

How democratic are Dutch parties?

What is the level of internal party democracy of Dutch political parties?



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INTRODUCTION

‘Political parties created democracy and modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties’ (Schattschneider, 1942, p. 1). This well-known quote from the American political scientist E.E. Schattschneider emphasizes the centrality of political parties to the good functioning of a democracy. Parties play a crucial role in linking society and government: political parties make democracy work. Nevertheless, the existence of political parties is continually challenged: for example, by the growing disconnect between the people and the political elite, the declining figures of political membership, and the rise of radical or anti-democratic political parties (Scarrow, 2005, p. 1). Beyond challenges concerning the role and functioning of political parties within the democratic system, questions arise whether the parties themselves must be, or should be, democratic (Cross and Katz, 2013, p. 1).

If these questions apply to academic political science or international political institutions, the answers are obvious: internal party democracy is a necessity or panacea (Cross and Katz, 2013, p. 1). The European Commission for Democracy through Law, also known as the ‘Venice Commission’, stated in its *Code of Good Practice in the Field of Political Parties* that “it’s an explicit aim” of political parties to ‘reinforce their internal democracy and increase their credibility in the eyes of citizens’.¹ Moreover, according to the Dutch Institute for Multiparty Democracy (NIMD), “internal democracy is one of the institutional guarantees that political parties would have to fulfill if they were to effectively meet what is expected of them in a democracy”.²

Several studies on the internal party democracy of western political parties preceded this study. This thesis is concerned with the issue of the internal party democracy of Dutch political parties. Whereas the internal organization of political parties long remained outside the scope of state regulation, regulations subject to internal party democracy become more and more customary

¹ [http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD\(2009\)002-e](http://www.venice.coe.int/webforms/documents/default.aspx?pdffile=CDL-AD(2009)002-e)

² http://www.nimd.org/documents/I/internal_party_democracy-_state_of_affairs_and_the_road_ahead.pdf

in European party systems (Van Biezen and Piccio, 2013, p. 27). However, the Dutch party law does not contain regulations on the internal organization of parties (Van Biezen and Piccio, 2016, p. 31). This notable absence of external regulations raises the following question: what is the level of internal party democracy of the Dutch political parties?

This research project focuses on internal party democracy within the Dutch political party system. The research question, which will be expounded on in a separate section, is formulated as follows: *What is the level of internal party democracy (IPD) of Dutch parties and what explains the differences over time and between parties?* By using the Intra-Party Democracy Index of Rahat and Shapira (2016) the internal party democracy of the Dutch parties is analyzed for two time periods. The comparisons over time do not demonstrate significant differences on the level of internal party democracy in the Netherlands in the last ten years, except for a few parties. The findings of this study show that not all Dutch parties are democratic, however, compared to other countries, Dutch parties can be defined as highly democratic. The findings also confirm that the existing explanatory literature on party models and internal party democracy can be successfully used to explain the differences between the parties.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Political parties are 'key institutions for a healthy democracy' (Cross and Katz, 2013, p. 1). Ever since the emergence of political parties, studies have been published about the relationship between democracy and political parties or about the relationship between the participation of party's members and political parties (Scarrow, 1999, p. 341). Another dimension to the link between a political party and democracy, is that of the organization's internal democracy. Within the field of the internal democracy of political parties, the question of whether political parties must be

internally democratic has not been answered conclusively. In this literature review, the main aspects discussed within the field of internal party democracy will be discussed.

IPD: definition and occurrence

Internal party democracy (IPD) is a very broad term describing a wide range of methods for including party members in intra-party deliberation and decision making (Scarrow, 2005, p. 3). Like democracy itself, there is no universally agreed upon definition of internal party democracy. Scholars have agreed on some basic principles political parties should be based on: electivity, accountability, transparency, inclusivity, participation, and representation (Mimpen, 2007, p. 2). Internal party democracy can include a wide range of instruments or methods, such as internal elections, leader or candidate selections, and open and equal participation opportunities for members. Due to different political circumstances, as with the existing national party system, political culture, and national party laws, there is no single set of 'best practices' for parties' internal democracy (Scarrow, 2005, p. 3).

In recent years, the occurrence of a gradual implementation of new, more participatory mechanisms of internal party decision-making is taking place (Gauja, 2009). The growing trend towards more internal party democracy is twofold. First, political parties decide to implement these internal processes because of the belief more internal party democracy will stop negative developments, like the declining numbers of party membership and negative image of the political elite. Parties try to counteract these developments by integrating more internal democratic procedures. By means of reforming the party structure and providing more opportunities for members to be involved in the party's decision-making and policy-making processes, parties expect to increase membership and satisfaction among their members (Cross and Katz, 2013, p. 2).

Second, parties implement internal processes because of the obligation by national or international regulation. Political parties have traditionally been understood as primarily private and voluntary organizations. Consequently, due to the fundamental democratic principles the internal organization of political parties long remained outside the scope of state regulation. The legal regulation of internal processes can therefore be considered as controversial. However, the current legitimacy crisis parties face is, according to politicians and policymakers, only solvable by generating more democracy: ‘the only cure for democracy is more democracy’ (Van Biezen and Piccio, 2013, p. 28). To ensure the proper functioning of the democratic system, regulations to enhance the internal democracy of parties become more and more customary. In most European countries, internal party democracy is nowadays regulated by party law. Rules to increase internal party democracy are adopted in the constitution or separate party law (van Biezen and Piccio, 2013). The Dutch party law does not contain regulations on the internal organization of parties (Van Biezen and Piccio, 2016, p. 31). Moreover, political parties are even not mentioned in the Dutch Constitution.

Taking the general growing trend towards more internal party democracy into account, a growing level of internal party democracy should be expected in the Dutch case. To analyze the internal party democracy of the Dutch parties, a time study to compare the differences over time is added to this study. According to Lucardie en Voerman (2011, p. 187), the Dutch party system has experienced three ‘waves’ of internal democratization. The first wave was at the emergence of mass parties at the end of the 19th century and beginning of the 20th century. It was the first time citizens were able to join the political system by becoming member of a political party. The second wave was when young members revolted against the domination of the party boards in the 1960s and 1970s. The third wave of democratization occurred at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21th century due to discontent with the return of power to the party boards. The effect of this

discontent was far-reaching democratization of most parties: individual members were able to vote at the convention, internal party referenda were allowed and adopted in the parties' constitution and regulations, and party leaders and chairmen were directly elected by the members.

