent local parties - when taken together - have become the strongest block in Dutch municipal councils (Boogers & Voerman, 2010, p. 76). In 2014, they jointly received more than 27% of the votes and in 2018, they accounted for almost 29% of the votes (Kiesraad, 2019). At both elections, the second largest political party family followed at a distance with 15% and 14% of the votes, respectively.

Although we observe that independent local parties have been successful in attracting votes, it cannot be directly inferred that independent local parties have changed the Dutch local party system. According to Mair (1997), the most important aspect of the party system is ‘the structure of inter-party competition, and especially the competition for government’ (p. 206). Yet, we do not know whether the rising popularity of independent local parties is reflected in government participation. In multi-party systems, there is no obvious relationship between the outcome of the elections and the selection of parties for government. This poses a puzzle for political scientists (De Swaan, 1973, p. 1). Consequently, coalition formation theory, which predicts the chances of political parties to join the coalition cabinet, has become a core research area in political science. Up until now, most coalition formation theories have been formulated to study government formation at the national level (Debus & Gross, 2016, p. 835). However, it is also important to study the dynamics and structure of local politics because local politics have a great impact on citizens’ everyday life (Gross & Jankowski, 2019, p. 1).

This thesis complements the literature by being the first study on government coalition participation of Dutch independent local parties. On the one hand, one could expect that independent local parties are more likely to join the coalition. Unlike local parties that have affiliations with national parties, independent local parties can avoid ideological contestation over issues that are often not even relevant at the municipal level (Boogers, 2008). Alternatively, they can position themselves as hands-on and pragmatic. An apolitical profile might increase their coalition chances. On the other hand, it is also plausible to argue that independent local parties have lower chances to govern compared to other party families. When independent local parties are founded out of dissatisfaction with national political parties (Boogers & Voerman, 2010, p. 85), coalition participation might become more difficult. Explicit disassociation from other parties competing at the election can complicate political cooperation afterwards. This thesis will shed light on this paradox by studying under which conditions independent local parties take part in coalitions at the municipal level. Rather than simply applying classical ‘national’ coalition formation theory to the local context, this thesis formulates alternative explanations tailored specifically to independent local parties. The hypotheses that are tested are first, that Dutch independent local parties with a strong localist profile have relatively higher chances to participate in government, and second, that those that can be characterised as a protest party are relatively less likely to join the coalition government. We estimate party typology through a quantitative text analysis of the electoral manifestos.

The structure of this thesis is as follows. The next section sets out reasons for focusing on party typology to explain local coalition formation rather than straightforwardly resorting to classical coalition formation theories. We discuss the different types of independent local parties that other scholars have identified in the Netherlands and formulate our expectations. Before presenting the results, we justify the focus on the Netherlands as a case and explain the data and methodological choices. After the discussion, the final section summarises the results and explores avenues for further research.

2. Coalition chances of independent local parties

Academic knowledge on coalition formation is mostly derived from studies conducted at the national level. The Comparative Manifesto Project (CMP) collects the electoral programmes of political parties from 1945 until today in over 50 countries to study the role of parties at

different stages of the political process, including coalition formation (Comparative Manifesto Project, 2019). However, it focuses exclusively on politics at the national level. Inspired by the CMP, the Local Manifesto Project (LMP) has started to collect and analyse local and regional electoral manifestos to gain new insights into the structure and dynamics of sub-national party competition (Local Manifesto Project, 2019). Still, over the years, sub-national coalitions have attracted far less public and academic attention than national coalition behaviour (Mellors & Brearey, 1986, p. 278; Gravdahl, 1998, p. 307; Bäck, 2008, p. 72). As a result, we lack systematic and comparable information about party competition at the local level. We argue, however, that simply applying knowledge gained at the national level to the local context can have serious implications.

In classical theories on coalition formation, scholars predict that ‘minimal connected winning coalitions’ will be formed (Axelrod, 1970; De Swaan, 1973). These coalitions are distinguished by both minimality (in the sense that if it loses one of its members it no longer controls a majority)¹ and connectedness (i.e. the parties are placed adjacent to each other on a left-right policy spectrum). When comparing the predictive strength of minimal connected winning theory and ‘simple’ minimal winning theories on European coalition cabinets, the performance of the former theory is superior (Laver & Schofield, 1990, pp. 98-101).

This thesis, however, challenges the importance of traditional variables such as ideological connectedness in predicting sub-national coalition formation. Laver, Rallings and Thrasher found that many existing coalition theories do not work well in British local politics (1987, p. 509). More recently, Bäck asked for attention on ‘traditional variables, such as size and policy’, but simultaneously emphasised the importance of additional variables, such as institutional factors, to predict local coalition formation (2003, p. 441).

The local level is ‘often seen as a less politicised part of the political system and [the level] where decision-making is assumed to follow a more pragmatic, consensual way’ (Debus & Gross, 2016, p. 835). Empirical data confirm this judgement. Klingelhöfer and Müller find that Dutch regional coalitions display large degrees of ideological heterogeneity and inclusiveness (2015, p. 102). The importance of ideology is challenged even further when one focuses on independent local parties. According to Boogers, independent local parties can

¹ Riker defines *minimal* winning coalitions as coalitions that have the smallest number of seats (1962). This is different from *minimum* winning coalitions as defined by Leiserson (1966). The minimum coalition is the coalition with the lowest number of participant parties in a coalition. However, in practice more often than not these terms are used interchangeably (see for example Bueno de Mesquita, 2001, pp. 9989-9891).

- consciously or subconsciously - evade the type of ideological contestation in which parties affiliated with a national party position themselves (2010, p. 81). More than two-thirds of the independent local parties indicate that they cannot or do not want to be put on a traditional left-right spectrum, or that they wish to be placed in the middle (Boogers, 2007, p. 96). Therefore, we presume that the party's placement on a political left-right scale is not the most important explanatory factor for local coalition formation, *especially* not with regard to the chances of independent local parties to join a coalition.

Now that we have questioned the importance of ideology, we have to revise coalition formation theory by identifying alternative or complementary conditions under which independent local parties join enter government. The party family of independent local parties is a very diverse group consisting of parties that do not necessarily share anything but the fact that they are not affiliated to parties at a supralocal level (Boogers, 2007, p. 92). For this reason, differentiating within this party family can be analytically helpful to get better insight in these parties and predict their coalition chances more accurately. Based on surveys on the political objectives and parties' doctrine, Boogers makes a classification of all Dutch independent local parties. He distinguishes three types of independent local parties: localist parties, protest parties, and interest parties (Boogers, 2007, pp. 94-95). According to Boogers, more than three quarters of the independents are localist or protest parties (2010, p. 81). Boogers classifies those parties that represent the interests of a specific group of voters as interest parties (Boogers, 2010, pp. 80-81). To illustrate, interest parties can focus on the interests of seniors or students. However, Boogers' original definition of interest parties also includes parties that, according to their party name, represent the interests of a specific village or neighbourhood within the municipality (Boogers, 2007, p. 97; Boogers, 2010, p. 81). Whereas we cannot easily distinguish the latter kind of parties from localist parties, the remaining interest parties may constitute a group of parties that is both small and diffuse. As a result, it is complicated to find good indicators to measure this party type. In this thesis, we therefore take a broad definition of localist parties and focus exclusively on the two most common party types, namely parties with a localist orientation and parties with protest party characteristics.

2.1 Localist parties

Earlier studies find that a majority of the Dutch independent local parties are localist parties (Boogers, 2010, p. 81; Boogers & Voerman, 2010, p. 85). They have been successful in attracting voters that have a so-called localist orientation (Otjes, 2018, pp. 321-322). Localist

parties are characterised by their focus on the quality of the municipal administration and local democracy. These parties express support for autonomy for the municipal level and identify with the local community. In general, these parties tend to take an apolitical stance, but they do engage in substantive political debates concerning the retainment of their own municipal identity (Boogers, 2010, p. 80). Otjes argues that the ‘local interest’ can take many forms (2018, p. 308). His examples of the local interest include independent local parties that set the preservation of a local hospital or a sports association as their main goal. It can also include parties that are founded because they wish to improve the traffic congestion or traffic bottlenecks in their town (Bottom & Crow, 2011, p. 220). Finally, Otjes remarks that political scientists can also classify parties that are founded to express a ‘Not In My Backyard’ sentiment towards environmental pollution as localist (Åberg & Ahlberger 2015, p. 817; Bottom & Crow, 2011, p. 222). These examples fit Boogers’ original definition. An important characteristic of localist parties is that they emphasise the apparent contrast between municipal interests on the one hand, and regional, provincial, or national interests on the other hand (Boogers, 2007, p. 97). Many of them argue that they can represent municipal interests better because council members can be put under considerable pressure when their political party has strong affiliations with parties at other levels of government (Boogers, 2007, p. 97).

Given that localist parties do not have to take into account considerations other than that of the local interest, one can expect that the electoral manifestos of these parties contain practical solutions to local problems, rather than that they present an overarching ideological vision. Because of their relatively apolitical and pragmatic character, it is easier for localist parties to compromise on certain policy areas and sign the coalition agreement. Therefore, we formulate our first hypothesis as follows:

Null hypothesis: There is no difference between types of independent local parties with regard to their chances to join the coalition.

Hypothesis 1: Independent local parties with a strong localist orientation are more likely to join the coalition.

2.2 Protest parties

Boogers argues that more than a quarter of the local independents is a protest party (2010, p. 81). Protest parties oppose municipal policies or appeal against the functioning of the municipal administration (Boogers, 2010, p. 80). They create a clear demarcation between establishment and anti-establishment, and address the poor responsiveness of the

establishment (Boogers, 2007, p. 97). Considering that many independent local parties are founded out of dissatisfaction with national political parties (Boogers & Voerman, 2010, p. 85), and that dissatisfaction is a push factor to vote for an independent local party (Otjes, 2018, pp. 321-322), Boogers' estimation that a relatively large share of the independent local parties can be classified as a protest party is convincing. The foundation and operation of an independent local party has become a way to express overall dissatisfaction with mainstream politics, regardless whether this dissatisfaction stems from experiences with the national or local level (Boogers & Voerman, 2010, pp. 79–80).

