

CAMPAIGNING WITHOUT SUBSIDIES

*EXPLORATIONS ON THE ORGANIZATION AND FUNDING OF THE ELECTION
CAMPAIGNS OF INDEPENDENT LOCAL PARTIES IN THE NETHERLANDS*

Master thesis Justin Bergwerff

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EXPLORATIONS ON THE ORGANIZATION AND FUNDING OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS OF
INDEPENDENT LOCAL PARTIES IN THE NETHERLANDS

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the organization and funding of the election campaigns of independent local parties in the Netherlands. Due to their representation in the national parliament, Dutch national parties receive public subsidy. As such, they are able to transfer funds to their local divisions in the municipalities across the country, in order to finance their party activities including election campaigns. Independent local parties, however, do not qualify for these funds, since they are not represented in the Dutch legislature. How, then, do independent local parties fund and organize their election campaigns?

Based on a survey amongst more than 300 respondents, the most important campaign activities, most common expenditures and the most common sources of income could be identified. The most common methods of campaigning include placing campaign boards and posters throughout the municipality, participating in election debates, flyer actions, publishing the election program on the party's website, performing local radio or television shows, advertising in local or regional newspapers and enhancing familiarity by using Facebook. The most parties have spent their money on campaign boards and posters, advertisements and flyer actions, while the most money per party is spent on advertisement, canvassing and other expenditures. On the revenue side, the most parties received their money for the campaign budget from council member contributions, membership fees and private member donations, while the highest amounts of money per party were received from council member contributions, aldermen contributions and other income sources.

It is also found that the number of party members, the municipality size, the number of council members and the number of aldermen on the one hand, and the size of the campaign budget on the other hand are positively correlated. Their explanatory value on the organization of the election campaigns, however, is low, just as the influence of the party type. While about 45 percent of the respondents thinks public funding of their election campaigns is necessary, a larger proportion of them thinks public funding would be a desirable development. The key argument is that almost all respondent want a level playing field when it comes to regulations on private donations and public party funding. The results of this study show that proponents and opponents of public party funding both think that independent local parties and national parties should be treated the same in this regard.

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PREFACE

The idea for this master thesis originated at the coffee machine during the break of the first meeting of our master thesis seminar on Dutch politics. My instructor, Hans Vollaard, told me he saw my name at the nomination list of one of the political parties participating at the upcoming local elections in the municipality of Leiden and presumed I was interested in local politics and election campaigns. He was right. When discussed the electoral success of independent local parties in the Netherlands, Vollaard stated that there is little known about the organization of the election campaigns of those parties in the literature and, maybe even more important, that it is unknown how these campaigns are funded. After all, other than national parties participating in municipal elections, independent local parties do not (yet) qualify to receive public subsidy for their party activities, including electoral campaigns. This conversation laid the foundations for the research process during the preceding months and for the final draft of my master thesis you are reading at this moment.

I would like to thank the respondents of my survey, the central component of this study's empirical analysis. Without their contributions, I would not be able to discover general patterns in the organization and funding of the electoral campaigns of independent local parties in the Netherlands. I want to thank Fons Zinken and Bert Euser for the time they have spent during the conversations and for the information they have provided. Professor Gerrit Voerman and Professor Marcel Boogers deserve my thanks for supporting my study by offering the e-mail address database and the qualification schedule of independent local parties respectively. In particular, I want to thank Hans Vollaard for the kind cooperation and his first-rate feedback on the numerous drafts of my research proposal and survey designs. When I e-mailed him for questions or feedback, I very often found his extensive answers, comments and recommendations in my mailbox the next morning. He did not only spark the development towards the final draft of my master thesis in offering an original study subject, he also managed to help me in preserving the velocity of the research process. I am grateful for his accompanying efforts. Finally, I want to thank the second reader of my thesis, Ruud Koole, for his valuable comments.

Leiden, June 10th, 2014,

Justin Bergwerff

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 RESEARCH MOTIVES

In an interview with *Binnenlands Bestuur* (Domestic Administration) on December 6th, 2013, Philip van Praag, Professor in Political Science at the University of Amsterdam, argued that it is unknown what amounts of money circulate in the campaigns prior to local elections. Indeed, political parties in the Dutch city councils receive compensations, but this budget is meant for the work-related efforts of the council members and not for election campaigns. Regarding funds for the latter, political parties in the city councils have to gather these means from alternative sources of income. However, no academic research is conducted on how local election campaigns are funded. It is thus unknown what amounts of money circulate in these campaigns. According to Van Praag, scientists and the media do not even consider to start an inquiry on this topic, since no overall picture can be drawn. Voters in the city of Groningen, for example, do not care about the ways how local election campaigns in Rotterdam are funded. National parties have guidelines on campaign finance for their local divisions, but Van Praag does not know whether political parties fiddle with those regulations (Delaere 2013).

In this discussion, it is important to draw a distinct line between national parties with local divisions and independent local parties. The majority of the Dutch national parties receive public subsidy that can be allocated amongst their local divisions throughout the country. Independent local parties in the Netherlands, however, do not qualify for this financial assistance, since public subsidies to political parties depend on the number of seats a party occupies in the Lower and Upper House of the Dutch national parliament. At the last municipal elections of March 19th, 2014, the independent local parties gained about one-third of the popular vote, while they are ineligible for public subsidy to fund their election campaigns. Even when independent local parties perform well at local elections, the distribution of public subsidies among the political parties in the Netherlands is not altered in their advantage.

When national parties decide to allocate a certain amount of the public national subsidies they receive to their local divisions throughout the country, their local divisions are able to employ these funds to finance their election campaigns prior to local elections.

Consequently, when it comes to the funding of their election campaign, local divisions of national parties have a head start in comparison to independent local parties. Of course, independent local parties do receive council compensations, just like the other parties in the city councils, but, as the name indicates, these means are meant for the work-related efforts of the council members and not for other party expenditures, such as election campaigns expenses. In order to fund their election campaigns, independent local parties have to depend on other sources of income, such as membership fees, contributions of council members and aldermen, and private donations.

Especially the latter issue has a significant level of relevance since last year, because the regulations on private donations are strengthened. Over the years, the topic of transparency within political finance has been placed high on the Dutch political agenda. In the *Wet financiering politieke partijen* (Wfpp, Law on the funding of political parties), which entered into force at May 1st, 2013, it is determined that private donations of more than 1,000 euro have to be registered and reported to the national government. The government, in turn, publishes donations of more than 4,500 euro (Parlement en Politiek 2014a). The fact that the law passed the Upper House with an overwhelming majority (Eerste Kamer 2013) reflected an urgent desire in Dutch politics to create more transparency within the topic of private donations to political parties. With the implementation of this new law, Dutch independent local parties, however, escaped from the obligations involved, since other than the national parties, they were only forced to publish their regulations on private donations. As a consequence, the regulations on the accumulation of donations had to be made public, but not the (amount of the) donations themselves (Delaere 2013).

This state of affairs was criticized, among others by Member of Parliament Pierre Heijnen. In December 2013, the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations Ronald Plasterk informed the Upper House of Parliament about a consultation in respect of the bill *Wijziging van de Wet financiering politieke partijen voor transparantie bij lokale partijen*, which contains an edit of the Wfpp to create more transparency within the practices of independent local parties. The goal of this edit is to include the independent local parties under the Wfpp regulations. As such, the funding of the independent local parties' election campaigns has to be made more transparent. Besides, Plasterk stated in his letter that he does not want to add unnecessary administrative burdens to political parties, leading to the decision to abolish donation regulation obligations from the bill (Plasterk 2013).