Taking the occurrence of a gradual implementation of new, more participatory mechanisms of internal party decision-making into account, the first hypothesis is:

H₁: The level of internal party democracy has increased within the last ten years.

IPD: desirable or not? The pros and cons of internal party democracy

Besides the efforts of parties to reform because of legal requirements or to counteract negative party developments, debates about the desirability and feasibility of internal party democracy still continue. No consensus exists on the pros and cons of IPD (Mimpen, 2007, p. 1). Arguments in favor of internal democracy claim that internal party democracy is essential for the growth and improvement of functioning and viable democratic institutions. According to Joseph (1997, p. 365), internal party democracy 'facilitates citizen self-rule, permits the broadest deliberation in determining public policy and constitutionally guaranteeing all the freedoms necessary for open political competition'. Moreover, the NIMD (Dutch Institute for Multiparty Democracy) argues that internal party democracy can 'enhance a necessary viable democratic culture' (NIMD, 2004) and according to Teorell, 'internal party democracy will provide necessary vertical linkages between different deliberating spheres, as well as horizontal linkages between competing issues (1999, p. 363). Other arguments in favor of internal party democracy are that IPD leads to the selection of more capable leaders, positive effects on representative policy, and greater electoral success (Scarrow, 2005, p. 3). The party's organization and accountability may be strengthened (Mimpen, 2007, p. 1), may ensure the control of the parties policies, and increase the transparency of decisions.

Critics to internal party democracy argue that it is important that there is democracy between parties, however, democracy *within* parties is not necessary, because the absence of

internal party democracy does not harm the democracy of the state (Rahat and Shapira, 2016, p. 3). Other arguments opposing internal party democracy mostly focus on the inefficiency to the democratic processes. A few examples of the effects of IPD that can harm democratic stability are the increasing risk of internal crises, lessening of party cohesion (Mimpen, 2007, p. 1), dilution of the party's leadership (Scarrow, 2005, p. 4), impediments to achieving the party's goals, and the possibility of increasing power for small elites by open candidate selection methods (Pennings and Hazan, 2001). Additionally, Cross and Katz mentioned the adverse impact on representative participation. Membership participation may attract only party activists, who tend to be ideologically extreme (2013, p. 3).

IPD, democracy and ideology

The notion of internal party democracy stems from the fundamental ideal of democracy: 'government by the people'. The relationship between democracy and political parties is a complex one. Many of the features and justifications of internal party democracy rest on the principles of democracy. Examining the interdependence between democracy and parties, several questions arise within the literature: 'Can we have political parties without democracy?', 'Can we have democracy without political parties?', and 'Is it possible, within a democracy, to have and allow nondemocratic parties?' (Mersel, 2006, p. 88). Since political parties are the main instruments in bridging the gap between the people and the government, the fundamental ideal of democracy views internal party democracy as essential for the growth and improvement of good and viable democratic institutions. Like democratic states, democratic parties maintain institutions that mediate between 'their' public and their leadership (Rahat and Shapira, 2016, p. 5). Political parties are a unique mechanism for governance and decision-making (Mersel, 2006, p. 91). Based on normative reasoning as well as the functional advantages, the importance of internal democracy can be argued. The relationship

between political parties and their own internal democracy is, therefore, a normative one. Being part of a democratic party system requires political parties to be internally democratic. Assuming the relationship between the Dutch state democracy and the internal democracy of political parties is a positive one, the second hypothesis is as follows:

H₂: All Dutch parties are internally democratic.

However, the interdependence of political parties and democracy does not eliminate the presence of the possibility of nondemocratic parties in the democratic system. As earlier mentioned in the section on the legal regulation of the party's organization, the fundamental democratic principles, such as the freedom of association, free speech, equality and pluralism, counteract the requirement of being internally democratic. While some countries ban non- or antidemocratic parties or establish constitutional or legislative rules for dissolving them, a clear cut and widely supported argument which views nondemocratic parties and democracy as incompatible does not exist. From the normative perspective, democracy requires political parties to be internally democratic too, however, the core values of democracy do not impede the existence of nondemocratic parties in a democracy.

Organizational variations between parties (like party's ideology, culture, its origins, its responses to political and organizational challenges such as fluctuating memberships, social norms, legal regulation, electoral competition, and the challenges of governance) influence how likely a high level of internal party democracy will be (Gauja, 2013, p. 117). A significant variation is the party ideology, which cannot be separated from the democratic values of the party. The imposition of internal party democracy has an effect on the ideology of the party. If a party has an inclusive party ideology, a high level of internal party democracy is more likely; while center-based ideologies, like fundamentalist religious ideology, personality-based parties, or nationalist parties

should favor a mere nondemocratic internal structure in which the power is concentrated (Mersel, 2006, p. 76). Whereas the democratic concept of leftist and green ideologies are based on popular participation and a high level of direct, and decentralized democracy, right-leaning and liberal ideologies has a more traditional or representative view on democracy (Scarrow, 2005, p. 62).

Party models and IPD

The likelihood of the implementation of internal party democracy also depends on the existing party model. Each party model has its own interpretation of democracy, and therefore of internal party democracy (Cross and Katz, 2013, p. 7). The question of internal party democracy leads to the problem of just who or what the party is (Carty, 2013, p. 11). In an attempt to understand the critical distinctions between the parties, several party models were developed by scholars. According to the influential work of Duverger (1954) the critical distinction between party models is the relationship between party members and the party elite. Two opposing archetypical models are the mass party and the cadre party. Other party models were developed later on, like the electoral-professional model of Panebianco (1988), the catch-all model of Kirchheimer (1966) and the cartel party model, developed by Katz and Mair (1995). Each of these models have their own interpretation on the implementation of internal party democracy. To explain the linkage between the party models and the likeliness of internal party democracy, the three faces of the party developed by Katz and Mair are used. According to Katz and Mair (1993) the three faces of a political party are: the party on the ground (importance as membership organization), the party in central office, and the party in public office. The relationships among them define the party's organization and 'shape the democratic tensions that govern its internal party decision-making and political life' (Carty, 2013, p. 11). Table 1 shows the three faces of the party in relation to the mass party model, the cadre party model and the cartel party model (these models will be used in the empirical part as well).