Earlier studies find that independent local parties with protest characteristics make populist or anti-political appeals (Holtmann, 2008, p. 13; Angenendt, 2015, p. 135). This makes the electoral manifestos of protest parties highly similar to those of 'challenger parties', which are also characterised by a critical and populist tone in response to established parties (Lewandowsky et al., 2016; Polk et al., 2017). However, one difference between protest parties and challenger parties is that the former cannot resemble 'advertisement manifestos' (Clark & Bennie, 2018). Contrary to challenger parties, they cannot promote the parties' core issues as a vote-seeking strategy for upper-level elections, a phenomenon discovered by Spanish and German parties in regional elections (Cabeza et al., 2017; Gross & Jankowski, 2019). This is simply because these protest parties are independent and only compete at the local level. Nevertheless, there are still many similarities between these two party types, the kind of appeals they make, and the kind of voters they attract. This makes it interesting to note that challenger parties 'do not ordinarily enter government' (Hobolt & Tilly, 2016, p. 972; Nyhuis & König, 2018). Consequently, we formulate the following expectation with regard to protest parties:

Hypothesis 2: Independent local parties that can be characterised as protest parties are less likely to join the coalition.

3. Case selection

In many Western European countries, independent local parties are on the rise (Otjes, 2018, p. 311). Yet, this thesis focuses on the Netherlands for a number of reasons. First, the Dutch electoral system is characterised by a list system so that candidates are not elected with a personal mandate, like for instance in France. This makes it easier to draw a line between an

independent councillor and a representative for an independent local party (Otjes, 2018, pp. 310-311). The Netherlands is preferred over Belgium, because in Belgium the electoral system is complicated by different types of lists running in municipal elections and by the differences between the regions of Flanders, Brussels and Wallonia (Steyvers et al., 2008, p. 171). For similar reasons, the German case is more complicated than the Dutch case. German states have different electoral systems and a different timing of the elections (Van der Kolk, 2007, p. 164). This poses problems when comparing the characteristics of political parties on the basis of electoral manifestos. Finally, the Dutch electoral system is highly proportional. As a consequence, changes in electoral support translate easily in changes in seat share. The Dutch case can therefore function as a most-likely case in which even new and upcoming party families or party types can influence the composition of the council, and potentially the coalition formation process and the structure of the party system as a whole.

On these grounds, this thesis focuses on the most recent Dutch municipal elections. At 21 March 2018, council elections took place in 335 of the 355 Dutch municipalities. Due to municipal reorganisation, twelve municipalities scheduled their elections at 22 November 2018.² For the purpose of comparison, the remaining municipalities that held elections already in 2017, 2016 or 2015 are excluded from the dataset,³ as are the elections for the island councils (*Eilandsraden*) at Bonaire, Saba and Sint Eustatius in 2019.

4. Data and methodology

4.1 Data collection

In order to find out under what conditions independent local parties enter the coalition government, classification of these parties is required. We estimate to what extent the Dutch independent local parties have a localist orientation and to what extent they display protest party characteristics. Party typology cannot be directly observed, but can only be measured indirectly through indicators. It is important that these indicators are produced in the same

² These municipalities are Altena, Beekdaelen, Groningen, Haarlemmermeer, Het Hogeland, Hoeksche Waard, Molenlanden, Noardeast-Fryslân, Noordwijk, Vijfheerenlanden, West Betuwe and Westerkwartier.

³ Edam-Volendam held elections at 18 November 2015, Meierijstad at 23 November 2016, and Leeuwarden, Midden-Groningen, Súdwest-Fryslân, Waadhoeke, Westerwolde and Zevenaar held elections at 22 November 2017.

underlying strategic environments. This avoids biased inferences (Slapin & Proksch, 2014, pp. 139-149). However, not all political text is created equally. By exclusively comparing party manifestos and excluding other political texts such as speeches (which were written for different purposes, have different intended audiences, and use different language), we avoid the comparison of texts with different data-generating processes (Slapin & Proksch, 2014, pp. 138-139). This thesis therefore exclusively analyses the electoral manifestos composed for the Dutch municipal election of 2018 to measure party typology. The advantage of classifying political parties on the basis of party manifestos is that ‘the estimation of party placements is based on official statements on policies issued by the parties themselves’ (Bakker & Hobolt, 2013, p. 30). This ensures a form of objectivity.

Although political scientists frequently use party manifestos as a resource for studies on politics at the national level, relatively few studies rely on local party manifestos as a resource because the collection is more challenging (Gross & Jankowski, 2019, p. 2). Each manifesto had to be downloaded or requested from the official websites of the respective political party. The data used in this thesis is partially collected by the author. However, thanks to a cooperation with other student-assistants as part of a larger project led by Otjes, we succeeded in obtaining 2,746 manifestos of the 2018 Dutch municipal elections. The main benefit of this cooperation is that this research approximates total population sampling. The data include almost all members of the population, so that we can get deep insights into local coalition formation processes. There is a remarkably reduced risk of missing potential insights from parties that are excluded from the analysis. As a result, it is possible to make analytical generalisations about local coalition formation in the Netherlands on the basis of these data.

4.2 Dependent variable: coalition participation

Coalition participation is the dependent variable of interest. We coded whether the party joined the municipal government with either ‘yes’ or ‘no’. This information was retrieved from official coalition agreements. In case a coalition agreement was not accessible online, we consulted news articles on the website of the municipality in order to find out which parties entered the coalition. Sometimes, coalition agreements were signed by all political parties (*‘raadsbrede akkoorden’*) or municipalities experimented with alternative forms of concluding agreements, perhaps inspired by a report on coalition formation by the Dutch Council for Public Administration (Raad voor het Openbaar Bestuur, 2018). In this thesis, we define coalition participation more narrowly. Alternative forms of political influence do not necessarily indicate coalition participation. We argue that coalition parties should be able to

exert direct executive power. For this purpose, it is required that each coalition party is represented in the council of mayor and aldermen (*college van burgemeester en wethouders*). If a political party is not represented in the executive board by an aldermen (*wethouder*), the local equivalent of a minister, we did not code that party as a coalition party, even when that party had the opportunity to provide input or propose policy ideas for the concluding agreements. Finally, the timing of the measurement is important. Some municipalities succeeded in finding a coalition within a few days, whereas this process took several months in other municipalities. Moreover, some coalition governments were already dissolved by the time of writing this thesis. The coding in this dataset was based on the first coalition government that was installed after the 2018 municipal elections.

4.3 Independent variables: localism and protest party characteristics

Gross and Jankowski highlight an additional reason why few scholars study local party manifestos (2019, p. 20). The high number of municipalities per country results in an even higher number of electoral manifestos that needs to be collected. Because of this volume, the analysis of these data poses methodological challenges. ‘Traditional hand-coding approaches are unrealistic approaches to transfer to the analysis of local party manifestos’ (Gross & Jankowski, 2019, p. 20). Automatic text scaling methods, on the other hand, have demonstrated to be far less time-consuming and more efficient methods to extract meaningful information from party manifestos (Laver et al., 2003; Slapin & Proksch, 2008; Debus & Gross, 2016). Therefore, this thesis also uses automated text analysis. This is the ‘systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics’ (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 1). Texts are not treated as discourse to be interpreted, but rather as data in the form of words (Laver, Benoit, & Garry, 2003). Although it can be suggested that validity is higher with human coding, using any computer algorithm will obtain the same results every time, thereby increasing reliability (Slapin & Proksch, 2014, p. 138). Moreover, computer-based content analysis reduces both the costs and likelihood of human error associated with hand coding texts (Slapin & Proksch, 2008, p. 707).

In order to extract the party type from the electoral manifestos of the political parties, this thesis uses a dictionary-based approach. A computer allocates the electoral manifestos to a defined coding scheme (*‘the dictionary’*). We design the dictionary through *a priori* reasoning and by drawing on dictionaries that have already been designed by other researchers conducting comparable research projects, namely Pauwels (2011), and Rooduijn and Pauwels (2011). According to Pauwels, to measure more specific ideological

dimensions,⁴ the dictionary based approach is the most suitable quantitative text analysis approach (2011, p. 103). Because both localist and protest parties reflect a rather specific ideology, it is quite convenient to develop appropriate dictionaries for these typologies.

Pauwels' dictionary on populism forms the foundation of the dictionary that measures protest party features. As elaborated upon above, protest parties are driven by opposition to a municipal plan, or by a general dissatisfaction with municipal administration (Boogers & Voerman, 2010, p. 85). Thereby the discourse and rhetoric of protest parties should have substantive similarities with populist parties that profile themselves as alternatives to the political elite (Boogers, 2010, p. 70). Compared to Pauwels' dictionary (2011), we only made small adjustments.⁵ To measure the localist character of parties, we formulated a dictionary that captures a focus on names of specific streets, buildings and places, a focus on the quality of the local administration and democracy, a generally apolitical character and the intent to preserve the municipality's unique character.⁶ The dictionaries will match with only small percentages of all the words in the party documents, because the number of meaningful words in manifestos that can be used to identify party characteristics is small. For this reason, the absolute numbers are not meaningful. Rather, for the purpose of comparison, the relative use of these words is relevant. In addition to that, 'comparing dictionary categories with each other is not always useful, since some dictionary categories contain far more words than others. The real test is to compare the categories among the different parties' (Pauwels, 2011, p. 105).

⁴ According to Pauwels, this includes inter alia a populist ideology (2011). In contrast, more general ideological dimensions are economic or cultural left-right dimensions.