A possible extension of the Wfpp and the desire to treat all political parties completely equal could result in a decision to provide public subsidies also to independent local parties. While proponents of equal treatment emphasize the current disadvantaged position of the independent local parties, opponents argue that the local parties are likely to lose their independency and their distinctiveness when such a policy shift takes place. At the national level of Dutch politics, the debate on public funding of independent political parties is up and running. On March 15th, 2014, Minister Plasterk suggested at BNR News Radio that the Dutch municipalities should take care of the financial support for local parties. The municipalities could, for example, allocate financial means in proportion to the number of council seats a party occupies. In this way, independent local parties receive public funding to finance their party activities, including election campaigns. In such a system, the European Union funds European parties, the national government supports the parties in both Houses of Parliament and the municipalities take care of the funding of the city council parties. According to Plasterk, this is how the regime is meant (BNR 2014). However, this solution has detrimental effects. For example, national parties are well known due to the relatively broad transmission time on radio and television. Moreover, besides the municipal subsidies, local divisions of national parties could also employ the remittances of the national subsidies to fund their election campaigns. Even when independent local parties are subsidized at the municipal level, with reference to national parties, they are still in a disadvantaged position.

1.2 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION AND SUB QUESTIONS

Due to their unequal situation when it comes to public subsidizing, the distinction between local divisions of national parties on the one hand and independent local parties on the other hand might influence the organization and funding of their election campaigns. As discussed above, independent local parties are not eligible for national subsidies to fund their party activities, including election campaigns, but are also not obliged to give disclosure when private donations provide the necessary revenues. When the distinction between the two kinds of parties and the organization and funding of their election campaigns are linked to each other, several questions can be raised, such as: How do independent local parties organize their election campaigns? By which means are these campaigns funded? How can we explain the methods of campaigning and the ways they are funded? Also in the above discussion on the public funding of independent local parties, several questions can be

raised, such as: is more transparency within the practices of independent local parties required and should this go hand in hand with public subsidizing of them or those parties? Is public funding of independent local parties necessary and to what extent is this policy shift desirable? What actor should be responsible for public funding of independent political parties: the national government or the municipalities?

The main research question of this study forms an overlay of the topics addressed above: *How are the election campaigns of independent local parties in the Netherlands organized and funded?* To structure an answer on this main question, the question is divided into three sub questions, namely:

- (1) What are the most important activities in the election campaigns of independent local parties in the Netherlands?
- (2) What are the most important sources of income in the funding of the election campaigns of independent local parties in the Netherlands?
- (3) What are the opinions of independent local parties in the Netherlands on the necessity and desirability of public funding of their party activities?

There are two main reasons why this study only focuses on independent local parties in the Netherlands and not on all Dutch local parties, including the local divisions of national parties. First, as will become clear in the next section, the electoral support for independent local parties has grown significantly in the last two decades and the results of the subsequent elections show a still growing trend to almost one-third of the popular vote in 2014. Hereby, independent local parties in the Netherlands form an interesting and important research topic. Their significance is strengthened by the fact that the independent local parties are the subjects in the above discussion on the regulations regarding private donations and public funding of party activities. Second, at the same time, the body of academic literature on the election campaigns of independent local parties in the Netherlands is almost non-existent. Their electoral success is often recognized and explained, but the attention to the process prior to the elections themselves is very limited. This study, thus, focuses on the parties that become more and more significant in Dutch local politics, but still need academic attention on topics that are not clarified yet.

This thesis has an explorative as well as an explanatory character. The study is explorative in the sense that it tries to discover general patterns in a field of inquiry that has to deal with limited attention in the academic literature. The study is explanatory in the

sense that it not only describes the state of affairs, but also tries to identify explanations for the ways how independent local parties organize and fund their election campaigns.

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND RELEVANCE

Based on the main research question and sub questions, two research objectives can be identified. First, the study wants to examine the organization and funding of the election campaigns of independent local parties in the Netherland. This objective is reflected in the main research question and the first two sub questions. Second, the study wants to examine the opinions of the independent local parties in the Netherlands on the necessity and desirability of public funding of their party activities. This objective is covered by the third sub question. Answers to the questions regarding both objectives will be provided by empirical research methods. The fact that this study also asks questions on the necessity and desirability of public funding of independent local parties in the Netherlands, could imply that there is a normative component involved as well. However, the goal of this study is not to generate an intrinsic value judgment on the necessity and desirability of public funding, but to reflect the opinions of the Dutch independent local parties on these topics. Of course, the content of their arguments could provide a foundation to start a normative discussion, but such a debate lies outside the scope of this study.

The academic relevance of this study is reflected by the knowledge gap that exists in the topics as addressed above. Although the electoral success of independent local parties in the Netherlands has not gone unnoticed, the scientific knowledge of their election campaigns, of the way they organize and fund them, and of their opinion on necessity and desirability of public funding is almost zero. This study tries to provide a modest explorative foundation for academic research on these topics. The societal and political relevance, as discussed in the previous sub section, is reflected by the still growing electoral support for independent local parties in the Netherlands and the fact that the independent local parties are the subjects in the discussion on the regulations regarding private donations and public party funding. It is largely unknown how the election campaigns of these electoral success stories are organized and funded. An overall perspective on these topics is currently absent. This study tries to deal with the questions related to this subject and, as such, tries to provide an accessible introduction into these topics for a broad public.

1.4 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This study tries to find answers on the questions which activities independent local parties undertake during their election campaigns, how they fund them and what their opinions are on the necessity and desirability of public funding of their party activities. In order to do so, the second section will develop the theoretical framework of this study. After an introduction on the electoral success of independent local party in the Netherlands, the discussion moves from election campaigns and their funding in general via election campaigns and their funding in the Netherlands towards election campaigns and their funding at the Dutch local level. Based on the theoretical framework, several hypotheses will be proposed, reflecting several explanations for the ways how independent local parties in the Netherlands organize and fund their election campaigns.

In the third section, the research methods will be explained. Globally structured around the sub questions, each subsection will provide the appropriate methods to provide an answer to the question involved. The fourth section is devoted to a discussion on the data and a presentation of the results of the empirical analyses. First, a hierarchical table of the several campaign activities will be presented, followed by two comparable hierarchical tables on the expenditures and incomes of the respondent's election campaigns. Also, the respondent's opinions and arguments on the necessity and desirability of public funding of their party activities will be schematically presented. In the fifth section, an answer to the main research and sub questions will be proposed, hereby discussing how the election campaigns of independent local parties in the Netherlands are organized and funded. The answers to the main research and sub questions will be followed by a discussion on the results and suggestions for future research on this topic. Also, the relevance of this study's results for the discussion on public funding of independent local parties will be addressed.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 INTRODUCTION: DEFINITIONS AND CLASSIFICATIONS OF INDEPENDENT LOCAL PARTIES

To start a discussion on the organization and funding of the election campaigns of independent local parties in the Netherlands, a proper conceptualization of these parties is required. In the Dutch city councils, a distinction can be drawn between local divisions of national parties on the one hand and independent local parties on the other hand. Local divisions of national parties, such as the VVD (*Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie*, People's Party for Freedom and Democracy) and the PvdA (*Partij van de Arbeid*, Labor Party), share at least two common roles. First, they function as a local political party, aspiring representation in the local authorities. Second, more differential, they can manifest themselves as local departments of a national political party, hereby reflecting the national party's profile (Boogers, Lucardie and Voerman 2006, 8).