Table 1 Three faces of the party combined with party models according to Carty (2013, p. 12-20)

Three faces (Katz & Mair)	Mass party model	Cadre party model	Cartel party model
Party on the ground	core of the organization	minimal	members as tool for recruitment
Party in central office	symbiosis between other faces, managing of other two	minimal	symbiosis with party in public office
Party in public office	subject to the other two	core of the organization	triumph of public office over other two faces

The classic mass party model distinguishes individual members as ‘the very substance of the party, the stuff of its activity’. Within the mass party model, internal party democracy is ‘a defining characteristic’ (Carty, 2013, p. 13). The three faces of the party are all represented in the structure of the mass party (see Table 1). The members (party on the ground) are the core of the organization, are connected to the party in public office (leadership), and are managed by the party in central office (bureaucratic organization). This relationship legitimizes the claim that mass parties are representative and democratically accountable institutions (Carty, 2013, p. 13). In light of the question of the desirability of internal party democracy, the level of IPD of the mass party is expected to be high.

In contrast to the mass party, a well-known statement of the cadre party is that such parties ‘have no members’ (Carty, 2013, p. 13). A cadre party is characterized by the domination of the elites and focuses on campaigning and elections. The cadre party does not favor a bureaucratic organization (the party in central office) or members participation (the party on the ground). The party in public office is the core of the organization. The party is financed by the elite instead of by the members. The elite of the party are grouped together, and have no interest in linking the members together. These features of the cadre party suggest that the desirability of internal party democracy is low. However, according to Duverger, pure cadre parties almost never exist. In

practice, most cadre parties allow ordinary members in ‘an attempt to identify and build their support base, but that membership is not institutionalized in a way that gives the party on the ground any significant or ongoing decision-making influence in the party’ (Carty, 2013, p. 13).

The cartel party model of Katz and Mair (1995) is known for their reliance on financial state subvention that frees it from reliance on the interests in civil society (Carty, 2013, p. 19). The parties form ‘a cartel’ of parties that want to maintain the existing structure. In the cartel party, the party in public office faces an organizational triumph over the other two faces. The party on the ground, the members, are used as tool for the recruitment of new personnel (Carty, 2013, p. 18). There is little room for member participation due to the highly managed competition on the part of the parties. A high level of internal party democracy should not be expected from this model. However, according to Carty, the opposite is true. Compared to the mass party, where members are the very substance, the cartel party sees the member as an individualistic tool. The members are isolated from one another and engaged in direct personal communication with the party (Carty, 2013, p. 19). Internal party democracy is used as a tool. The cartel party abandons the hierarchical party structure for a stratarchical organization, a factionalized organization of different autonomous ‘units’ that are independent from each other. According to Katz and Mair, this stratarchy is used to constrain internal party democracy. The cartel party thesis suggests a decline of internal party democracy; however, the study of Loxbo (2013) demonstrate there is no evidence for this suggestion.

In light of the different existing party models and their view on internal party democracy, the third hypothesis is:

H₃: Dutch mass parties have a higher level of internal party democracy than cartel parties and cadre parties have a lower level of internal party democracy than cartel parties.

Research question and operationalization

The research question is: *What is the level of internal party democracy (IPD) of Dutch parties and what explains the differences in time and between parties?* The dependent variable is the level of internal party democracy. The independent variables are the growing attention to internal party democracy, the democratic approaches, and the party models. Three hypotheses, which were derived from the above discussed theory, are given. The research question is answered using the Intra-Party Democracy Index of Rahat and Shapira (2016).

The index of Rahat and Shapira consists of a questionnaire that includes the operationalization of the five dimensions of participation, competition, representation, responsiveness, and transparency (see Appendix A). The questionnaire is designed to examine Israeli political parties, however, with small adjustments the questionnaire is applicable for cross-national research. Rahat and Shapira used (not published) the index to analyze the level of internal party democracy in six major parties in Canada, Ireland, and Great Britain (Rahat and Shapira, 2016, p. 15) and it was adapted quite easily.

METHODOLOGY AND CASE SELECTION

In order to probe the theoretical expectations, both a quantitative and a qualitative method is used to determine the level of internal party democracy in the Netherlands. The unit of analysis is the party. The goal of this thesis is to compare the internal party democracy of Dutch parties over time to explain the differences over time and between the parties. The IPD index of Rahat and Shapira is 'a both empirical and normative tool for evaluating and comparing political parties over time and space' (Rahat and Shapira, 2016, p. 1). To compare and explain the level of internal party democracy over time, two time periods are used: 2006 and 2016.

The Intra-Party Democracy Index of Rahat and Shapira takes a broad definition of democracy as starting point. According to the IPD index, in a democratic party 'the relationship

between the public, party institutions and the party's representatives in government are founded on principles of participation, competition, representation, responsiveness, and transparency' (2016, p. 5). These principles or dimensions include criteria of internal party democracy of both narrow and broad definitions of democracy (2016, p. 11). Rahat and Shapira use this broad definition because they tried to determine whether a party is democratic and to evaluate the quality of its democracy (2016, p. 5). Their five dimensions cover most of the aspects of internal party democracy found in the literature.

The IPD index of Rahat and Shapira is not the only quantitative study to the level of internal party democracy. Many earlier studies measured specific aspects of internal party democracy. Some studies focused on certain aspects of participation (like candidate or leadership selection), on responsiveness, decentralization, competition, or on formal rules (Rahat and Shapira, 2016, p. 5). The work of Von dem Berge et al. (2013) is one of the first attempts to design a comprehensive index to measure internal party democracy. The aim of Rahat and Shapira with their index is to offer an index 'that will look at various phenomena in the internal life of political parties and at various democratic dimensions, at both formal rules and actual behavior' (2016, p. 5). Susan Scarrow (2005) wrote another well-known work on internal party democracy. She defines three criteria or dimensions of internal party democracy: inclusiveness, (de)centralization, and institutionalization. The criteria of inclusiveness and institutionalization are covered in the five dimensions of Rahat and Shapira. The dimension of (de)centralization is not included as separate principle, however, some of the features of this dimension are found in Rahat and Shapira's dimension of representation (Rahat and Shapira, 2016, p. 6). Because of its broad and more comprehensive approach, the IPD index of Rahat and Shapira is chosen in favor of the index of Von dem Berg et al. or the more qualitative approach of Scarrow.