⁵ Dictionary protest parties:

ontevreden*; onvrede; verzet*; protest*; *bedrog*; *verraa*; *verrad*; absurd*; schaamteloos; schand*; arrogant*; belof*; belof*; belov*; oneerlijk*; leugen*; lieg*; waarheid*; corrupt*; propagand*; elit*; regime*; gevestigd*; establishm*; heersend*; klasse; ondemocratisch*; politic*; referend*; directe; toegeven; volk; burger*

⁶ Dictionary localist parties:

loka*; regiona*; eigen; karakter; uniek; trots; behoud*; verbind*; verbonden; herken*; contact; dicht*; onafhankel*; apoliti*; expert*; kloof; *dijk; *molen; *woud; *bos; *polder; *brug; *tunnel; *viaduct; knooppunt; kruispunt; spoor*; rotonde; *beek; *sloot; *kanaal; *haven; *singel; *gracht; *straat; *laan; *kade; *steeg; *weg; *pad; *horst; *hof; *centrum; *terrein; *plein; *brink; *markt; *plaats; *wijk; buurt*; *dorp; *werf; *gebied; *veld; *weide; *dal; *hoek; zwembad; *huis; *kerk; *hal; *school; *plantsoen; *tuin; *park; *station; *halte

4.4 Control variables: party size, municipality size, and party ideology

Next to the main predictor variables of interest, that is the degree of localism and protest party characteristics throughout the manifesto, we include several control variables in our models. We control for the size of the party, the size of the municipality, and party ideology.

We operationalise the size of the party by the number of seats in the municipal council that the party has won at the elections. Based on the principle of minimality, we assume that the more seats a party has, the more chances it has to be represented in the coalition government.

The size of the municipality is operationalised by the number of inhabitants of that municipality. Boogers and others have shown that on average independent local parties have more (active) members in smaller municipalities than local branches of national parties have, whilst in larger municipalities independent local parties have relatively fewer (active) members (2007, pp. 24-25). Moreover, in larger municipalities, local branches of national parties may be better organised because the stakes for the overarching political organisation are higher. We expect that these two elements combined translate to smaller chances for the independents to participate in coalitions in larger municipalities.

The last control variable is ideology. The idea behind ‘connected coalitions’ is that the median party will get into the government (Laver & Schofield, 1990, p. 111). The concept of the median party is derived from Downs’s concept of the median voter (1957). It is the party that positions itself exactly in the middle on a policy dimension. The median party controls the representative in the middle, when counting from either end of the relevant dimension (Aylott & Bergman, 2011, p. 45). The median party-hypothesis builds upon classical coalition formation theories. These works suggest that cabinets that are ideologically divided are relatively unstable because such cabinets require the coalition partners to make more and greater policy compromises (Axelrod, 1970; De Swaan, 1973). In a perfectly one-dimensional world, the median party can gain a majority by coalescing with all parties on either the left or the right (Laver & Schofield, 1990, pp. 110-119). By including a control variable that measures each party’s ideological distance to the median party in their municipality, we are able to compare the predictive strength of the median party-hypothesis with our hypotheses on party typology.

The ideological positions of political parties are estimated by using the computer programme Wordscores (Laver et al., 2003). Wordscores compares the frequency distribution of words in ‘reference texts’ with the frequency distribution of words in ‘virgin texts’. Reference texts are ‘texts whose policy positions on well-defined *a priori* dimensions are

known to the analyst' (Laver et al., 2003, p. 313). Virgin texts are the texts under analysis, namely the texts whose programmatic positions are unknown. In this study, the virgin texts are the electoral manifestos of the Dutch municipal elections in 2018. To select appropriate reference texts, 'reference scores' are usually derived by using expert judgements (Gross & Jankowski, 2019, p. 8). Reference texts should represent the extremes of the political space, and possibly the centre as well (Laver et al., 2003, pp. 314-315). Including a reference text that represents the centre makes it easier for Wordscores to comprehend the policy dimension and estimate the parties' positions on this particular dimension. It increases the accuracy and validity of the method.

Since there is no suitable expert data available on the ideological positions of local parties, we derive reference scores from expert data on the manifestos of the Dutch national elections in 2017. The Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) was carried out in the beginning of 2018 and asked 15 experts how they would position the Dutch national parties in terms of their overall ideological stance in 2017. They made a scale from 0-10 in which 0 represented extreme left, 5 the centre, and 10 extreme right. With an average score of 1.27, the Socialistische Partij (SP) is the most leftist national party. Forum voor Democratie (FvD) is the most rightist party. On average, it scored 9.53. The experts almost unanimously classified ChristenUnie (CU) as the centre party. The mean of the scores given to CU is exactly 5.00. We select the latest national electoral manifestos of these three parties as reference texts and accept the CHES judgements as their reference scores. After estimating the ideological position of each local party (the virgin scores), we calculate the distance that each party has to the median party of their own municipality.

4.5 Methodology

As a first step to answering the research question, we run a logistic regression with all parties that participated in the municipal elections of 2018. This means that not merely the independent local parties, but also the local parties that have affiliations with national parties are included in this model. Moreover, this model includes all control variables. It tests whether party family has any significant effects on the chances to enter the coalition government. We expect to find that being an independent local party per se does not have a significant effect. Therefore, we further examine the conditions that could predict the coalition chances for each individual independent local party. By adding the dependent variables localism and protest party characteristics to a multilevel logistic regression model, we can estimate whether party type is a significant predictor for coalition participation of the

independents. Moreover, we test whether the addition of party ideology is an improvement compared to the model that controls for factors identified by classical coalition formation theories only.

5. Results

In total, the electoral manifestos of 2,746 parties that competed at the Dutch municipal elections of 2018 have been collected. This dataset includes 788 independent local parties, of which 712 parties gained seats in 337 different municipalities.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of coalition participation per party family

Party family	Number of parties with seats that joined the coalition government	Number of parties with seats that did not join the coalition government	Participation in coalition government per party family (%)
50PLUS	2	17	10.53%
CDA	226	116	66.08%
Christelijk	22	17	56.41%
CU	71	63	52.99%
D66	94	158	37.30%
DENK	0	12	0.00%
GL	85	94	47.49%
Lokaal	330	382	46.35%
Overig	8	28	22.22%
Progressief	35	39	47.30%
PvdA	92	163	36.08%
PvdD	0	16	0.00%
PVV	0	29	0.00%
Rechts	3	2	60.00%
SGP	31	26	54.39%
SP	20	91	18.02%
VVD	204	112	64.56%
All parties	1,223	1,365	47.26%

Table 1 summarises the coalition outcomes per party family. All independent local parties are clustered by the party family name *Lokaal*. Local branches of national parties are listed by their national party name. However, in some municipalities two national parties presented a common list and a common political programme for the election. This is called electoral fusion. We treat these partnerships as separate party families. Often these two parties are ideologically related and therefore, the names of these party families are derived from their

ideological profile. In the 2018 municipal election, CU and SGP often run with a common list. We gather these lists in one party family labelled *Christelijk*. In addition to that, D66, PvdA and GL shared lists in varying compositions. We labelled all these collaborations *Progressief*. The party family *Rechts* covers all alliances that include VVD. VVD had alliances with a variety of parties, including former independent parties and D66. Finally, all remaining parties are labelled as *Overig*. To avoid skewing of results, we exclude parties that did not gain any seats at the Dutch municipal election of 2018 from Table 1. These findings indicate that independent local parties have been able to enter the coalition government, just as local branches of national parties have done. On average, 47.26% of the political parties that gained seats in a municipal council joined the coalition government. For independent local parties, this percentage is almost identical. However, these numbers do not control for other factors. Therefore, we now examine more closely, whether party family actually is a predictor of coalition participation by means of running a logistic regression model.

5.1 Coalition participation per party family

In the following model, we look whether party family is a significant predictor of local coalition participation, whilst controlling for the number of seats, number of inhabitants, and ideological distance from the median party within the municipality. The number of seats varies between 0 and 14. However, we excluded those parties that did not win any seats from the analysis. Most parties won less than five seats. The graph and histograms in Appendix A show in further detail how the data are distributed. The number of inhabitants per municipality varies between 932 and 854,047. On average, Dutch municipalities have 65,970 inhabitants. The table in Appendix B provides an overview of the minimum, maximum and average size of the municipalities in which each party family has participated. The ideological positioning per party family is presented in a boxplot in Appendix C. The boxplot contributes to the validation of the measurements on the ideological positioning of the parties acquired through the Wordscores approach. It displays the dispersion of each party family on a left-right spectrum. The relative position of local parties that have national affiliations resembles the classification of their overarching party organisations by CHES (Polk et al., 2017). In that way, the boxplot advances face validity. We explain the relative low degree of dispersion on both scales by the fact that some issues that might be exposed in the national manifestos fall outside the municipal's competence, and are therefore excluded from the municipal party's programmes. In addition to that, as stated before, the municipal level can be seen as a less

politicised part of the political system compared to the national level. These two elements may contribute to lower absolute scores.

Since these variables were measured on different scales, all variables are standardised. Transformation of the data makes it easier to read the results for the regression analysis and to compare the scores. Table 2 presents the results of the logistic regression model on coalition participation.