Contrary to those parties, independent local parties share only the first role and furthermore, have to meet two other necessary characteristics. First, since they are called a 'local' party, independent local parties can only participate in one municipality. Second, as the most differential characteristic, independent local parties do not have formal bindings with national political parties (Derksen 2003, 119). Partly overlapping, the VPPG (*Vereniging van Plaatselijke Politieke Groeperingen*, Association of Local Political Factions) also adopts two key characteristics of independent local parties, namely the requirement that the party only participates at local elections and the absence of ties to a national political party (VPPG 2014). Euser adds a third characteristic, namely the absence of a political ideology. According to him, independent local parties are broad-based and have pragmatic party programs, targeted at local issues in their particular municipality (Euser 2010, 15). However, the absence of a political ideology could be a characteristic of a sub group of independent local parties, but not a necessary benchmark for an independent local party *by definition*. After all, there are independent local parties that express an ideological profile as an ideological alternative for national parties, for example when those parties are not active at the local level or when those parties have fallen apart due to internal struggles (Boogers, Lucardie and Voerman 2006, 13).

As a general conceptualization, independent local parties can thus best be defined as local political organizations that participate in local elections in exclusively one municipality, without any ties to national political parties. According to Boogers, due to these characteristics, independent local parties can play a distinct role at the local level of government. They are more clearly focused on local issues and their political position cannot be easily reduced to national political cleavages. “For these reasons, local parties are commonly regarded as an extraordinary phenomenon in local politics” (Boogers 2008, 151).

Besides their general similarities, several kinds of independent local parties can be distinguished. Boogers, Lucardie and Voerman (2006) have developed a classification of three different categories of independent local parties. (1) *Localist parties* mainly focus on the quality of the local government and the local democracy. The authentic character of the municipality is of major importance. The word ‘*belang*’ (interest) is often incorporated in the party name. (2) *Protest parties* are characterized by resistance against municipal plans or general dissatisfaction with the performance of the local government. Usually, these parties call themselves ‘*leefbaar*’ (liveable) or ‘*onafhankelijk*’ (independent). (3) *Interest parties* mainly focus on the interests of a specific group of residents in their particular municipality. Examples of such parties are local parties for the elderly, students, or the citizens of specific municipal areas, for example when the municipality is composed of several distinct villages (Boogers, Lucardie and Voerman 2006, 20-21; Boogers and Voerman 2010, 85).

Besides this triptych, there are at least two other types to distinguish, namely personal lists and ideological parties. Personal lists refer to local lists that are named after their list header. This is usually done since their list header has acquired great familiarity in the local community due to his or hers political experience or societal functions (Boogers, Lucardie en Voerman 2006, 14). Ideological parties refer to independent local parties with an ideological profile, such as *Progressief Winterswijk* (Progressive Winterswijk). As discussed above, such parties can originate, for example, when the particular ideological national party is not active at the local level or when such parties have collapsed due to internal struggles (Boogers, Lucardie and Voerman 2006, 13).

2.2 EXPLANATIONS FOR THE INDEPENDENT LOCAL PARTIES’ ELECTORAL SUCCESS

In the past, the scientific attention to the concept of independent local parties in the Netherlands has traditionally been almost zero. Academics in the field of political science

and public administration have long considered them as regional phenomena, difficult to understand by outsiders. Although the knowledge on their nature is still very limited and fragmented, the electoral growth of the independent local parties in the Netherlands since the 1990s has led to a modest increase in academic attention (Boogers, Lucardie and Voerman 2006, 3).

At the last municipal elections of March 19th, 2014, the independent local parties in the Netherlands gained an aggregated 29.7 percent of the popular vote, hereby outnumbering the national parties. These elections can be labeled as a continuation of the electoral success of the Dutch independent local parties at previous elections. Between 2002 and 2010, namely, the independent local parties gained about a quarter of the popular vote at all three municipal elections (Derksen and Schaap 2010, 30). After a small loss in the municipal elections in 2006, the independent local parties show a repeatedly growing trend in vote percentages, resulting in a victory of almost one-third of the popular vote at the last local elections (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1: Popular votes for Dutch independent local parties (1994-2014).

Year of local election	Popular vote for independent local parties
1994	16.4 %
1998	18.3 %
2002	25.0 %
2006	22.1 %
2010	23.7 %
2014	29.7 %

Source: Kiesraad <www.verkiezingsuitslagen.nl>.

Besides electoral reasons, the minor decrease in popular vote percentages in 2006 has an additional explanation. Since 2006, the *Kiesraad* (the National Election Board of the Netherlands) utilizes a new definition of local parties. Before that year, combinations of national parties (such as local progressive parties, which include combinations of the local divisions of national progressive parties) and regional parties were included under the header 'local party'. Since 2006, however, these parties are no longer considered as local parties (Van Ostaaijen 2012, 201). The post-2006 *Kiesraad* definition of local parties, thus,

most properly corresponds with this study's conceptualization of independent local parties in the Netherlands, as discussed above.

What accounts for the (still growing) electoral success of the independent local parties in the Netherlands at municipal elections? Boogers, Van Ostaaijen and Slagter (2010) discover several strong assets of local parties that create an advantage for them vis-à-vis national parties. Independent local parties are able to profile themselves with local issues, since they are not obstructed with certain party-political ideologies. Furthermore, independent local parties are quite capable to recruit appealing candidates who are rooted in the local community and, consequently, enjoy local familiarity. More in general, independent local parties are often regarded to be more directly related with society than national parties. Another strength lies in the fact that independent local parties can profit from national political developments. For example, when voters are dissatisfied with the national party they usually support, the switch to another national party could be a bridge too far, while the switch to a (less ideological) independent local alternative is more acceptable. Independent local parties can also profit from the dissatisfaction with politics in general. Independent local parties do not want to be associated with the (negative image of) national politics, but want to profile themselves with their independency. As such, they form an excellent alternative for dissatisfied voters (Boogers, Van Ostaaijen en Slagter 2010, 4).

In its opinion poll on March 15th, 2014, EenVandaag also identified several general motives among their sample of the Dutch electorate to vote on an independent local party. Mainly, the local character of the parties is a strong asset. A substantial proportion of the voters believe they are more familiar with the problems and desires in their community than the local divisions of national parties are. Other than the local divisions of national parties, independent local parties are not biased by national interests from The Hague and can focus solely on local issues. Independent local parties can also perform an outlet role for those voters that are dissatisfied with politics in general and the squabbling in The Hague. As such, independent local parties provide the opportunity to cast a protest vote against the national parties. Finally, not all national parties participate at the local elections in each municipality and in some municipalities, such as Rozendaal, independent local parties are the only participants in the elections. When a voter's favored party does not participate in his or hers municipality, independent local parties can function as a local alternative and do not force the voter to switch to another national party (EenVandaag 2014).

Why do independent local parties choose for an independent position vis-à-vis national parties? Boogers, Lucardie and Voerman (2006) and Boogers (2008) identify four general motives. First, in their political decision-making, independent local parties are not biased by national interests and do not have to translate national (ideological) standpoints into their local policy. Instead, they can focus solely on local solutions to local problems. Due to this characteristic, independent local parties are often regarded to be more responsive to local issues than the local divisions of national parties are. Second, since independent local parties are usually not bound to any political ideology, they can profile themselves with non-political messages and pragmatic solutions to local problems. Third, voters can averse to politics in general, which usually results in a protest vote against national parties. Fourth, independent local parties are not negatively affected by national political trends. When national politicians take unpopular measures, their local divisions are usually held responsible during local elections. As a result, local divisions of national parties face electoral decline, while independent local parties profit from these developments by profiling themselves as local, independent alternatives (Boogers, Lucardie, and Voerman 2006, 9-10; Boogers 2008, 152-153).