The questionnaire (Appendix A) includes the operationalization of the five dimensions. Based on the answers on the questionnaire, each party received a grade between 0 (no internal party democracy) and 100 points (highest level of internal party democracy). Rahat and Shapira label the grades of the parties into three democratic levels. A score of 61-100 points means a party is 'democratic', a party with a score between 30-60 points is 'partly democratic', and a score below 30 points means a party is 'non-democratic' (2016, p. 13). The dimension of participation – which has the largest share of 30 points out of 100 – examines the ways members and nonmembers can participate into the selection of leaders, candidates, and ideological debates of the party. The dimensions of representation and competition both received a 20 points weight value. The dimension of representation studies the representation of woman and specific social groups. The competition dimension valued the competitiveness inside the party's institutions. Responsiveness and transparency both received 15% of the points. The first examines the responsiveness by the party to their members, while the last examines how open and transparent the party is.

All major established Dutch political parties are studied in this thesis. The parties are: the Christian Democratic Appeal (CDA), Democrats66 (D66), GreenLeft (GroenLinks), the Labor Party (PvdA), the Party for Freedom (PVV), the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD), and the Socialist Party (SP). Relatively new and small parties, like the Christian Union (ChristenUnie), the Elderly Party (50+), the Animal Party (Partij voor de Dieren), or the State Reformed Party (SGP) are not included due to their small representation in parliament.

The analysis of the IPD index for 2016 is done on the eve of the general elections for the Dutch parliament of March 2017. The analysis is done in December 2016 and January 2017. Because not every candidate list was already approved by the members, the provisional candidate list is used in the analysis. The data to measure the dimensions were collected from a variety of sources: party documents, like party constitutions and regulations, parties' websites, media reports found in

LexisNexis and the Political Party Database. These secondary data were found on the internet, requested from the parties, extracted from the Political Party Database or found on the archives of the DNPP (Documentation Centre of Dutch Political Parties). Most of the questions in the questionnaire are based on the party's formal written rules found within the official party's documents. Therefore, the party's constitutions and regulations were the most significant sources in this study. Sometimes there was a clear and proven contradiction between the parties' regulations or constitutions and what actually takes place. In line with the research Rahat and Shapira has done, real events were preferred over formal rules found within the party's documents.

RESULTS

The findings of the IPD index of 2016 appear in Table 2. The overall scores display the majority of the major Dutch parties – five out of seven - score above 61 points and can thus be categorized as 'democratic'. The Socialist Party, which scored only one point (59) away from the democratic category is regarded as 'partly democratic'. The Party for Freedom is an outlier and with 19 points categorized as 'non-democratic'.

From a theoretical perspective, the results demonstrate that democratic, partly democratic, and non-democratic parties can operate within the Dutch democratic system. Despite scoring as a partly democratic party, the SP is not far away from the democratic category and the gap between the SP and the CDA is smaller than the gap between the CDA and the PvdA. The findings show that most of the parties are spread along a continuum at the top segment of the index and are not concentrated close to the middle.

The calculated IPD score of 2006 can be found in Table 3. Because the PVV was established in 2005 and for the first time joined the parliamentary election in 2006, the IPD score of the PVV cannot be calculated. The overall scores display that, as with the IPD scores of 2016, five parties can be regarded as 'democratic'.

Table 2 IPD among the major Dutch parties in 2016

General ranking	Party	Participation (out of 30)	Representation (out of 20)	Competition (out of 20)	Responsiveness (out of 15)	Transparency (out of 15)	Total
1	PvdA	26	18	20	12	15	91
2	GroenLinks	26	15	10	12	15	78
3	D66	26	14	10	8	15	73
4	VVD	27	11	10	8	15	71
5	CDA	26	10	10	8	15	69
6	SP	15	11	10	8	15	59
7	PVV	1	11	0	0	7	19

Table 3 IPD among the major Dutch parties in 2006

General ranking	Party	Participation (out of 30)	Representation (out of 20)	Competition (out of 20)	Responsiveness (out of 15)	Transparency (out of 15)*	Total
1	VVD	26	12	20	8	15	81
2	GroenLinks	25	19	10	8	15	77
3	PvdA	23	16	10	12	15	76
4	CDA	26	10	10	8	15	69
5	D66	26	8	10	8	15	67
6	SP	15	10	10	8	15	58
7	PVV**	-	-	-	-	-	

* The transparency score of 2006 cannot be calculated. Each party gained a full score of 15 points in this table.

** 2006 was the first year the PVV joined the parliamentary election. The IPD score of the PVV in 2006 can therefore not be calculated.

The SP, which scored two points (58) away from the democratic category, is regarded as ‘partly democratic’. As with 2016, the SP is not far away from the democratic category and most of the parties are spread along a continuum at the top segment of the index. The next chapter will discuss the results that were represented in this chapter.

DISCUSSION

In this part, the results of the IPD index will be interpreted, explained and evaluated. The previous mentioned hypotheses will be evaluated. The first section explores the first hypothesis, and is a both quantitative and qualitative overview of the IPD indexes of 2006 and 2016. The second section deals with the analysis to the second hypothesis, some generalizations to the IPD scores are made. In the third section a comparison is made to theoretically explain the variance in IPD scores and to discuss the third hypothesis.

An overview of Dutch political parties

This section explores the first hypothesis, which suggests that the level of internal party democracy has increased within the last ten years. The IPD index is calculated for the 2006 and 2016 situation of the seven major Dutch parties (see Tables 2 and 3). Because the dimension of transparency cannot be calculated for the situation of 2006, this dimension is ‘excluded’ in the comparison. Each party gained the full score of 15 points in the IPD index of 2006.

The IPD index of 2016 shows a wide variety, with scores ranging from 91 to 19 points. A wide gap appears between the Party for Freedom and the other six parties. Within the democratic category, a high variance is found, with scores ranging from 69 to 91 points. The most significant differences are found in the representation and competition scores. The ranking of the democratic parties approximately follows the left-right ‘ranking’ of the parties. The leftist parties – the Labor Party and GreenLeft – gained the highest scores, followed by the centrist party – Democrats66 – and then the parties on the (center) right – the People’s Party for Freedom and Democracy and the

Christian Democratic Appeal. The wing parties, the left-wing Socialist Party and the right-wing Party for Freedom – are found at the bottom of the ranking.