Table 2: Results of the logistic regression model on coalition participation

Model 1				
Independent variable	Fixed effects estimates (Std. Error)	95% Confidence interval (CI) for odds ratio (OR)		
		Lower	Odds ratio	Upper
Party family: CDA	1.291* (0.784)	0.95	3.64	24.00
Party family: Christelijk	1.880** (0.859)	1.42	6.56	47.84
Party family: CU	1.706** (0.796)	1.39	5.50	36.88
Party family: D66	0.944 (0.784)	0.67	2.57	16.97
Party family: DENK	-14.272 (642.200)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Party family: GroenLinks	1.074 (0.790)	0.75	2.93	19.46
Party family: Lokaal	0.523 (0.779)	0.45	1.69	11.07
Party family: Overig	-0.053 (0.909)	0.18	0.95	7.35
Party family: Progressief	0.779 (0.815)	0.53	2.18	14.97
Party family: PvdA	1.029 (0.784)	0.73	2.80	18.47
Party family: PvdD	-14.294 (567.775)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Party family: PVV	-15.256 (396.621)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Party family: Rechts	0.716 (1.207)	0.21	2.05	28.03
Party family: SGP	0.971	0.60	2.64	18.68

	(0.837)			
Party family: SP	-0.331	0.17	0.72	4.96
	(0.819)			
Party family: VVD	1.372*	1.03	3.94	26.01
	(0.784)			
Number of seats	0.786***	2.04	2.19	2.37
	(0.038)			
Number of inhabitants	-0.000***	1.00	1.00	1.00
	(0.000)			
Ideological distance	0.214	0.00	1.24	471.30
	(2.910)			
Intercept	-3.211***	0.00	0.04	0.15
	(0.777)			
Observations				2,588
R ² (Hosmer-Lemeshow, Cox-Snell, Nagelkerke)				.27, .31, .41
Akaike Inf. Crit.				2,661.418

Note: Model $\chi^2(19) = 958.52, p < 0.01$ ***

* $p < 0.1$; ** $p < 0.05$; *** $p < 0.01$

Table 2 indicates that being an independent local party does not have any significant effects on the chances to enter the coalition government. Such significant effects are found exclusively for the Christian party families CU and *Christelijk* ($p < 0.05$). These parties have relatively higher chances to govern. To illustrate, the results show that, when keeping the other variables at a fixed value, the odds of getting into the coalition for *Christelijke* parties over the odds of getting into the coalition for parties belonging to another party family is 6.56. In contrast, the confidence interval, which indicates the precision of the effect estimate, of independent local parties crosses the null hypothesis (1). Because of this, we cannot establish the direction of the effect for independent parties. This finding confirms our expectation. The party family of independents is a diverse group. They do not necessarily have anything in common but the fact that they run independently. As a result, there can be large variation of coalition chances among the different independent parties. To answer the research question which independent local parties are relatively more or less likely to take part in the coalition, we use to multilevel regression models that include party typology and test the effects of the independent parties' types on local coalition participation.

5.2 Coalition participation among the independent local parties

We measured the degree of localism and protest party characteristics by means of the dictionary approach. Before we use these scores in a regression model, we should validate

these measurements. The two text plots in Appendix D visualise a semantic network analysis for each dictionary. The plots display the dictionaries as a network, where the lines show co-occurrences of words. It reveals that the words within the two dictionaries cluster well in the party manifestos. This validates the selection of words of the dictionaries. Since the dictionary on protest characteristics resembles Pauwels' dictionary on populism and that dictionary has already proven its validity (Pauwels, 2011, p. 113), it is especially relevant to notice that the words of the dictionary on localism are strongly connected in the text plot. In addition to the validation of the selection of the words, one needs to establish that independent local parties have relatively high scores on these two orientations compared to other party families. This ensures that the dictionaries capture specific typologies that are tailored to the context of independent local parties. Table 1 in Appendix D confirms that independent local parties score relatively high on both localism and protest party characteristics. Third and finally, we need to demonstrate that the selection of which party is a localist party or a protest party within the party family of the independents is valid. Many scholars agree that 'party names can provide useful informational clues concerning the political values and programmatic priorities of political parties' (Heyerick, 2016, p. 166, see for example Lau & Redlawsk, 2001; Kam, 2005; Boogers, 2008). With regard to localist parties, party names usually include '*gemeentebelangen*', '*burgerbelangen*', '*algemeen belang*', or the name of the municipality or the interest groups within it (Boogers, 2010, p. 80; Heyerick, 2016, pp. 166-167). Parties with a protest profile include terms like '*burger*', '*anders*', '*beter*', '*alternatief*', and '*onafhankelijk*' in their party name or belong to the so-called '*leefbaarpartijen*' (Boogers, 2010, p. 81; Heyerick, 2016, p. 167). Taking a sample from the 10% most localist parties, 88.61% party names are indeed localist according to these criteria. Respectively 48.72% of the parties with the most protest party characteristics have a typical protest party name. Vice versa, parties with these names score relatively high on these dimensions. The degree of localism varies between all independent localist parties between a value of 0.000 and 0.188. However, almost all parties with a typical localist name score higher than the median score, which is 0.039. The degree of protest characteristics in the electoral programmes of independent local parties varies between 0.000 and 0.062. Except for a few outliers, parties with a typical protest party name score above 0.007. This means that they score higher than about three quarters of all independent parties.

Table 3 displays the descriptive statistics of the independent local parties after standardisation of the independent variables and the control variables on municipality size and ideological distance from the median party. It includes the data of 788 of the 794 independent

local parties. Some electoral manifestos were shorter than 1,000 words (circa two pages). Short electoral programmes are not particularly informative and not reliable (Pauwels, 2011, p. 104). To avoid outliers and improve the quality of the research, we excluded these party programmes from the final analysis.⁷

Table 3: Descriptive statistics of the independent local parties | N = 788

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Std. Err.	Min.	Median	Max.
Localist orientation	0.291	0.123	0.004	0	0.270	1
Protest characteristics	0.083	0.096	0.003	0	0.057	1
Number of seats	3.598	2.339	0.088	1	3	14
Number of inhabitants	0.075	0.117	0.004	0	0.042	1
Ideological distance from median party	0.036	0.054	0.002	0	0.025	1

Table 4 shows the results of four different regression models. The first model only includes the control variables and excludes localism and protest characteristics, the second and third model build upon this basic model by each including only one of these two predictors, and the fourth model is the final model which includes all control variables and both predictor variables of interest. Based on these findings, we can accept both hypotheses. The presence of localist or protest features throughout the electoral manifesto are both significant predictors for coalition participation of independent local parties. The p-values for these characteristics are smaller than 0.05, and the confidence intervals for the odds ratio do not include 1. Hence, the null hypothesis can be rejected. Holding the other factors constant, the odds of getting into the coalition are higher for localist parties than for parties without a localist orientation (5.14, $p < 0.05$). On the other hand, the odds of getting into the coalition are lower for protest parties than for non-protest parties (0.04, $p < 0.05$). This confirms our expectations.

⁷ These parties are Senioren Partij de Ronde Venen, Lokale Democraten IJsselstein, Jongerenpartij JO Best, Deventer Belang, Wij Lansingerland, and Bevolkingsbelangen Hillegom.

Table 4a: Results of multilevel logistic regression models on coalition participation for independent local parties

Independent variable	Fixed effects estimates (Std. Error)			
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Localism		1.686** (0.818)		1.637** (0.819)
Protest characteristics			-3.196** (1.279)	-3.129** (1.273)
Number of seats	0.811*** (0.066)	0.799*** (0.066)	0.804*** (0.066)	0.793*** (0.066)
Number of inhabitants	-13.616*** (2.764)	-13.667*** (2.813)	-13.748*** (2.765)	-13.788*** (2.815)
Ideological distance from median party	-6.385* (3.454)	-6.329* (3.466)	-6.082* (3.456)	-6.096* (3.475)
Intercept	-2.080*** (0.272)	-2.552*** (0.361)	-1.803*** (0.290)	-2.267*** (0.376)
Observations	788	788	788	788
Pseudo R ² (method = 'theoretical')	0.593	0.598	0.604	0.608
Akaike Inf. Crit.	656.801	654.564	651.832	649.839

Note: * p < 0.1; ** p < 0.05; *** p < 0.01

Table 4b: Results of multilevel logistic regression models on coalition participation for independent local parties

Independent variable	Odds ratio estimates and 95% confidence interval (2.5%, 97.5%)							
	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	OR	CI	OR	CI	OR	CI	OR	CI
Localism			5.40	1.08, 27.00			5.14	1.03, 25.90
Protest characteristics					0.05	0.00, 0.45	0.04	0.00, 0.48
Number of seats	2.25	1.99, 2.57	2.22	1.96, 2.54	2.23	1.97, 2.56	2.21	1.95, 2.53
Number of inhabitants	0.00	0.00, 0.00	0.00	0.00, 0.00	0.00	0.00, 0.00	0.00	0.00, 0.00
Ideological distance from median party	0.00	0.00, 1.31	0.00	0.00, 1.43	0.00	0.00, 1.79	0.00	0.00, 1.83
Intercept	0.13	0.07, 0.21	0.08	0.04, 0.16	0.17	0.09, 0.29	0.10	0.05, 0.21

To make interpretation of the results easier, effect plots of the coefficients of the final model are included. Figure 1 shows the predicted values of coalition participation for both predictor variables, localism and protest characteristics, and displays their confidence intervals. From this figure, it follows half of the parties with a localist orientation of 0.4 are expected to join the coalition government. Parties that have a stronger localist orientation are more likely to govern and vice versa. One can also see that independent local parties without protest party characteristics have about 50% chance of joining the municipal coalition, whereas the chances to be in the coalition are more than twice as small for protest parties that score 0.4 or higher.