2.3 ELECTION CAMPAIGNS AND PARTY FINANCE IN GENERAL

With independent local parties conceptualized and their electoral success explained, the discussion moves to election campaigns and party finance. *Election campaigns* refer to “the means by which political parties, alliances, coalitions, and candidates convey their policies and election programs to the electorate in an election contest” (Dundas 2011, 743-744). The ways in which these campaigns are funded are determined by the party’s *party finance*, which refers to the total of incomes and expenses of political parties or candidates (Koole 2011, 221). *Campaign finance* would refer to the total of incomes and expenses of a party’s election campaign and is a major component of party finance. However, as Pinto-Duschinsky argues, it is hard to distinguish between the campaign costs of party organizations and their routine expenses, such as maintaining permanent party offices, carry out policy research and engaging in political education (Pinto-Duschinsky 2002, 70). Party finance, thus, includes “the costs of election campaigns that are the responsibility of party organizations” (Pinto-Duschinsky 2011, 1803), but is broader than only campaign expenditures. However, to simplify matters for the purpose of this study and to guarantee consistent use of the

concepts involved, the term to refer to the ways independent local parties fund their election campaign, will be 'party finance'.

The whole of rules and regulations regarding the ways through which parties can acquire financial means for their party activities, including election campaigns, is known as the financing regime. According to Van Biezen, a country's financing regime regarding political parties is determined by three dimensions. First, *regulation* refers to the degree of public control over donations to and expenditures by political parties and candidates. Second, *transparency* refers to the presence or absence of rules regarding the financing process, such as rules on reporting, monitoring and enforcement. Third, *subsidization* is the availability of various forms of public funding of political parties (Van Biezen 2010, 67).

The main types of regulation can include requirements on parties and donors to declare financial accounts and donations, requirements about the publication of such information, formal requirements for disclosure of donations and of loans to parties, and requirements for elected politicians to declare their personal assets. Furthermore, regulation can include bans on particular sources of donations, such as foreign donations and donations by companies. Also, states can put limits on permitted spending by parties or by candidates on election campaigns or limits on the amounts that a donor is permitted to give (Pinto-Duschinsky 2011, 1805).

Regulations regarding party finance are meant to create a level playing field for all political parties. In a democratic ideal, the *one person one vote* system include that every citizen has the right to vote, regardless their financial situation. Without any regulations on party finance, the risk exists that people can buy political power. That is the reason why many governments around the globe strive to diminish the consequences of unequal spread of wealth in party finance, for example by prohibiting donations from trade and industry (Koole 2011, 223-224). Other kinds of regulations are also possible. More in general, in recent decades, "there has been a strong international tendency to increase legal regulation of both party funding and public subsidies" (Pinto-Duschinsky 2011, 1805).

In the debate on more transparency in party finance, proponents argue that there needs to be fairness between parties (which refers to the level playing field argument that can also be used in the discussion on regulations). Opponents of more transparency, however, argue that private donations to parties and politicians form an act under the freedom of expression. In some situations, donor privacy is a highly sensitive issue,

“especially in regimes where anyone known to give financial support to a party opposing the government may be subjected to harassment and even to violence” (Pinto-Duschinsky 2011, 1806).

During the last decades, however, proponents of more transparency in party finance seem to have prevailed, regarding the fact that strict rules on more transparency within party finance have increased sharply. The goal of more transparency is to adjust the negative image of corruption often associated with the relationship between money and politics. The main, but not exclusive, targets of enhanced transparency are private donations to parties and politicians. Usually, private donations to parties and politicians consist of small amounts provided by a large number of donors. Large amounts provided by only a few sponsors are often regarded as undesirable, since in such situation, the party’s or politician’s independency is at stake. However, no agreement exists on what exactly a large amount is. More (international) consensus consists on the desirability to inform the public about the origin of the large amounts of money, so that the electorate can take this information into account when they have to determine their vote (Koole 2011, 222-223). Although more transparency limits the freedom of citizens to freely spend their money to the goals they want, most democracies nowadays have banned anonymous contributions. Even though a vote is cast in secret, a financial donation to a political party is usually regarded as a public act (Hague and Harrop 2010, 213).

Regarding public subsidizing, a distinction can be made between direct and indirect subsidies. Direct subsidies usually take the form of financial contributions, for example for political education and policy research (Van Biezen 2010, 95). Direct financial subsidies can also be employed for campaign costs and regular party expenses (Pinto-Duschinsky 2011, 1806). Indirect subsidies appear usually as free or subsidized time on television and radio for parties and candidates to convey their campaign messages to the public (Pinto-Duschinsky 2011, 1805-1806). In some countries, commercial broadcasters are required to make free time available as a condition of their license. Historically, however, free political broadcasts on state-owned television and radio are the most common forms (Hague and Harrop 2010, 212). Also, in some countries and under certain conditions, tax deductibility of membership fees and private donations to political parties can appear as a form of indirect subsidy (Van Biezen 2010, 95; Koole 2011, 226).

Since the mid-60s of the previous century, the most Western countries have some kind of public funding of political parties. Western Germany was the first to implement a policy with direct state subsidy to political parties in 1967. The fact that Hitler's NSDAP received millions of German marks from the trade and industry between the two World Wars, the conviction was that one-sided dependency on trade and industry had to be prevented. Henceforth, donations to parties became the domain of the democratic controlled state (Koole 2011, 221-222). Between 1960 and 1990, practically all Western European states followed suit. State subsidies also have developed quickly in the new democracies of Eastern Europe, where party membership numbers are far smaller than in Western Europe and public subsidies have to compensate the lack of sufficient income from membership fees (Hague and Harrop 2010, 211-212).

The decision to implement direct party subsidizing is applauded as well as opposed. Proponents of public funding argue that political parties perform a public function and therefore they need to be publicly funded as well. Also, public funding creates a level playing field when the independent state subsidizes all political parties. If such public funding is absent, certain parties such as pro-business parties have more access to private funds than others. Furthermore, solely relying on private donations encompasses the risk that political power can be bought by wealthy donors (Hague and Harrop 2010, 212).

Opponents of public funding, however, argue that public funding favors established and large parties, hereby creating cartels. In this way, parties serve the state, not society (Hague and Harrop 2010, 212). Also Van Biezen argues that the development towards more and more direct and indirect public funding of political parties underlines the increasing interdependence between parties and the state, and the subsequent emergence of the cartel party, as observed by Katz and Mair (1995) two decades ago (Van Biezen 2010, 79). The threatening aspect of the emergence of the cartel party is that those parties tend to become state parties, hereby alienating themselves from their electorate. Cartel parties tend to protect themselves from competition by forming a cartel that excludes newcomers. As a result, the gap between (state) parties and the citizenry widens (Lucardie 2003, 26).

Although the motives to introduce public subsidizing of political parties or not can differ among several countries, one common international development in the area of party finance is the tendency towards greater involvement of the state in the organization and regulation of the incomes and expenses of political parties (Van Biezen 2010, 67). Over the

past two decades, political parties have faced a rapid decline in party membership, resulting in decreasing membership fee revenues. To overcome these financial setbacks, public funding is employed to support them (Van Biezen 2010, 67-69; Hague and Harrop 2010, 211). Finance scandals and corruption also play an important role in the decision to implement public party funding. Pinto-Duschinsky argues that “the frequency with which new laws concerning campaign and party finance are enacted is testimony to the failure of many existing systems of regulations and subsidies. Hardly a month goes by without a new scandal involving political money breaking out in some part of the globe” (Pinto-Duschinsky 2002, 69). Also Van Biezen argues that the development towards a greater role of the state in party finance is regularly considered as a response to high levels of corruption. Public regulation of party finance aims to control the amount of donations, hereby improving transparency and the public accountability of political actors (Van Biezen 2010, 67-69).