The IPD index of 2006 shows less variety, however, the IPD score of the PVV is not calculated. In contrast to the scores of 2016, the IPD scores of the democratic categorized parties are closer to each other, while the score of the SP is almost the same (59 points in 2016 and 58 points in 2006). The ranking shows two remarkable shifts. Whereas the PvdA ranked first in 2016, the IPD index of 2006 put the PvdA on the third rank, with a difference of 15 points in ten years. The VVD IPD score of 2016 is 10 points lower than the score of 2006 and put the VVD from the first place in 2006 to the fourth in 2016. The next paragraphs will compare the IPD scores of 2006 and 2016 parties individually.

With 69 points, the **CDA** is, according to the IPD index of 2016, the last party in row of the democratic parties. The largest difference between the CDA and other parties is its lower score on representation. This lower score has to do with the – in contrast to other parties – low number of women on the candidate list and representatives in parliament. Besides this, there is not much difference between the CDA and the other parties. CDA's 2006 IPD index scores are exactly the same as its 2016 scores. However, there were some internal changes in the internal democracy of the party. The additional representatives of the regional branches and special organizations at the convention were abolished; causing the unequal ratio between 'ordinary' members and the members of special organizations disappeared. However, these changes do not influence the IPD score between 2006 and 2016.

In their constitution, **D66** stated that 'in particular, the party strives for radical democratization of the society and the political system' (D66 Statuten, art. 2). For instance, D66 strongly supports the directly elected mayor and referendums and can be considered a supporter of

participatory democracy.³ Nevertheless, D66 only scored 73 points in the 2016 IPD index, 21 points less than first-ranked PvdA. In terms of participation, competition and transparency, D66 is comparable to other parties. However, no special mechanisms are employed to guarantee representation of all social groups. D66 held no competitive elections for the position of the party leader since 2006, which explains its lower score on the competition dimension in 2016. Additionally, members cannot participate in the decision-making regarding whether the party joins or leaves the coalition or which of the representatives take part in the cabinet. Compared to 2006, the IPD score has increased with six points from 67 points in 2006 to 73 points in 2016. Since 2006, some changes in the field of internal party democracy have taken place. On the dimension of participation, the availability of digital voting (adopted in 2006) is extended to the election of the party leader, the party's chairman, and the candidate list. On the dimension of responsiveness, the convention is formalized to be held twice a year instead of once a year. The dimension of competition gained more points in 2006 due to the competitive leadership election of 2006, with two candidates.

GroenLinks is second-ranked in the IPD index of 2016. Compared to the 2006 IPD index, the score of GroenLinks has increased with only one point from 77 to 78 points. However, despite its score of 78 points in 2016, GroenLinks has some far-reaching and modern forms of internal democratic procedure. Since 2006, digital voting to adopt the candidate list was introduced. The digital voting for leadership elections and candidate lists has been formalized in the constitution. Since 2006, it is possible to request an internal referendum. This is in line with the support for referendums in general, and therefore for more participatory democracy. The responsiveness score rose from 8 in 2006 to 12 in 2016 because of the formalization of the presence of a member of the party board at coalition talks. Compared to 2006, the abolishing of the party council and the advisory

³ <https://d66.nl/standpunt-over/referendum/> and <https://d66.nl/gekozen-burgemeester-stap-dichterbij/>

board of the party board, which had the same powers as the convention, resulted in the participation score rising from 25 in 2006 to 26 in 2016. Because more women were represented in the parliament and on the candidate list and the rules about the mix of women and immigrants enacted in the valid constitution of 2006, the representation score declined from 19 to 15 points in 2016.

The **PvdA** shows the highest ranking in the IPD index in 2016. It has particularly high scores on the dimensions of competition and responsiveness. Since the last election in 2012, several competitive elections for the chairman and party leader were held. During these elections, all members were able to vote (digitally) for the party leader in a members' referendum. Another significant difference with the other parties is the need of an approval of the convention to take part in a coalition, which resulted in a high responsiveness score. The difference between the participation score of 2006 and 2016 is striking (76 points in 2006 and 91 points in 2016). The scores of the participation, representation and competition dimension have increased compared to the 2006 score. The participation of ordinary members at the convention has been allowed since the beginning of 2016. Until 2015, only representatives of the local branches could take part in the convention. With the 2016 Constitution, the voting system and the participation of all members, and therefore the score on participation and competition, was drastically changed. Compared to the other parties, the PvdA's IPD scores show the most significant change in ten years.

The **PVV** has only one formal member: founder and party leader Geert Wilders, and has therefore a very low score on participation, competition, and responsiveness in the 2016 IPD index. The dimension of transparency also has a low score, while all other parties gained the maximum score of 15 points. Party's documents or documentation of party events were compared to the other parties not available. Since the diversity figures of the PVV's representatives in parliament and on the candidate lists is also below the average of other parties, the representation score is not high.

With an IPD score of 19 points, the PVV is an exception when compared to the other parties regarding IPD.

The **SP** is traditionally a party with a more hierarchical and hidden party structure. This structure leads to the lower scores of 59 points in 2016 and 58 points in 2006. SP's lower score is due to its low participation score. In the other dimensions, SP's scores are comparable to those of the other parties. The participation score is determined by the quantity of people that can participate in the decision-making process. In the decision-making processes of the SP, decisions are reserved to the small inner circle of the party board, or to the party council or convention, which are a selected group of representatives. Comparing SP's constitutions of 2006 and 2016, the only difference is the frequency of the convention. While the 2006 constitution requires that the convention is held every four years, the current constitution changed this to every two years. In 2015, the first competitive election for the party's chairman was held, with two candidates. However, these candidates were nominated by the party board and there were rumors about impediment and bias of the party board.⁴

The **VVD** is traditionally a democratic party: 'the VVD went further in its democratization efforts than the CDA and PvdA' (Lucardie and Voerman, 2011, p. 189-190). However, the IPD score of 2016 dropped from 81 points to 71 points in 2016. The participation score increased with one point from 26 points in 2006 to 27 points in 2016. The introduction of 'thematic networks', in which non-members can participate, in the 2016 Constitution is the reason for VVD's high score on participation. Lack of a competitive leadership election since 2006, no special mechanisms for social groups, a lower percentage of woman on candidate lists compared to other parties, and lack of a need for approval of the convention to join a coalition led to lower scores on competition and representation in 2016 compared to the 2006 ones.