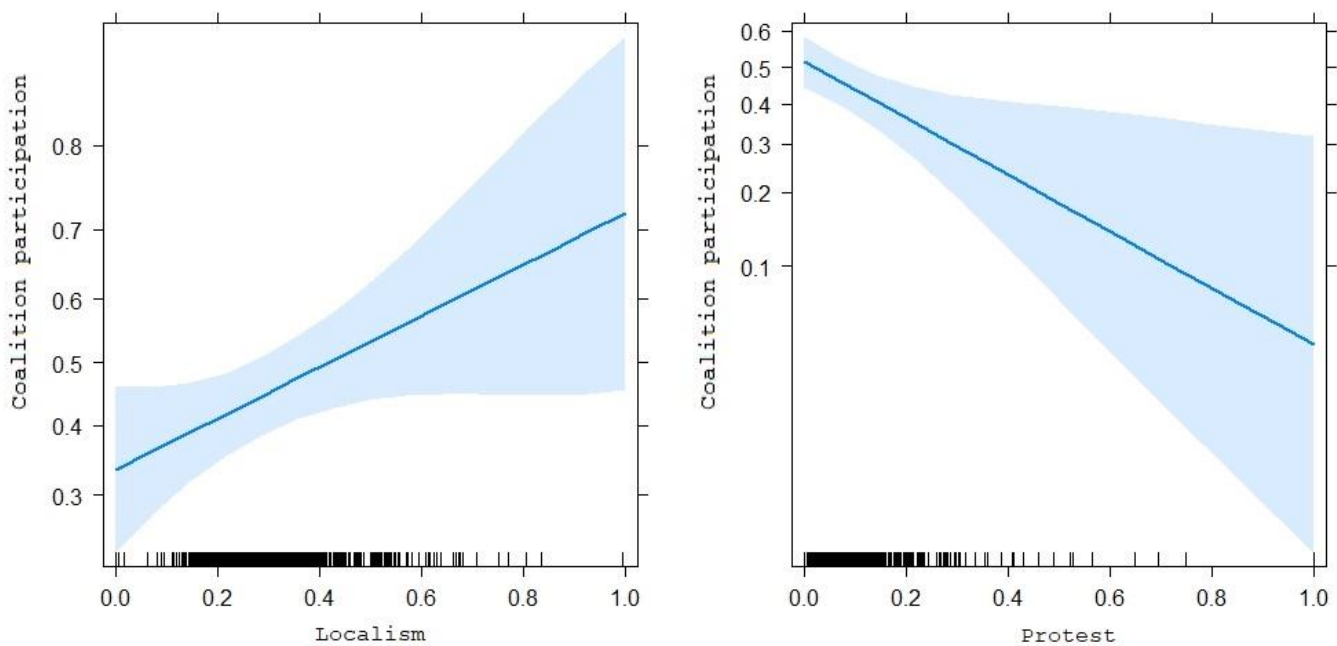


Figure 1: Predicted values of coalition participation for independent local parties

Figure 2 presents the effect plots of the control variables. As expected, the number of seats has a significant positive relation with the coalition chances (0.793, $p < 0.05$). In contrast to the first regression model, municipality size has a significant negative effect on the coalition chances (-13.788, $p < 0.05$). This means that independent local parties are constrained in their search for a coalition in larger municipalities. Finally, ideology is a significant factor when we also accept p-values smaller than 0.1. The larger the ideological distance that a party has to the median party of its municipality, the smaller its coalition chances (-6.096, $p < 0.1$). Independent local parties may have different positions on the political left-right spectrum, but as Boogers has noted, classifying these parties on such scales is challenging (Boogers, 2007; Boogers, 2010). Keeping in mind that this p-value indicates that there is a 10% chance of a

Type I error, i.e. a false rejection of the null hypothesis, one might conclude that ‘connectedness’ is not the best predictor for local coalition formation after all.

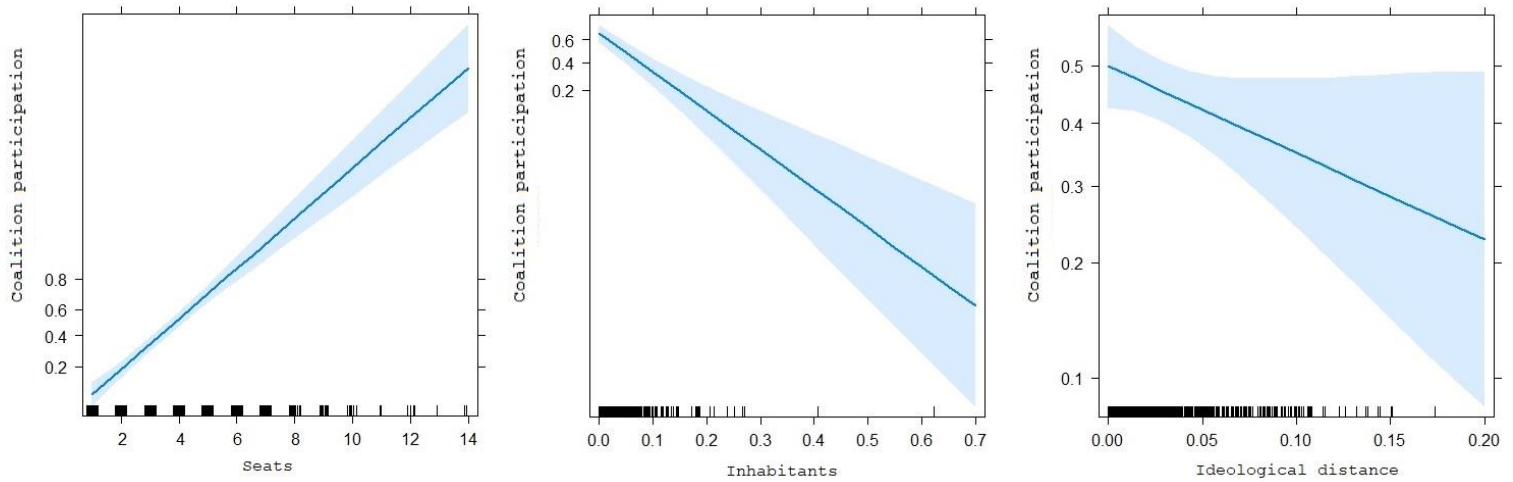


Figure 2: Predicted values of coalition participation for independent local parties

Party typology, on the other hand, has demonstrated to be a good, complementary predictor when it comes to independent local parties. To estimate the added value of localism and protest party characteristics, we briefly assess the fit of the models. The Akaike information criterion decreases for each model, indicating that the fit is improving. The deviance functions as a measure of how much unexplained variation there is in a model – the higher the value, the less accurate the model. On the basis of these deviances, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) can further specify the level of improvement of the models including their significance. Comparing the fit of the first model and the fourth model, the change in the deviance (or $-2 \log$ -likelihood statistic) is -10.96 , $p < .05$. Most of this improvement is due to adding the variable on protest characteristics to the model. Merely adding protest characteristics as a predictor to the model also has a large and significant impact. To illustrate, the deviance between the second and the fourth model changed by -6.72 , $p < .05$. The change of adding localism as a predictor variable to the first model is -3.99 , $p < .05$.

6. Discussion

In this section, we discuss our methodological choices to measure party typology. Subsequently, we discuss the implications of our conceptualisation of party ideology. Lastly, we highlight some limitations in our data.

We have measured localism and protest party characteristics by means of the dictionary approach. Because the dictionaries are developed by *a priori* reasoning, this is a so-called supervised method. However, some authors emphasise the advantages of unsupervised methods. These approaches are *a posteriori* (Benoit & Laver, 2006) and ‘seize upon the primary variation in language across actors’ (Grimmer & Stewart, 2013, p. 293). Unsupervised document classification techniques can discover dimensions in documents of which the scholar does not have much prior knowledge, including dimensions that do not necessarily reflect ideological differences between parties (Gross & Jankowski, 2019, p. 9). This can make this method particularly helpful to do research on relatively understudied party types, including localism. However, for this study, unsupervised methods have proven to be of little use. We have run a topic model analysis with the electoral manifestos of all independent local parties. Topic modelling is a technique that identifies the most discriminatory groups of documents automatically. It models the distributions of topics over words and words over documents. We have removed stop words and punctuation, and selected only the top 5% of the most frequent features that appear in less than 10% of all documents. In this way, we have focused on common, but distinguishing features. We listed the results in Appendix E. We find that between 25 different topics, there was a high degree of overlap. Words that were frequently used within different topics include: ‘we’, ‘our’, ‘municipality’, ‘municipal interest’, ‘inhabitants’, ‘possible’, ‘good’, ‘new’, and verbs such as ‘want’, ‘think’, ‘must’, ‘stay’, ‘going’. We are unable to derive meaningful information from this output. These topics do not seem to reflect party types, nor do they present ideological dimensions.

With regard to the conceptualisation of ideology, one should be aware that there is an academic debate on which dimensions can capture party ideology best. Some scholars do not use a single dimension, but argue that there are two relevant dimensions. Moreover, there is disagreement about the content and relevance of each of these dimensions. To illustrate this point, next to a socio-economic left-right dimension, cleavages in Dutch politics used to be captured in terms of religion and secularism (see Irwin & Van Holsteyn, 2007). Nevertheless, some scholars argue that the religious conflict line has lost much of its traditional structuring capacity for Western European politics (for example, Kriesi et al., 2008, pp. 11-12). These scholars refer to a so-called ‘new’ cultural ideological dimension by many different labels (Bakker & Hobolt, 2013, p. 28), such as material-postmaterial (Inglehart, 1971), ‘new politics’ (Franklin, 1992), authoritarian-libertarian (Kitschelt, 1994), GAL-TAN (Green / Alternative / Libertarian versus Traditionalist / Authoritarian / Nationalist; see Hooghe et al.,

2002), or integration versus demarcation (Kriesi et al., 2008). Also in the Dutch context, there are indications that a new cultural dimension is replacing the older religious-secular dimension in importance for understanding voting behaviour (Andeweg & Irwin, 2014, p. 127). Moreover, it is found that independent local parties have been successful in attracting voters who have more conservative views on new cultural issues, such as immigration (Otjes, 2018, p. 322). Yet, religion is still important to Christian democratic voters, even though the number of Christian democratic voters is declining (Andeweg & Irwin, 2014, pp. 126-127). Furthermore, independent local parties used to be particularly strong in Catholic regions (Otjes, 2019, p. 3). Therefore, it can also be argued that this ‘older’ ideological dimension may still be important to predict coalition formation processes of the independents. Especially when keeping in mind of all party families under analysis, Christian party families had a significant positive relationship to coalition participation (see Table 2), this ideological cleavage should perhaps not be ignored in local coalition formation studies. At minimum, researchers should be aware of these different interpretations of ideology and the implications of their methodological choices on their findings.