To return to the classification of Van Biezen, each of the three dimensions includes their own arguments towards greater state intervention. (1) The regulation of donations and expenditures has to prevent that political power can be acquired by financial means (Van Biezen 2010, 72). Regulation of donations prevents external donors to pay large sums of money to let a party or candidate return the favor in the political arena. The regulations on expenditures prevent parties and candidates to ‘buy’ votes on a large scale. (2) Besides these rules to guarantee that money does not pervert the democratic process, transparency requirements are aimed to enhance political accountability by enforcing insight in the actual levels of incomes and expenditures (Van Biezen 2010, 76). (3) The main reason to introduce public funding is to ensure the continuation of party democracy. The costs of politics have risen, in the sense that modern politics has become increasingly professionalized and cost-intensive (Van Biezen 2010, 79). The costs of campaigning have risen, while at the same time, the number of volunteers, party membership numbers and (thus) membership fee revenues have decreased (Koole 2011, 221). Consequently, many governments have intervened by providing direct financial support to parties and candidates (Van Biezen 2010, 79).

2.4 PARTY FINANCE IN THE NETHERLANDS: THE SHIFT TOWARDS PUBLIC FUNDING

Until the end of the 1960s, the party finance of the Dutch political parties was characterized by a modest size and strong dependency on membership fees. There were some state subsidies, but they were meant for specific goals. Donations from trade and industry played

a minor role (Koole 2011, 225). It was the era of pillarization (around 1917 until the end of the 1960s), wherein Dutch society was segmented in several 'sub populations', each provided with their own trade unions, schools, newspapers, and political parties. Due to the deeply divided character of Dutch society, people felt attached to each other and to their own pillar. The membership numbers of political parties were high and, as a result, the main sources of income consisted of membership fees (Andeweg and Irwin 2009, 28-33).

After the pillarization era, general state subsidies for political parties were introduced. The main reason for this development was not the presence of corruption and finance scandals. Considering the fact that there were almost no regulations on party finance at that moment, Koole argues that this could be an explanation for the absence of scandals, since no scandals can occur when there are no regulations to violate. However, the main developments leading to the implementation of public party funding had to do with the ending of the pillarization era. Not only the party membership numbers declined sharply, but also the connections between the political parties and their related pillar organizations were cut. As a result, the Dutch political parties faced a sharp decline in income (Koole 2011, 225).

During the 1970s, three forms of state subsidies were implemented, namely subsidies for the parties' scientific institutes, the parties' education programs and the parties' political youth organizations (Koole 2011, 226). This meant that the subsidies could not be spent freely, but only to these three specified goals. In 1999, however, the *Wet subsidiëring politieke partijen* (Wsp, Law on subsidizing political parties) entered into force. Since then, subsidies were no longer indirectly, but directly paid to political parties. The amounts for the parties' scientific institutes and education programs were strictly reserved for these goals, but the remainder became free to spend. In 2005, the number of goals was extended, resulting in the fact that from that moment, public subsidies could also be used for the funding of election campaigns (Koole 2011, 228).

The Dutch political finance system is characterized by a high level of direct and indirect public funding (Van Biezen 2010, 89; Pinto-Duschinsky 2002, 77). Direct subsidies are meant to be used for education, research, information and promotion of youth participation and are allocated based on the current representation in the legislature (Van Biezen 2010, 95). The number of seats in the Second Chamber of Parliament is decisive, except when a party is only represented in the First Chamber of Parliament. This situation, however, rarely occurs (Parlement en Politiek 2014b). Indirect subsidies consist of free

broadcasting possibilities and tax relief. Broadcast time is allocated proportional to the current representation in the legislature. Tax reliefs exist because donations to Dutch political parties are tax deductible (Van Biezen 2010, 95). Since donations to a party can be deducted from one's taxable income, the state misses a certain amount of tax revenue, hereby indirectly funding political parties. The state also indirectly supports political parties, for example, in providing wooden boards for party posters during election campaign periods (Lucardie 2003, 24).

Based on Van Biezen's classification of regulation, transparency and subsidizing, the world's countries can be displayed in a three-dimensional spatial model. As such, the Dutch party finance system can be characterized by low levels of regulation, moderate levels of transparency and high levels of subsidization (Van Biezen 2010, 68). The high levels of subsidization, as discussed above, are reflected in the various direct and indirect ways in which the Dutch government funds the political parties represented in the legislature. The levels of regulation and transparency have traditionally been low respectively moderate, but, as discussed in the introductory section of this study, the 2013 Wfpp included several measures to enhance regulations and transparency, for example by obligating that private donations of more than 1,000 euro have to be registered and reported to the national government. However, as also Koole rightly observes, in the current Wfpp, parties at the Dutch regional and local level are immune from those obligations (Koole 2011, 235). Plasterk's edit of the Wfpp has to ensure that also political parties at the regional and local level become included under the Wfpp regulations.

2.5 THE DUTCH LOCAL LEVEL: ELECTION CAMPAIGNS AND PARTY FINANCE

Although their relative contribution to the total party incomes declines, (Koole 2011, 227), the major income source of the Dutch political parties is still composed of the party's membership fees. Different parties utilize different mechanisms to determine the fee amount. While parties like GroenLinks (greens) and the PvdA employ fees proportional to the member's annual income, the membership fees of parties like the VVD are determined by the member's age (Lucardie 2003, 22-23). Although membership fees are the most important source of income, due to public subsidies and free publicity in the media, national parties and their local division are still in an advantaged position vis-à-vis independent local parties during their election campaigns. It has become clear that public subsidies in the

Netherlands are allocated based on the current representation in the national legislature (Van Biezen 2010, 95). This means that a certain amount of money is distributed along parliamentary seats. This allocation mechanism easily explains why independent local parties do not receive national subsidy, since they are only represented in the local municipalities and not in the national parliament. It has also become clear that since 2005, national parties and their local division can use their subsidies for their election campaigns as well. This is where national parties and their local divisions can get a financial head start when contrasted with the election campaigns of independent local parties.

Given this unequal situation, it is maybe surprisingly unknown what this disadvantaged position implies for the election campaigns of independent local parties. As mentioned in the introduction of this study, almost no academic research is conducted on the way local party activities in general and their election campaigns in particular are funded. The only two exceptions to this knowledge gap are the study of Boogers, Lucardie and Voerman (2006) and the research report of Necker van Naem (2013).

In their study, Boogers, Lucardie and Voerman show that Dutch independent local parties mostly depend on membership fees for their party activities, followed by contributions from council members and aldermen, and private member donations. A minority of the respondents indicates they receive donations from non-member donations and the municipality (see Table 2.2) (Boogers, Lucardie and Voerman 2006, 25-26).

Table 2.2: Sources of income of Dutch independent local parties.

Source of income	Frequency percentage
Membership fees	86.1%
Council members and aldermen contributions	77.1%
Member donations	44.6%
Non-member donations	17.7%
Municipal support	2.2%

Source: Boogers, Lucardie and Voerman (2006, 26).

Commissioned by the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, Necker van Naem, a Dutch research and consultancy agency for the public domain, has executed an inquiry on the consequences of a possible extension of the Wfpp to the regional and local levels of

government. In their report, they discuss, among others, the size of the financial administration of the Dutch national and independent local parties. The authors show that the average income of independent local parties in the Netherlands is 3,233 euro a year. The most important source of income consists of the membership fees (almost 80 percent of the respondents indicated that they receive revenue from this source). Almost 70 percent of the parties yield income from the contributions of their representatives in the city councils, while about 30 percent of them indicate that they gain money from returns on equity, such as interest on savings. 53 percent of the independent local parties receive private donations. The size of these donations, however, is limited (164 euro on average per year). Considering the average yearly income of 3,233 euro, donations contribute only about 5 percent of the income to the total amount. However, in an election year, the income from donations is usually higher than in other years. This can be explained by the fact that in those years, party representatives usually donate an extra sum of money to the campaign budget. Also, parties usually send letters to their members, asking for an extra contribution (Necker van Naem 2013, 32-36).¹

Although this information provides some guidelines, is it still unknown what proportion of these incomes are used for the party's election campaigns, what actual amounts of money circulate in their election campaigns, what activities are the most important, where the independent local parties spend their money on and which sources of income are the most important to fund their election campaigns. Empirical means have to be applied to clarify the topics above and to provide answers to the main research and sub questions of this study. This literature review, however, does provide some possibilities to propose certain expectations.