⁴ <http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/sp-ers-bestuur-belemmert-vrije-voorzittersverkiezing~a4195030/>

Another difference with the prevailing constitution of 2006 is the abolishing of the party's council. Until the revised 2016 Constitution, the decisions about party's documents (like the constitution and regulations) were more centralized because of the strong role of the party council. However, due to the shifting opinion towards a more participatory democracy,⁵ the VVD abolished the party council in its 2016 Constitution to 'give room to the renewal of the party, by replacing the party's council by new forms of discussions and debate'. Despite of the fourth ranking in 2016, the VVD is the only Dutch party where non-members formally can participate in ideological debates.

Some generalizations can be made out of the overview of the current internal party democracy and the comparison between the IPD scores in 2016 and 2006. Around the turn of the century, many parties passed far-reaching processes and formalized rules of democratization (Lucardie and Voerman, 2011, p. 188-195). On the contrary, within the comparison between 2006 and 2016, only the scores of the PvdA and VVD show some significant differences, whereas the difference of the VVD is due to the absence of a leadership election in 2016. Looking to all Dutch parties, the level of internal party democracy does not show a major increase since 2006. This may not be surprising, as most of the parties were already democratic to a large extent in 2006. To conclude, the first hypothesis has to be rejected. To little has changed to speak of a general increase of the level of internal party democracy in the Netherlands since 2006.

The Netherlands in international perspective

The second hypothesis is based on the normative assumption that all Dutch parties are internally democratic. To confirm the hypothesis, all parties needed to score 61 or higher on the IPD index. However, the normative requirement for political parties to be internally democratic, is counteracted by the existence of nondemocratic parties in democracies.

⁵ <http://www.volkskrant.nl/politiek/gekozen-burgemeester-omstreden-in-vvd~a1003464/>

The results of the IPD index of 2016 (Table 2) show that five out of the seven studied parties fit within the democratic category. Except for the Party for Freedom, all parties are concentrated at the top segment of the index. A positive relationship between the state democracy and the level of internal party democracy of Dutch parties has to be rejected. The results of the IPD index do not correspond with the idea that being part of a democratic state means all political parties have to be democratic too. Also in the Netherlands, nondemocratic parties can exist within the democratic system.

However, the majority of parties correspond with the normative ideal of internal party democracy and are found in the top segment of the index. Great variety is found at this top segment. The Dutch parties' IPD indexes need a point of reference for comparison reasons; an international 'benchmark' may provide more insight in the results of the Dutch parties. To get the most accurate comparison, only the countries which are analyzed with the IPD index of Rahat and Shapira are used in this comparison.⁶ The IPD index of Rahat and Shapira has been used to analyze the level of internal party democracy of the political parties in Israel, Canada, Ireland and Great Britain. The fact that not every Dutch party is analyzed in this thesis, only the major parties, limits this comparison, as does the fact that the number of countries used in this comparison is small and may be unrepresentative. To enlarge the comparison, the Democracy Index and Democracy Ranking of 2015⁷ are added to the comparison.

⁶ Rahat and Shapira (2016) examined the applicability of the IPD-index for cross-national research by analyzing the internal party democracy in Israel, Canada, Ireland and Great Britain (as of December 2012). The six parties of the Westminster systems of Canada, Great Britain and Ireland received scores ranging from 52 to 68 points, with only one point separating the two British parties (Conservative Party: 68; Labour Party: 67) as well as the two Canadian parties (Conservative Party: 61; Liberal Party: 60), and eight points separating the two Irish parties (Labour Party: 60; Fine Gael: 52). In Israel's multiparty system, the Israeli parties (n=18) received scores ranging from 86 points to 2 points. For this comparison, the seven major Israeli parties were taken into the analysis, to ensure a better comparison with the Dutch case. These four countries, with three Westminster systems and one multiparty system, is not very representative to compare to the Dutch case; however, the IPD index has not been used for other countries (Rahat and Shapira, 2016, p. 15).

⁷ The Democracy Index of the Economist Intelligence Unit is an annual democracy index based on 60 indicators, grouped into five dimensions: electoral processes and pluralism, functioning of the government,

Table 4 *IPD index averages*

Country	IPD index average/mean
Netherlands	74.5 points
Great Britain	67.5 points
Canada	60.5 points
Ireland	56.0 points
Israel	39.3 points

Table 5 *Democracy Index 2015*

Country	Democracy Index '15 # = number on list
Canada	#7 / 9.08 points
Netherlands	#10 / 8.92 points
Ireland	#12 / 8.85 points
Great Britain	#16 / 8.31 points
Israel	#34 / 7.77 points

Table 6 *Democracy Ranking 2015*

Country	Democracy Ranking '15 # = number on list
Netherlands	#6 / 83.6 points
Ireland	#9 / 81.7 points
Great Britain	#12 / 80.0 points
Canada	#15 / 79.1 points
<u>Israel</u>	#24 / 73.0 points

The results of the comparison of the IPD scores are shown in Table 4. Tables 5 and 6 show the overall scores and rankings of the five countries on the Democracy Index of the Economist of 2015 and on the Democracy Ranking of 2015. A large variance appears in the average IPD scores. The IPD index of the Netherlands shows the highest average points (74.5 points), while Israel, which also has a multiparty system, scored almost 30 points lower.

Cross-analyzing the two indexes on democracy, the average scores are highest for the Netherlands (8.92 points and 83.6 points), followed by Ireland, Great Britain, Canada and Israel. The ranking of the IPD index roughly follows the ranking of the overall IPD index scores. Only Ireland shows a difference: it is the second highest ranked democracy, but it is fourth on the IPD

political participation, political culture and civil liberties. The maximum score is 10 points. The Democracy Ranking is an annual ranking of the Democracy Ranking Association, which used a multi-dimensional framework based on six dimensions: politics, gender, economy, knowledge, health and environment. The maximum score is 100 points.

scores. Theoretically, there seems to be a relationship between the level of state democracy and the level of internal party democracy. The higher the general quality of state democracy, the higher the average level of internal party democracy. One of the limitations with this conclusion is the limited number of countries in this study. More cross-national research of the IPD index of Rahat and Shapira might help to strengthen (or weaken) the argument of a positive relationship between state democracy and internal party democracy.