Finally, we discuss some limitations in our data. We have examined the effects of party size, municipality size, and policy-related factors on coalition formation. However, there might be additional factors influencing the chances of local parties joining the government. Because we exclusively collected data on coalition participation directly after the 2018 election, we do not know which political parties had an incumbency status or previous governmental experience. Yet, some scholars highlight the importance of these factors for predicting coalition formation (see for example De Lange, 2009, p. 7; Döring & Hellström, 2013, p. 684). Bäck finds that adding information on incumbency status increased the ability to predict coalitions in municipalities in Sweden (2003, p. 465). In this thesis, the finding that some Christian parties had significantly more chances to enter the coalition, might partially be explained by these factors or other office-seeking variables that have not been included in the model. We conclude that collecting these data and controlling for it opens promising avenues for future research.

7. Conclusion

By attracting more than two million votes at the last Dutch municipal elections in 2018, independent local parties have shown that they are a force to be reckoned with. Together they almost take one-third of the seats in the municipal councils, but still little is known about

these independent local parties. This thesis aimed to shed light on these parties and their ability to transform the party system through coalition participation. We have seen that the percentage of independent local parties joining the coalition is highly similar to the overall average. Even when controlling for other variables, independent local parties do not have significantly higher or lower chances to join the coalition government.

Since the independents form a very diverse group consisting of parties that do not necessarily share anything but the fact that they are not affiliated to parties at a supralocal level (Boogers, 2007, p. 92), it is interesting to examine the coalition chances of different types of parties within this larger group in further detail. This thesis is the first to study whether party type can be a good predictor of coalition participation of independent local parties. By analysing the electoral manifestos, we find that of the independent local parties, localist parties have significantly higher chances of joining the coalition. On the other hand, protest parties are significantly less likely to join the municipal coalition. Moreover, in contrast to local branches of national parties, independent local parties also have relatively smaller chances of getting executive power in large municipalities. We found relatively weaker evidence for the median party-hypothesis. Contrary to national level politics, the ideological distance a party has to the median party is not a strong predictor of coalition formation at the local level. The relevance of this study lies in the fact that we have complemented classical coalition formation theories by finding alternative conditions that can predict more accurately, which of these local parties enter the government.

Even though this thesis focuses on the Netherlands, the findings are also relevant for countries that have a similar electoral system, party system, and history of democracy (Otjes, 2018, p. 313). This thesis contributes to knowledge on independent local parties beyond the Dutch context, not only because independent local parties are on the rise in many Western European countries, but also because there are indications that these independents abroad can be characterised as localist or protest parties in a similar fashion. In Germany, for example, independent party lists originate from the sentiment that local politics should not become politicised by parties (Naumann, 2012). Those independents who strive for depoliticisation of local politics can be regarded localist. Other German independent parties have expressed the will to fight the ‘colonisation’ of national parties at the local level (Angenendt, 2015, p. 130). These strong anti-establishment sentiments remind of protest parties. Aars and Ringkjøb show that 53% of the Norwegian independent political parties were founded to support their own local community (2007, p. 4) and 24% indicates that a breakout from an established political party was decisive in creating an independent list (2007, p. 5). These percentages are

comparable to the share of localist and protest parties in the Netherlands, respectively. Similar results are obtained in Flanders, where 52.6% are localist parties and 17.2% are protest parties (Heyerick, 2016, p. 168). We recommend scholars to conduct further studies on local coalition formation to explore whether it takes place under the same conditions in other Western European municipalities, and ultimately, to improve traditional coalition formation theories.

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Appendix A

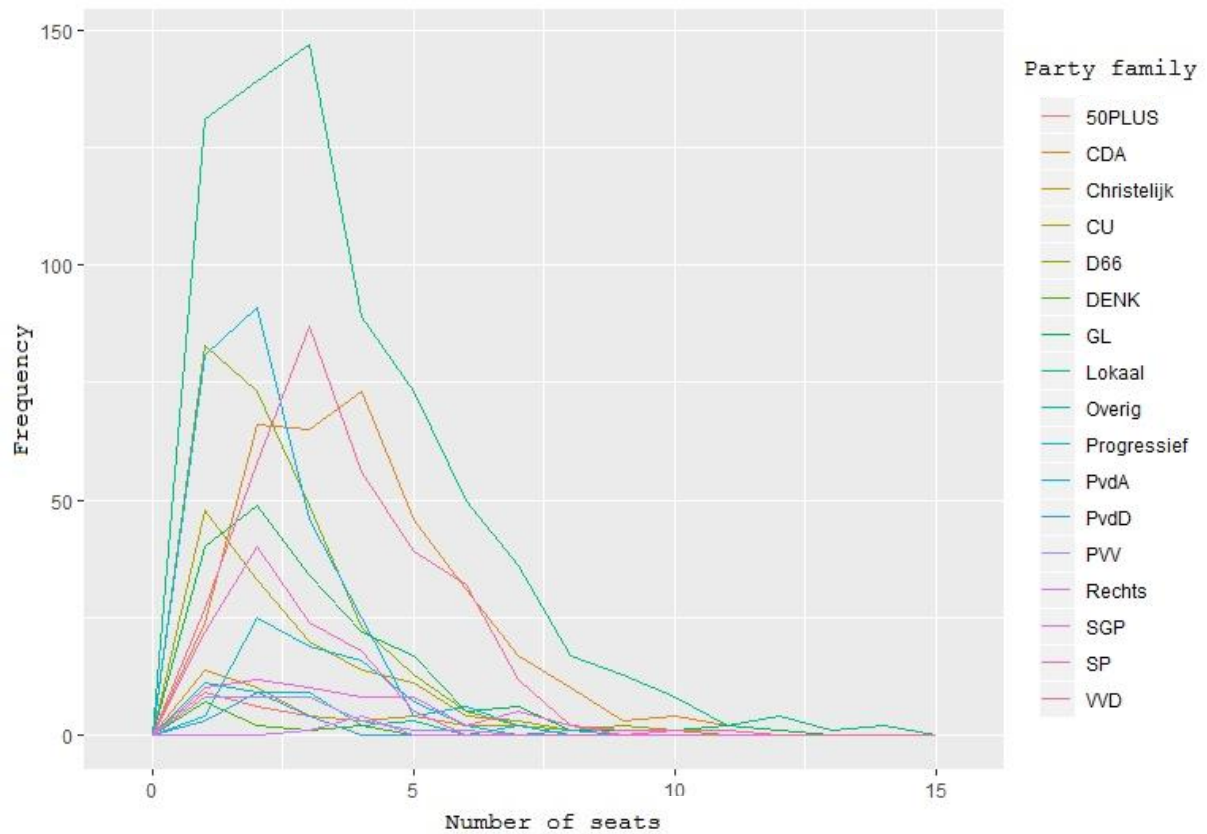


Figure 1: Distribution of council seats per party family

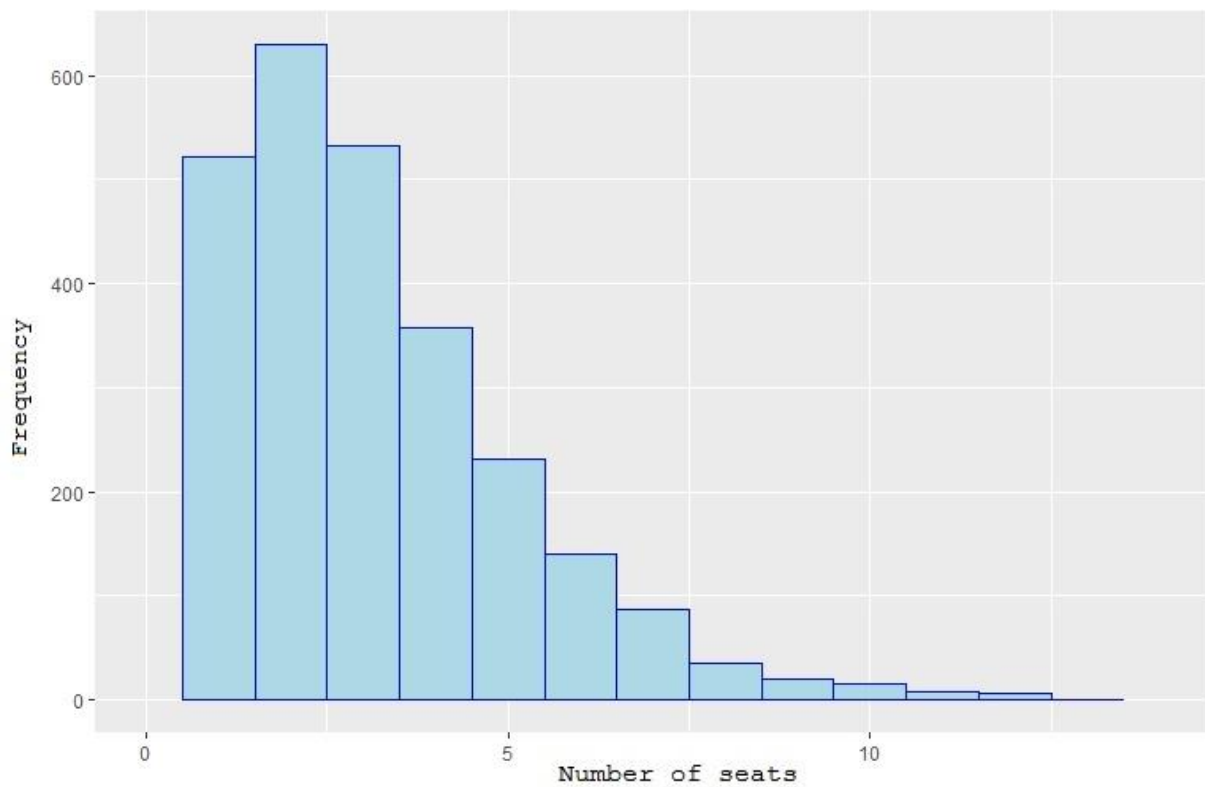


Figure 2: Histogram of council seats (all local parties)