2.6 HYPOTHESES

Based on the above discussion and the classification of the different kinds of Dutch independent local parties, several hypotheses or expectations can be formulated. As outlined in the introduction of this thesis, this study is mainly explorative in the sense that it tries to discover general patterns in topics that are not clarified yet. Besides, this study is

¹ Since the information in the Necker van Naem research report was only presented in bar diagrams, it was not possible to determine the exact percentages. For that reason, the percentages could not be presented in a (comparative) table, alongside the results of Boogers, Lucardie and Voerman (2006).

also explanatory in the sense that it not only describes the state of affairs, but also tries to identify explanations for the ways how independent local parties organize and fund their election campaigns. These explanations will be formulated as formal hypotheses.

2.5.1 NUMBER OF PARTY MEMBERS

A higher number of party members implicates more manpower during election campaigns. One, thus, could expect that less money is needed for the campaign, resulting in an election campaign characterized by high manpower spending and less financial spending. However, at the same time, a higher number of party members would imply higher membership fee revenues, resulting in a higher campaign budget. Besides revenues by membership fees, party members are also items of expense, for example when invitations and agendas for party assemblies have to be sent. However, the costs of the election campaigns are generally not dependent on the membership numbers. The costs of placing an advertisement in a local newspaper or the costs of printing flyers are not affected by party members. At the same time, the campaign revenues do increase when membership numbers increase. Thus, the expectation is that membership numbers positively affect the campaign budget.

Hypothesis 1: The number of party members and the height of the campaign budget are positively correlated.

Regarding the distinction between labor-intensive and money-intensive campaigning, the explanation could be contradictory. On the one hand, when the campaign budget is higher, possibly due to higher membership numbers, a party has more money available. The party, then, could decide to focus more on money-intensive campaign activities, such as newspaper advertisements. On the other hand, as discussed above, when the membership numbers are high, the party could have more manpower during election campaigns. The party, then, could decide to focus more on labor-intensive campaign activities during their campaign, such as canvassing and flyer actions at markets and other public locations. Of course, these campaign methods also cost a certain amount of money, but other than advertising in newspapers, they also require the efforts of candidates and other party volunteers. Considering this distinction, the expectation regarding the number of party members and the nature of the campaign methods results in two different hypotheses.

Hypothesis 2: The higher the number of party members, the more advertisements the party will place in local or regional newspapers.

Hypothesis 3: The higher the number of party members, the more days a party will devote to flyer actions and canvassing.

2.5.2 MUNICIPALITY SIZE

When municipality size is measured by population numbers, one could expect that in larger municipalities, the average number of party members is higher. When the expectation regarding the correlation between party membership numbers and the size of the campaign budget can be confirmed, then it is most likely that the size of the campaign budget is higher in larger municipalities than in smaller ones.

Hypothesis 4: The size of the municipality and the size of the campaign budget are positively correlated.

2.5.3 NUMBER OF COUNCIL MEMBERS AND ALDERMEN

Council members and aldermen generally contribute a certain proportion of their compensation to the campaign budget of their party. When a party is represented with a lot of council members and aldermen in the city council and the municipal executive respectively, one could expect that the campaign budget is higher than when a party is has only a few council members represented in the city council.

Hypothesis 5: The number of council members and the size of the campaign budget are positively correlated.

Hypothesis 6: The number of aldermen and the size of the campaign budget are positively correlated.

2.5.4 PARTY CLASSIFICATION

The party type classification in the theoretical framework yields five kinds of independent local parties, namely localist parties, protest parties, interest parties, personal lists, and

ideological parties. One could expect that localist parties generally attract the most votes at local elections. After all, one could expect that an independent local party representing all municipality citizens will usually get more votes at local elections than a party specifically looking after the interests of a sub group of the municipality's population, such as the elderly. Furthermore, one could also expect the non-political messages of localist parties will appeal more citizens as a neutral alternative for national parties than ideological parties do, since political ideologies appeal only to a certain population segments, while deterring others. For these reasons, one could expect that localist parties attract, on average, the most votes at local elections, resulting in the highest average number of party seats. Building on the expectation that the number of council members and the size of the campaign budget are positively correlated, one could also expect that, as a result, the size of the campaign budget will be the largest amongst localist parties.

Hypothesis 7: The size of the campaign budget is the largest amongst localist parties.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1 INTRODUCTION: DATA SOURCES

As explained in the introduction of this study, the main research question is split in three sub questions. In this section, the research methods to generate an answer to each particular question will be outlined. To gather empirical data to answer the questions, two information sources are available. The quantitative source of this study takes the form of an electronic survey, consisting of questions on the organization and funding of the election campaigns of independent local parties in the Netherlands. The surveys, made with the Qualtrics programme, were distributed after the municipal elections of March 19th, 2014 among approximately 1,000 e-mail addresses. These addresses are obtained from a database, created by Professor Gerrit Voerman, historian at the Rijksuniversiteit in Groningen. This database, established during Voerman's research on the candidate recruitment of independent local parties in the Netherlands, contains the contact e-mail addresses of all parties that were allowed to delegate council members to the city councils throughout the country during the period 2010-2014. The great advantage is that no sampling is required, since practically the whole population can be captured. An overview of the specified survey questions and their answer options in Dutch and in English are included in Appendix 2 and 3 respectively.

The qualitative source of this study consists of interviews with two representatives of independent local parties in the Netherlands, with expertise on the (financial) organization of independent local parties in the Netherlands and their election campaigns. The purpose of the interviews is to obtain the representatives' knowledge on the election campaigns of independent local political parties and the way(s) these campaigns are funded. The first interview involves a conversation with Fons Zinken, the president of the *Vereniging van Plaatselijke Politieke Groeperingen* (VPPG, Association of Local Political Factions), an association representing the interests of local political parties and their council members. The second interview is a conversation with Bert Euser, former party chairman and former alderman for the *Echt voor Albrandswaard* (EVA, Truly for Albrandswaard) party in the municipality of Albrandswaard, situated south of Rotterdam. Euser is involved in the *Platform Lokale Partijen* (PLP, Platform of Local Parties), an association aiming to translate

the policies of independent local parties in the municipalities of the province of South Holland to the provincial level. Due to their political experience and their work in the coordinating associations, both representatives are familiar with the topics of this study. The interview with Zinken has been held on Tuesday March 25th, 2014 and the interview with Euser has been held on Wednesday April 2nd, 2014.

3.2 METHODS ON CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES

In order to answer the question which activities are the most important in the election campaigns of independent local parties in the Netherlands, the surveys provide the most appropriate source of information. The electronic survey contains a set of questions on the organization of the election campaigns of independent local parties. The question in this block are composed of several campaign methods, such as advertising in local newspapers, participation in election debates, interviews on radio and/or television, distribution of flyers, social media, and public party meetings. Per campaign method, the respondent is able to indicate to what extent this particular activity was part of their last election campaign. Each of these methods has an appropriate number of response options, in line with the nature of the question involved. For example, the number of times party candidates participate in election debates is usually higher than the number of public party meetings a party organizes. Each campaign activity is covered by a separate question. Also, it is possible for respondents to mention complementary activities when they are applicable to their election campaign but not included in the questions.

Based on the respondents' answers, it is possible to develop a ranking order of campaign activities that appear the most in the respondent's last election campaign. For each activity, it can be determined to how many respondents the particular method was applicable to. The ranking of these activities will be presented in a hierarchical table.