The second hypothesis is based on mixed support. The Dutch parties are not all democratic. Also nondemocratic and partly democratic parties exist within the democratic system of the Netherlands. However, compared to other countries, the Netherlands achieved high IPD scores. Despite of the absence of national regulations on the internal party's organization, a high level of internal party democracy is found, probably due to the high level of democracy in general.

Explaining the variance: a comparison

The third hypothesis is the most theoretical of the three hypotheses. It assumes a relationship between the type of party and the level of internal party democracy. Due to their own ideology, origin and structure, the Dutch parties analyzed in this thesis can be categorized using these party models. Therefore, the overall score on the IPD index of the analyzed Dutch parties can be explained, interpreted, and clarified by using the theories related to these party models.

As suggested by the third hypothesis, the level of internal party democracy of Dutch mass parties should be higher than the IPD score of cartel parties; whereas the IPD score of cadre parties should be lower than these of the mass or cartel party. Using the typology of Dutch parties of Koole and Ruesen⁸, no pure mass party exists within the Dutch party system. According to their typology,

⁸ The typology of the Dutch parties is derived from the work of Ruesen (2013) in his master's thesis *Nederlandse politieke partijen en hun inkomsten: professionalisering in de werving van donaties en giften*. For his research, Ruesen verified the typification of Koole (1996) and categorized the Dutch parties into the existing party models. His conclusion is the same as Koole in 1996: the PvdA, CDA, D66 and GroenLinks can be typified as a combination between the mass and cartel model, with the emphasis to the mass party

the PvdA, CDA, D66 and GroenLinks are typified as a combination between a mass and a cartel party; the VVD is typified as a cartel party and the SP is seen as a (modern) cadre party. Following the hypothesis, the PvdA, CDA, D66, and GroenLinks would be expected to have a higher IPD score than the VVD and SP, whereas the level of internal party democracy of the VVD as cartel party should be higher than these of the SP's cadre model. The overall scores of 2006 and 2016 displayed in Tables 2 and 3, partially confirm this assumption. The IPD index of 2016 'fits' more into this assumption than the 2006 index, in which the VVD was first-ranked. However, according to Koole and Ruesen, the VVD has some mass party characteristics. This may lead to a higher ranking for the VVD in the IPD index, since it is not a purely cartel party. In conclusion, the relationship between the level of internal party democracy and party models elaborated on in the literature review, gives - partially - evidence to support the third hypothesis.

Furthermore, the analysis to the third hypothesis can also include the party's ideology, due to the fact the party's ideology and party model are inextricably intertwined (Mersel, 2006, p. 99). As suggested in the literature review, inclusive party ideologies are expected to have a higher level of internal party democracy than those based on fundamental or personality-based ideology, which favor a mere nondemocratic party structure. Furthermore, leftist and green ideologies have a more inclusive and participatory party ideology than the right-leaning or liberal based ideologies. As noted earlier, the ranking of the IPD-index of 2016 approximately follows the left-right 'ranking' of the parties. The leftist and 'green' ideology based parties – the PvdA and GroenLinks – gained the highest scores, followed by the centrist party – Democrats66 – and then the parties on the (center) right – the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy and the Christian Democratic Appeal. The wing parties, the left-wing Socialist Party and the right-wing Party for Freedom – are found at the

model. The VVD is typified as a cartel model with some mass model characteristics, and the SP as a modern cadre model. His work is downloaded from: <http://dare.uva.nl/cgi/arno/show.cgi?fid=486492>

bottom of the ranking. The wing parties, have a mere elite- or personality based ideology, which supports the mere nondemocratic party structure. We could thus expected to find these two parties – and especially the strong personality-based PVV – on the bottom of the ranking.

A good illustration to demonstrate the relationship between party model and ideology and the expected level of internal party democracy is the difference between the IPD score of the PvdA and SP. Both are leftist ideology based parties, however, these two parties have different structures. The PvdA is typified as a combination of a mass and cartel party, and the SP as a (modern) cadre party. Looking at the characteristics of the mass party model, the core of the party are the members. According to the party's website, the PvdA distinguish their members 'as the determinants of the direction of the party'. The newly introduced concept of *Ledendemocratie* (member democracy) of the PvdA meets the requirements of the mass party. The members' referendum, the one-vote system, and the election of the candidates and chairman by a members' convention fits into the ideas of the mass party. These observations support the expectation that the level of internal party democracy of a mass party – in this case the PvdA – will be high.

The lower IPD score of the SP is mainly due to the low participation score. The 'ordinary' members of the SP are not the 'core' of the party, whereas the decision-making is dedicated to the party elites. The characteristic of the cadre party is the domination of elites. Within the structure of the SP, this can be seen from the hierarchical elite-based structure and powerful party board. The convention is only accessible for selected representatives, and important decisions are made by the party board. The well-known quote 'cadre parties have no members' can partly correspond with SP's low participation score in the IPD index. A low overall IPD score should be expected of cadre parties and SP's scores on the IPD index are indeed low compared to the other parties.

However, more democratization within SP, with the first election of the chairman held, suggests SP is slowly becoming more of a mass party. This can be explained by the tendency of cadre

parties to adopt democratic processes from their mass opponents to respond to democratic forces and to legitimize their claims to being part of a democratic system (Carty, 2013, p. 16). Despite the adoption of democratic processes, these developments are not intended to alter the fundamental authority of the elite. To become more democratic, the power of the party board and party council needs to be abandoned.

The major part of the overall picture of the relationship between the party models, the party's ideology, party's structure and the level of internal party democracy is supported by the above data and observations. These observations give enough evidence to support the third hypothesis; Dutch mass parties have a higher level of internal party democracy than cartel parties and cadre parties have a lower level of internal party democracy than cartel parties.

CONCLUSION

This thesis has examined the level of internal party democracy of Dutch political parties. Three hypotheses were tested to answer the research question *What is the level of internal party democracy of Dutch parties and what explains the differences in time and between parties*. The analysis of the IPD indexes found not enough evidence to support the first hypothesis. To little has changed to suggest the level of internal party democracy has increased within the last ten years. The second hypothesis is based on mixed support. Although the analyzed parties are not all democratic, a high level of internal party democracy compared to other democratic countries is found. The analysis related to the third hypothesis gives enough evidence to support this assumption. The theoretical assumptions on the level of internal party democracy explains and supports the IPD-scores of the Dutch parties.