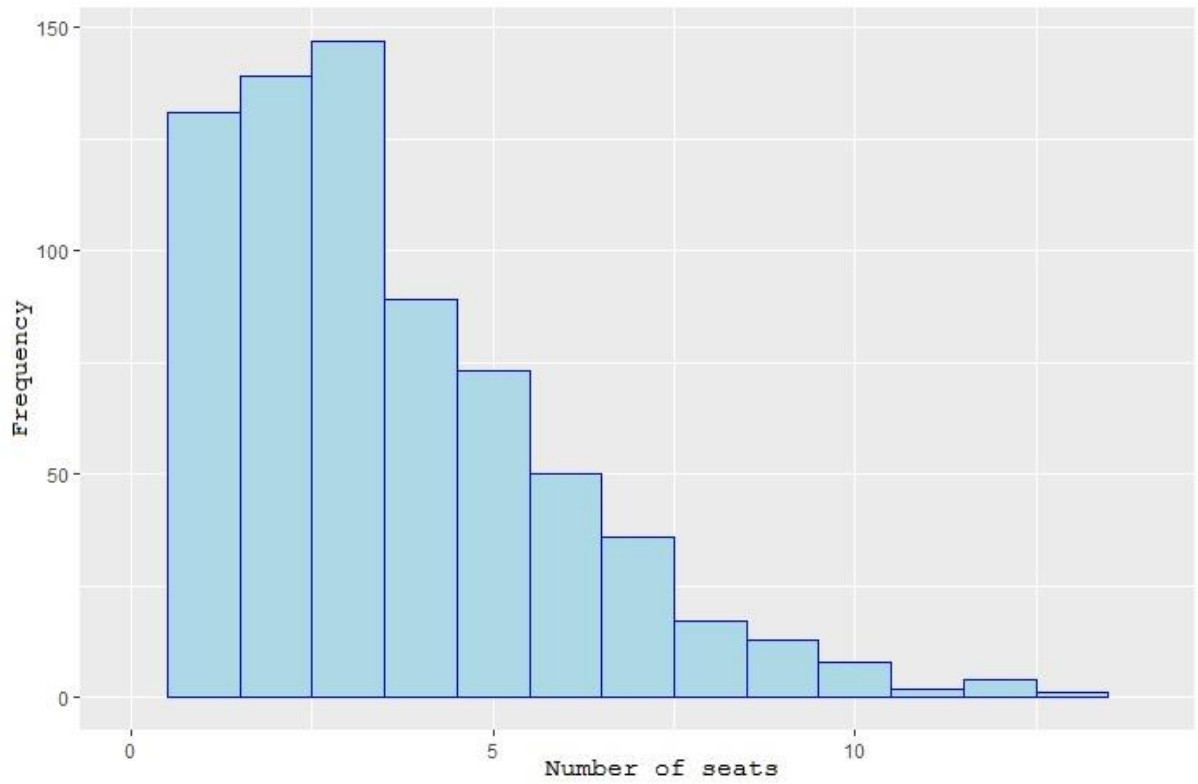


Figure 3: Histogram of council seats (independent local parties only)

Appendix B

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of inhabitants per municipality

Number of inhabitants per municipality in which the political party participates			
Party family	Min.	Max.	Mean
50PLUS	44,485	854,047	200,245
CDA	3,654	854,047	48,669
Christelijk	10,180	638,712	77,727
CU	5,175	854,047	62,248
D66	7,314	854,047	56,876
DENK	57,761	854,047	232,601
GL	7,768	854,047	68,632
Lokaal	932	854,047	64,882
Overig	14,395	854,047	168,896
Progressief	8,430	157,223	28,328
PvdA	3,654	854,047	56,244
PvdD	26,365	854,047	245,599
PVV	12,245	638,712	134,567
Rechts	10,180	41,725	23,310
SGP	5,175	854,047	56,290
SP	11,328	854,047	86,113
VVD	3,654	854,047	50,773
All parties (N = 2,746)	932	854,047	65,970