3.3 METHODS ON CAMPAIGN FUNDING AND EXPENDITURES

The surveys also provide the most appropriate source of information to determine which sources of income are the most important in the funding of the Dutch independent local parties' election campaigns. The surveys can also be used to discover on which campaign activities the most parties have spent the most of their budget. The last two blocks of survey question address these two topics. The expenditure component involves the same activities

as listed in the campaign activities and asks what amount of money the party has spent on each particular activity. The funding component covers the revenue side of the financial process. After asking for the total campaign budget of the last municipal elections, the respondents are asked to specify this amount along several possible financing arrangements, such as membership fees, contributions of council members and aldermen, and private donations. In case the list is not satisfactory, it is possible for respondents to mention complementary income sources. In both blocks of survey questions, it is explained that respondents are allowed to fill in estimates when they are not sure about the exact sums of money or to leave the questions unanswered when they are totally unfamiliar with the amounts.

Also regarding the financial component of the election campaign, it is possible to create a ranking order based on the respondents' answers. Based on the respondent's answers, it can be determined how many parties have spent a certain amount of money on each particular activity and, if applicable, how much money on average. Also, it is possible to determine how many parties have received money from each particular source of income and, if so, how much on money on average. Just as the ranking order of the campaign activities, the expenditures and sources of income will be hierarchically displayed.

3.4 METHODS ON EXPLANATIONS

This study not only tries to discover how independent local parties organize and fund their election campaigns, but also tries to find explanations for these patterns. In the theoretical framework, several hypotheses are proposed, which will be tested during the empirical analysis of the survey results. The survey starts with a number of introductory questions on the name of the party, the municipality involved and the number of party members per January 1st, 2014. This date is deliberately chosen, since political parties usually take stock of the increase or decrease of the party membership numbers in the annual report per January 1st of each year. Asking for the exact number of party members on this date yields more reliable information than an arbitrary snapshot during the year. The respondents are asked to fill in their party name, since in this way, they can be classified in one of the five party categories.

The classification schedule is made available by professor Marcel Boogers. He first executed a factor analysis regarding the variables on the reasons of origin and the goals of

the independent local parties involved. Boogers used the factor scores to execute a cluster analysis and on the basis of these results, he was able to classify his respondents into the three categories. He also classified the parties based on their party name. Since this thesis distinguishes between five party types, only a certain proportion of the parties could be imported directly from Boogers's database. To classify the remainder of the parties, the categorization was executed on the basis of the party's name, the party's optional ideological profile and the party's objectives. Based on these three characteristics, each respondent is linked to one of the five party categories.²

Furthermore in the introduction of the survey, the respondents are asked to fill in the total amount of seats their party occupied in the city council in the period between 2010 and 2014. Since the contribution of council members to the campaign budget (as a possible way of campaign funding) depends on the number of council members prior to the municipal elections of March 19th, 2014, not the number of seats after those elections are relevant, but the number of seats before those elections. For the same reason, it is finally asked how many aldermen of the party were part of the municipal executive during the same period.

The number of party members, the municipality size, the number of council members and aldermen, and the party type are the main possible explanatory variables in this study. In the next section, several statistical tests will be used to examine the strength and significance of the correlation between these variables and the organization and funding of the election campaigns of the Dutch independent local parties in this study's sample.

3.5 METHODS ON THE NECESSITY AND DESIRABILITY OF PUBLIC FUNDING

To detect the opinions of independent local parties in the Netherlands on the necessity and desirability of public funding of their election campaigns, the surveys and interviews are both appropriate sources of information. In the surveys, the respondents are asked to answer several questions on the necessity and desirability of public funding of independent local parties. Furthermore, the respondents are asked on their attitude towards disclosure of private donations and their attitude towards the proposal of Minister Plasterk to make the

² The database involved is used by Professor Boogers in cooperation with Professor Lucardie and Professor Voerman in their 2006 article "*Lokale politieke groeperingen. Belangenbehartiging, protest en lokalisme*". This database was provided by Professor Boogers at April 24th, 2014. In his email, he explained the methodological process towards his classification.

municipalities responsible for subsidizing the political parties in their particular municipality. These topics are also addressed during the interviews with the two representatives.

Based on the quantitative survey data and the qualitative interview data, it is possible to detect the opinion of the independent local parties in the Netherlands on the necessity and desirability of public funding of their party activities. Their opinions will be graphically displayed in the next section, alongside with the most important arguments the respondents and the representatives provided to support their claims.

4. DATA AND RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION: DATA ADJUSTMENTS AND POSSIBLE BIASES

The survey was completed by a total of 460 respondents. However, to make the database suitable for analysis, four adjustments had to be made. First, for each of the responses, the party was classified into one of the five categories (localist party, protest party, interest party, personal list, ideological party). This classification was executed with valuable support of the SPSS database and the methodology as provided by Professor Boogers. Furthermore, for each response, the party and municipality involved was classified into the corresponding Dutch province, to control the data for a representative geographical distribution. Also, for each municipality, the corresponding population number at January 1st, 2014 was recovered with support from the CBS (*Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek*, Central Bureau for Statistics), to make the database suitable for statistical analysis on population numbers.

Second, the respondents that refused to mention their name and municipality were omitted from the database, since it was not possible to classify these parties into one of the five party types and place them in the right province. Third, the database contained local combinations of national parties. Also these respondents were omitted, since these parties do not meet the qualification of an *independent* local party (i.e. no ties to national political organizations), as conceptualized in the theoretical framework. Fourth, in about twenty times, two representatives of the same party completed the survey, resulting in double responses corresponding with the same party. To prevent personal judgment of the results and to prevent doubtful influence on the survey data, it is chosen not to average the answers on the questions, but to leave the response that came in first intact and to omit the second response from the database.

As a result of these adjustments, the data itself was not affected, save for the fact, of course, that the number of responses decreased with about one-third to a total number of 306 unique responses. The quality of the dataset, however, is not determined by the exact number of respondents, but by the extent to which the sample is representative for the whole population. For this reason, the sample is controlled for the responses per province, per country region and the frequency distribution based on the five party categories. The number of responses per province is displayed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Number of responses and number of municipalities per province.

Province	Frequency of responses (N=306)	Frequency of municipalities (N=403)
Noord-Brabant	19.9% (61)	16.6% (67)
Noord-Holland	17.0% (52)	13.1% (53)
Zuid-Holland	14.1% (43)	16.1% (65)
Limburg	12.1% (37)	8.1% (33)
Gelderland	11.4% (35)	13.9% (56)
Utrecht	5.9% (18)	6.4% (26)
Overijssel	4.6% (14)	6.2% (25)
Drenthe	4.2% (13)	2.9% (12)
Friesland	3.9% (12)	5.9% (24)
Groningen	2.9% (9)	5.7% (23)
Zeeland	2.6% (8)	3.2% (13)
Flevoland	1.3% (4)	1.4% (6)

The ranking order of responses corresponds for the main part with the hierarchy of municipality numbers. When the twelve provinces are combined in country regions, with Northern Netherlands consisting of Groningen, Friesland and Drenthe, Southern Netherlands consisting of Zeeland, Noord-Brabant and Limburg, Western Netherlands consisting of Noord-Holland, Zuid-Holland and Utrecht and Eastern Netherlands consisting of Overijssel, Gelderland and Flevoland, the results also correspond for the main part with the geographical location of the Dutch municipalities (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2: Number of responses and number of municipalities per country region.