No evidence was found to support the expectations of a growing level of internal party democracy within the last ten years. However, current developments of the parties show a growing consciousness of parties to their internal democracy. Due to the changing political landscape and

the growing attention of supranational organizations like the European Union, the parties have become more progressive on matters of internal party democracy. Many parties are trying to democratize their party: the VVD allowed non-members to participate in ideological debates,⁹ the candidate list of GroenLinks is for the first time approved by a members' referendum,¹⁰ the PvdA allowed all citizens to vote for the new party leader,¹¹ the first chairman election of the SP has taken place,¹² and the CDA asked 1000 members to deliver input for their election program.¹³ In that regard, the Dutch parties might started to follow the trend of becoming more and more internally democratic.

⁹ Leidraad 'Toekomst van de VVD': [http://files.vvd.nl/Leidraad'ToekomstvandeVVD'2.pdf](http://files.vvd.nl/Leidraad%20ToekomstvandeVVD'2.pdf)

¹⁰ <https://groenlinks.nl/referendum>

¹¹ <https://www.pvda.nl/verkiezingen/lijsttrekker/>

¹² <https://www.nrc.nl/nieuws/2015/11/28/sp-kiest-ron-meyer-tot-nieuwe-partijvoorzitter-a1411173>

¹³ <http://www.volkskrant.nl/binnenland/democratische-vernieuwing-cda-leden-beslissen-mee-over-partijprogramma~a4374472/>

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APPENDIX A – IPD QUESTIONNAIRE*(1) Participation (30 pts)***1.1 Who selects the party leader? (5 pts)**

- 5 pts A group of selected representatives, all party members or all citizens of voting age
- 0 A small inner circle of the party elite or a single leader

1.2 Who selects the party leader? (5 pts)

- 5 pts All citizens of voting age
- 4 All party members
- 3 Selected representatives
- 1 A small inner circle
- 0 A single leader

1.3 Who selects the party's candidates to the parliament? (5 pts)

- 5 pts A group of selected representatives, all party members or all citizens of voting age
- 0 A small inner circle of the party elite or a single leader

1.4 Who selects the party's candidates to the parliament? (5 pts)

- 5 pts All citizens of voting age
- 4 All party members
- 3 Selected representatives
- 1 A small inner circle
- 0 A single leader

1.5 Who of the following can participate in writing or approving the party platform? (5 pts)

- 5 pts All citizens of voting age
- 4 All party members
- 3 Selected representatives
- 2 A small inner circle
- 1 A single leader
- 0 The party doesn't have a platform

1.6 Who of the following could take part in ideological debates conducted by the party in the last four years? (5 pts)

- 5 pts All citizens of voting age
- 4 All party members
- 3 Selected representatives
- 0 The party didn't conduct ideological debates

(2) Representation (20 pts)**2.1 What percentage of realistic positions¹⁴ on the party list is filled by women candidates? (5 pts)**

- 5 pts > 45%
- 4 35–44%
- 3 25–34%
- 2 15–24%
- 1 5–14%
- 0 < 5%

2.2 What is the value of the Women Ranking Index¹⁵ on the party list? (5 pts)

- 5 pts > 0.45
- 4 0.35–0.44
- 3 0.25–0.34
- 2 0.15–0.24
- 1 0.05–0.14
- 0 < 0.05

2.3 What is the percentage of women among the party's current parliament representatives? (5 pts)

- 5 pts >45%
- 4 35–44%
- 3 25–34%
- 2 15–24%
- 1 5–14%
- 0 < 5%

2.4 Does the party employ special mechanisms (such as reserved positions or districts) to guarantee representation for the following social groups or sectors on its parliament list? (10 pts)

- 2 pts Woman
- 2 Immigrants
- 2 Senior citizens
- 2 Young adults
- 2 Residents of the geographical periphery

¹⁴ The 'realistic positions' of the candidate lists are taken from an opinion poll of 22 December 2016 of the *Politieke Barometer* (Ipsos). Ipsos is a polling organization who publishes each two weeks a new *Politieke Barometer*, an opinion poll to the distribution of seats in the Dutch parliament. The number of seats in the poll of December 22 is equal to the 'realistic positions' used in this analysis.

¹⁵ Women Ranking Index: ($\frac{\text{sum of position values}}{15} \times 100$). Example: in order to calculate the women ranking index, the sum of values of the positions on the list is first calculated. The total value of the list is 5 (for 1st position) + 4 (for 2nd position) + 3 (for 3rd position) + 2 (for 4th position) + 1 (for 5th position) = 15. Women won position 3 on the list that has the value of 3, and number 5 on the list that has the value of 1. The sum of these values is 3 + 1 = 4. The value of the index would thus be $\frac{4}{15} \times 100 = 26.7$ (Rahat and al., 2008, p. 679).

(3) Competition (20 pts)

3.1 Have there been competitive elections (with two or more candidates) for the position of party leader since the last general elections? (10 pts)

10 pts Yes

0 No

3.2 Have there been competitive elections for the party institutions (convention, council, central committee) during the last four years? (10 pts)

10 pts Yes

0 No

(4) Responsiveness (15 pts)

4.1 Does the party have a selected representative institution (e.g. a central committee, convention) and has it met at least once in the last two years? (5 pts)

5 pts Yes

0 No

4.2 Do the party's institutions do the following? (10 pts)

4 pts Take part in selecting the party's representatives in the cabinet

3 Approve whether the party joins or leaves the coalition

3 Conduct debates about policy matters

(5) Transparency (15 pts)

5.1 How easy is it to obtain a copy of the party constitution or regulations? (5 pts)

5 pts The updated text is available on the party website or was sent out after the first request was made

3 The text was obtained only after a number of requests

0 The text was not obtained even after repeated requests

5.2 Are the following available on the party's website and or Facebook page? (10 pts)

1 pts The party's constitution or regulations

1 The party's platform or document of principles

1 Information about the party's history

1 Biographies of the party's parliamentary members and or candidates

1 A list of party officials and their contact details

1 Documentation of party events

1 Articles or transcripts of speeches by party representatives and officials

1 Details about contributors

1 News and updates

1 Information about local party branches