Appendix C

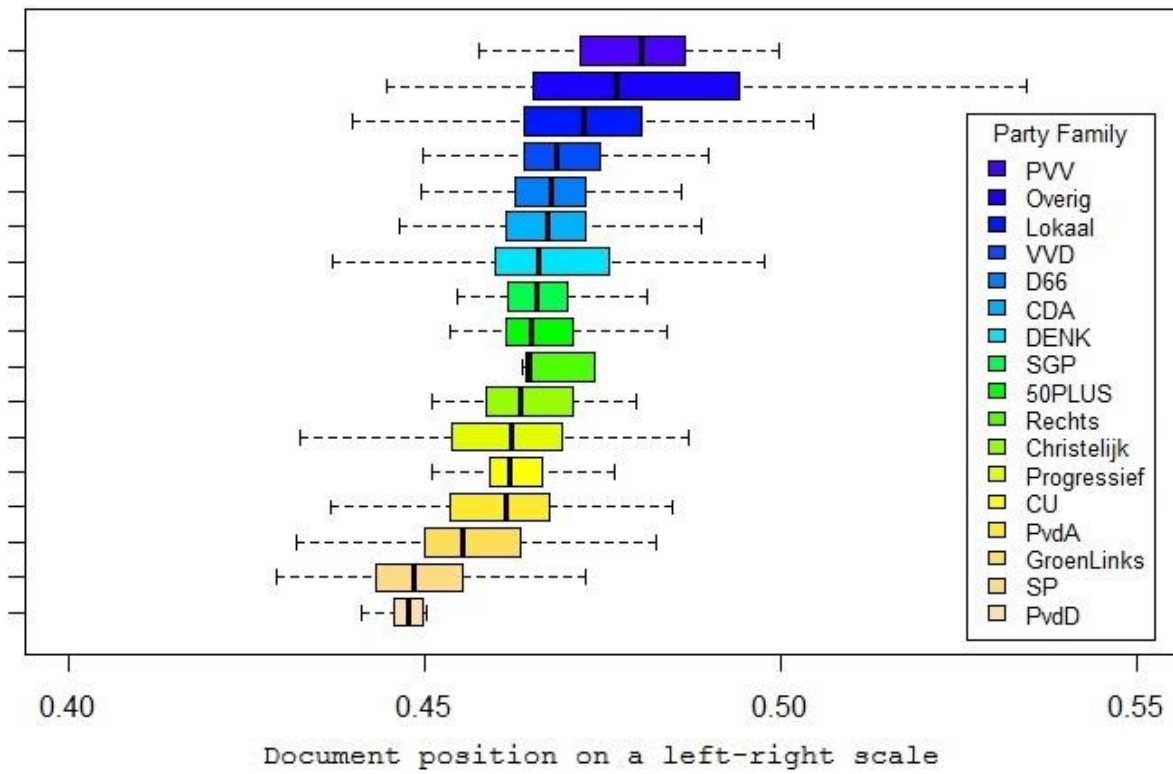


Figure 1: Wordscores on a left-right ideological dimension per party family

Appendix D

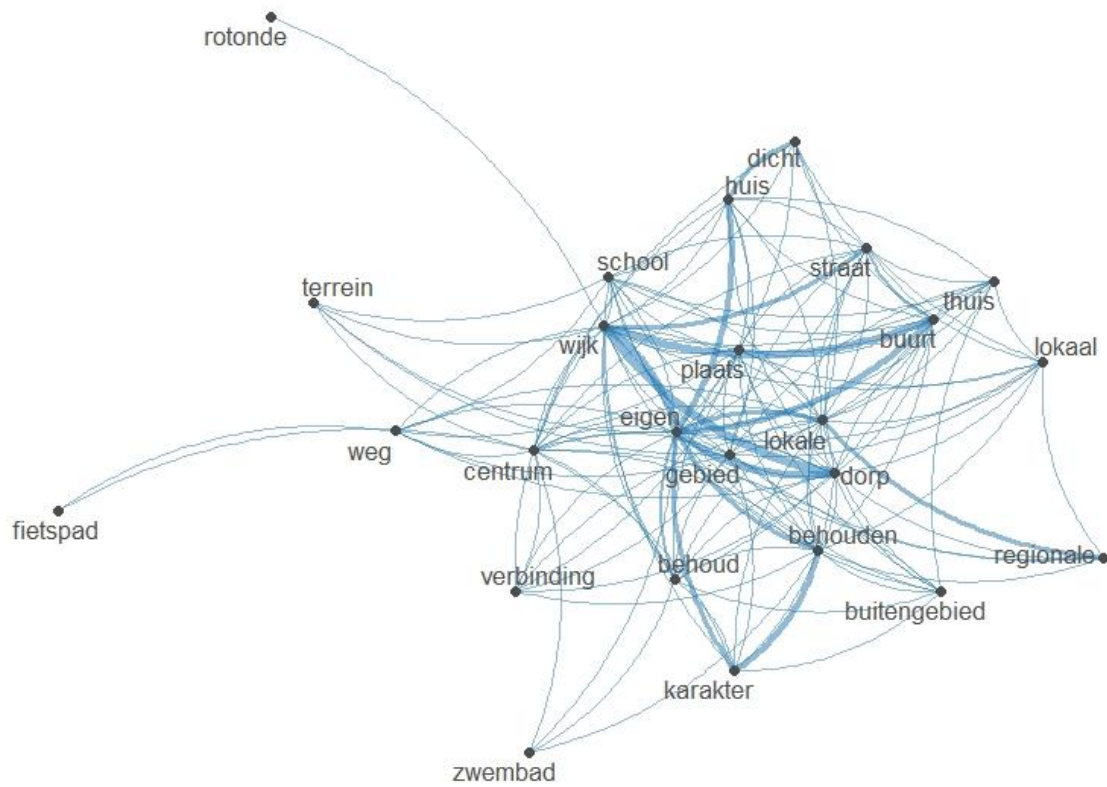


Figure 1: Text plot visualising a semantic network analysis of localism

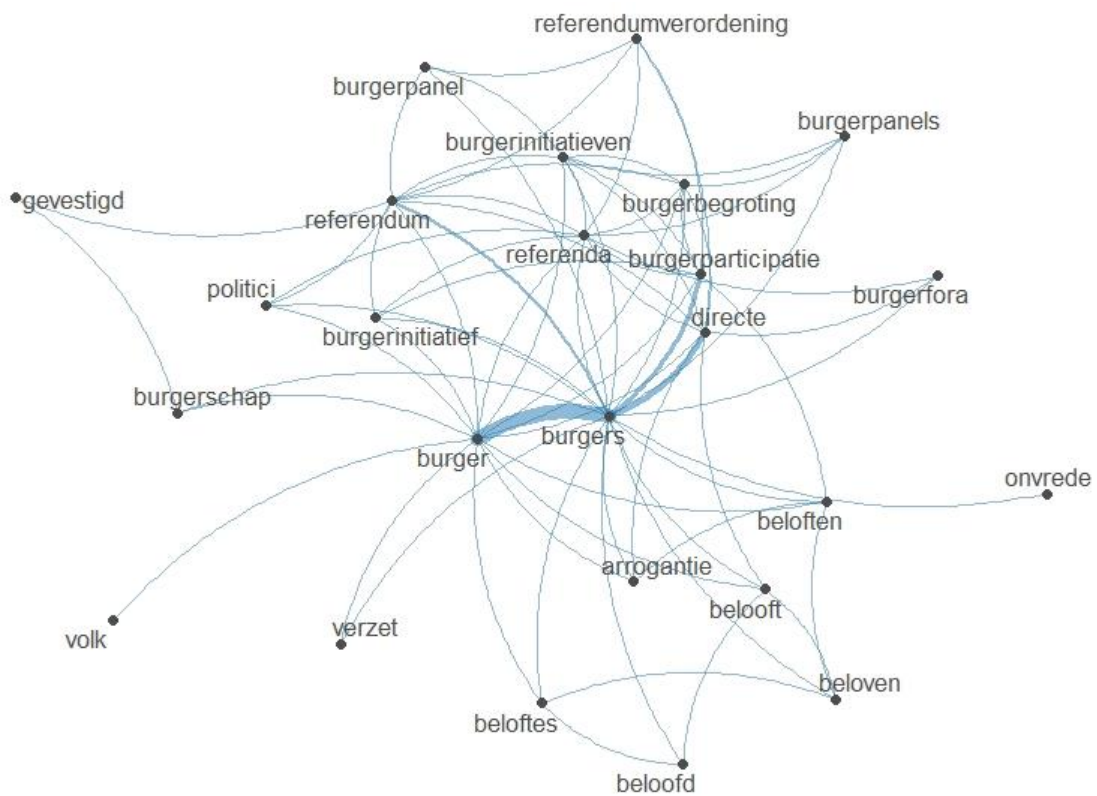


Figure 2: Text plot visualising a semantic network analysis of protest party characteristics

Table 1: Relative scores on the two dictionaries per party family

Party family	Localist orientation	Protest party characteristics
50PLUS	0.027	0.005
CDA	0.038	0.003
Christelijk	0.032	0.004
CU	0.031	0.003
D66	0.034	0.002
DENK	0.021	0.003
GL	0.032	0.003
<i>Lokaal</i>	<i>0.038</i>	<i>0.005</i>
Overig	0.026	0.004
Progressief	0.035	0.003
PvdA	0.036	0.003
PvdD	0.030	0.003
PVV	0.028	0.010
Rechts	0.034	0.001
SGP	0.032	0.007
SP	0.033	0.002
VVD	0.036	0.002

Appendix E

Table 1: Results of unsupervised document classification by topic modelling

Topic 1	O, burgerbelangen, gemeente, opa, wij, onze, goed, inwoners, mensen, moeten, ede, wel, eigen, we vindt, gaat, belangrijk, alleen, nieuwe, maken
Topic 2	Wij, onze, we, willen, moeten, gaan, vinden, mensen, gemeente, wel, waar, maken, komen, partij, goed, zullen, zien, gaat, alleen, mogelijk
Topic 3	Gemeente, inwoners, mogelijk, aandacht, stimuleren, onze, lokale, goede, zorg, samenwerking, waar, beleid, blijven, goed, sport, alle, samenleving, onderwijs, ruimte, kernen
Topic 4	Gemeente, wij, onze, belang, inwoners, veenendaal, willen, moeten, waar, krimpenerwaard, alle, mogelijk, stein, goed komen, maken, nodig, zorg, goede, stad
Topic 5	Lijst, wij, gemeente, onze, belang, willen, nieuwe, groningen, moeten, partij, verkiezingsprogramma, lokale, inwoners, gaan, lijn, mensen, harlinger, jaren, we, maken
Topic 6	Gemeente, moeten, dient, wij, mogelijk, waar, dienen, beleid, burgers, mensen, alle, sociale, verkiezingsprogramma, burger, zorg, goed, goede, zoals, inwoners, gemeentelijke
Topic 7	We, onze, gemeente, wij, inwoners, willen, samen, moeten, goed, blijven, goede, nieuwe, waar, maken, belangrijk, gaan, ondernemers, kernen, mogelijk, eigen
Topic 8	Moeten, gemeente, we, mensen, mogelijk, waar, wij, blijven, goed, ouderen, dient, maken, zorg, willen, goede, bedrijven, komen, alle, dienen, belangrijk
Topic 9	Westland, gemeente, we, moeten, wij, verstandig, onze, burgers, willen, verkiezingsprogramma, waar, goed, beter, maken, alle, goede, nieuwe, valkenswaard, zoals, aandacht
Topic 10	Delft, helder, gemeente, den, moeten, eiland, helmond, mensen, gaan, waar, beter, mee, alle, we, belang, ommen, goed, jaar, inwoners, komen
Topic 11	Gemeente, onze, we, dorpen, gewoon, moeten, inwoners, zorg, samen, waar, nieuwe, goed, goede, blijven, alle, eigen, mensen, wonen, puur, mogelijk
Topic 12	Gemeente, onze, inwoners, moeten, kernen, mogelijk, kern, we, waar, alle, nieuwe, blijven, burgers, maken, nieuw, dorp, zoals, aandacht, bedrijven, zorg
Topic 13	Wij, hoorn, gemeente, inwoners, mogelijk, i, moeten, onze, e, maken, a, sterk, willen, goed, waar, alle, aandacht, putten, ibh, mensen
Topic 14	Leefbaar, gemeente, zeewolde, moeten, hart, lelystad, huizen, inwoners, mogelijk, haarlem, we, goed, waar, nieuwe, stad, maken, ridderkerk, vindt, zoals, sociale
Topic 15	Gemeente, alkmaar, moeten, belang, onze, mogelijk, wij, goed, algemeen, bas, seniorenpartij, binnen, waar, inwoners, vindt, goede blijven, dient, partij, ouderen
Topic 16	Gemeente, onze, we, moeten, inwoners, weert, wij, waar, mensen, goed, mogelijk, stad, samenwerking, maken, blijven, zorg, goede, alle, gouda, jaren
Topic 17	Den, wij, haag, we, moeten, haagse, stad, dorpsbelangen, gemeente, jongeren, waar, gaan, west, betuwe, alle, onderwijs, onze, mensen, maken, partij
Topic 18	Stad, we, willen, wij, gemeente, binnenstad, mensen, maken, wijken, moeten, waar, daarom, goed, komen, wijk, gaan, alle, samen, rotterdam, stadspartij

Topic 19	Lokaal, gemeente, we, moeten, mensen, velsen, wij, goed, vindt, mogelijk, inwoners, waar, belang, zoetermeer, onze, willen, montfoort, zó, maken, p
Topic 20	Gemeente, wij, we, onze, inwoners, moeten, willen, gemeentebelangen, heusden, mogelijk, aandacht, wijchen, blijven, alternatief, zorg, goed, vinden, vindt, maken, waar
Topic 21	Papendrecht, schiedam, gemeente, onafhankelijk, beter, eg, gy, volkspartij, dgp, onze, wijknu, goed, dient, verkiezingsprogramma, nieuwkoop, x, sg, maken ggy, ay
Topic 22	The, uden, we, to, and, vdg, mos, jong, a, kieskatwijk, sgb, terschelling, vindt, mensen, open, ronduit, waar, bbb-ndb, stadspartij, for
Topic 23	Gemeente, wassenaar, moeten, wij, onze, dlw, venray, waar, maken, hengelo, inwoners, gaan, wel, alle, vlp, gaat, komen, lokaalhengelo, kaag, braassem
Topic 24	Gemeentebelangen, gemeente, zaanstad, moeten, inwoners, nieuw, heiloo, elan, vindt, waar, onze, mogelijk, maken, democratisch, staat, rosa, nieuwe, goede, zorg, goed
Topic 25	Gemeente, belang, inwoners, waarom, mogelijk, almelo, moeten, waar, mensen, alle, groen, beverwijk, goede, maken, wij, dieren, dinkelland, binnen, zorg, westerveld