Province	Frequency of responses (N=306)	Frequency of municipalities (N=403)
Western region	36.9% (113)	35.7% (144)
Southern region	34.6% (106)	28.0% (113)
Eastern region	17.3% (53)	21.6% (87)
Northern region	11.1% (34)	14.6% (59)

A major bias, however, is involved in the classification of the five party categories, as displayed in Table 4.3. Two-thirds of the respondents are labelled as localist parties, while less than four percent of the respondents are personal lists. In their categorization, Boogers, Lucardie and Voerman classified half of their 251 respondents in the localist category, and the other two quarters globally equal in the protest and interest category (Boogers, Lucardie and Voerman 2006, 21). Regarding the fact that this study distinguishes between five categories instead of three, one could expect that the proportion of parties in each category would be lower than the proportion in each of the Boogers, Lucardie and Voerman classifications. Instead, the proportion of localist parties is no less than 66 percent, while the proportion of interest parties has not even reached seven percent. Of course, the sample of this study cannot be regarded as comparable to Boogers, Lucardie and Voerman's (which classification is better supported by statistical methodologies). However, it cannot be denied that the localist parties are overrepresented in this sample. This could indicate that the classification in this study has not been executed properly, in the sense that too many parties have been labelled as localist while in reality, they belonged to another category. In any case, this classified sample cannot be easily regarded as a representative sample for the whole population of Dutch independent local parties. It needs no further clarification that this bias has considerable consequences for the generalizability of this study's conclusions on the bases of this classification.

Table 4.3: Number of respondents per party category.

Party category	Frequency of responses (N=306)
Localist party	66.0% (202)
Protest party	14.4% (44)
Ideological party	8.8% (27)
Interest party	6.9% (21)
Personal list	3.9% (12)

4.2 THE ORGANIZATION OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGNS

Based on the answers of the respondents, Table 4.4 presents a ranking order of activities that appeared the most in the last election campaigns of the Dutch independent local parties. The second column refers to the percentage of the parties that indicated that the activity

involved was part of their campaign. The percentage excludes missing and “not applicable / do not know” answers. As a result, only those respondents are included that indicated that the activity involved was part of their last election campaign. The third column, then, refers to the average intensity of the activity when applicable to the election campaign, hereby thus only referring to the parties part of the percentage in the second columns.

Table 4.4: Hierarchy and intensity of campaign activities of Dutch independent local parties.

Campaign activity	Frequency (N=306)	Intensity
Placing campaign boards and posters	95.8% (293)	Most (239 or 82%) of them throughout the whole municipality.
Election debates	94.1% (288)	Most (103 or 36%) of them three or four times.
Flyer actions	90.2% (276)	Most (80 or 29%) of them three to four days. Most (226 or 74%) of all respondents held flyer actions at markets and in shopping malls.
Publishing the election program on website	89.7% (275)	
Performance in local radio or television shows	87.6% (268)	Most (59 or 22%) of them three times.
Advertising in local or regional newspapers	82.7% (253)	Most (152 or 60%) of them four or more times.
Enhancing familiarity via Facebook	82.4% (252)	
Enhancing familiarity via Twitter	65.4% (200)	
Public party meetings	54.2% (166)	Most (59 or 36%) of them one time.
Spreading the election program door-to-door	48.7% (149)	
Campaign spot	39.9% (122)	
Canvassing	21.2% (65)	Most (22 or 34%) of them five or more days.

Almost all parties placed campaign boards and posters throughout the whole municipality and participated in election debates three or four times. Nine out of ten respondents indicated their party held flyer actions during the election campaign, most of them at three or four days. Markets and shopping malls were the most common locations, but also offering the flyers door-to-door (13%) and important traffic and public transport junctions (12%) were mentioned. 90 percent of the parties have published their election program on their website. Candidates of seven out of eight parties have performed on local radio or television shows (usually about three times), while five out of six respondents indicated they advertised in local or regional newspapers, the most of them four or more times. Facebook was the most common form of social media used to enhance local familiarity, followed by Twitter. 54 percent of the respondents indicated they have organized public party meetings, usually one time. Almost half of the parties have spread the election program door-to-door, while four out of ten parties produced and spread a campaign sport. Canvassing was only applicable to the election campaigns of one out of five independent local parties.

4.3 THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN'S FINANCIAL COMPONENT

Table 4.5 presents a ranking order and the average amounts of campaign expenditures of the parties in the sample. The second column in the table refers to the percentage and actual number of respondents that filled in an actual amount of higher than zero. As a result of omitting the zeros and empty spaces from the analysis, it is possible to determine how many parties in the sample have spent money on each particular campaign activity. The third column, then, shows the average amount of money the parties involved have spent. For the sake of readability, all average amounts are rounded to whole euros.

Most parties have spent their money on campaign boards and posters, advertisements and flyer actions, while the least parties have spent their budget on radio and television performances, election debates and canvassing. The most money per party is spent on advertisements, canvassing and other expenditures. By contrast, the least money is spent on election debates, social media and public party meetings. Two results stand out: (1) Only a small percentage of the respondents indicated that they have spent money on canvassing, but when they did, they have spent the third largest average amount of money on it. (2) Advertising in local newspapers appears second in spending frequencies as well as in the second place of the average amount of money spent on the particular activity.

Table 4.5: Mean expenditures in the election campaigns of independent local parties

Campaign activity	Spending frequency (N=306)	Average expenditure
Campaign boards and posters	67.3% (206)	€ 920
Advertising in local news papers	64.7% (198)	€ 1,221
Flyer actions	63.1% (193)	€ 989
Spread of election program	55.9% (171)	€ 935
Other expenditures	46.4% (142)	€ 1,575
Public party meetings	33.3% (102)	€ 390
Social media	23.9% (73)	€ 361
Campaign spot	20.6% (63)	€ 576
Radio/television performance	15.7% (48)	€ 727
Election debates	15.0% (46)	€ 164
Canvassing	7.5% (23)	€ 1,027

Regarding the revenue side of the balance sheet, Table 4.6 also presents a ranking order and the average revenue amounts of the parties in the sample. The second column in the table refers to the percentage and actual number of respondents that filled in an actual amount of higher than zero. As a result of omitting the zeros and empty spaces from the analysis, it is possible to determine how many parties in the sample have actually received money from each particular source of income. The third column shows the average amount of money the parties involved have received. All average amounts are rounded to whole euros.

As Table 4.6 shows, the most parties have received their money from council member contributions, membership fees and member donations, while the least parties have received money from municipal support, party executive contributions and other income sources. The highest amount of money per party is received from council member contributions, alderman contributions and other income sources, while the least money is received from municipal support, non-member donations and returns on equity. Also here, two remarkable results stand out. (1) A small percentage of the respondents indicated they received money from other income sources, but when they did, they have received the second largest average amount per party from it. However, when asked to the specific sources of income in this category, most respondents provided income sources that could be

headed under one of the above categories, such as membership fees and donations. (2) Council member contributions appear on the top of the receiving frequencies as well as at the top of the average amount of money received from the particular source of income, both with considerable distance from the runner-up. The majority of the respondents, thus, labels council member contributions as the most important source of income for their election campaigns.

Table 4.6: Mean revenues to the campaign budget of independent local parties

Source of income	Receiving frequency (N=306)	Average revenue
Council member contributions	61.1% (187)	€ 4.158
Membership fees	53.3% (163)	€ 1,435
Donations from members	34.6% (106)	€ 1,104
Alderman contributions	21.9% (67)	€ 1,992
Council fraction compensation	12.4% (38)	€ 991
Donations from non-members	9.5% (29)	€ 637
Equity returns	4.9% (15)	€ 699
Other income sources	4.6% (14)	€ 2,879
Party executive contributions	4.2% (13)	€ 748
Municipal support	1.0% (3)	€ 450

4.4 HYPOTHESES

The first hypothesis stated that the number of party members and the height of the campaign budget are positively correlated. Since both variables are interval variables, the Pearson correlation coefficient is the most appropriate measure to determine the correlation's strength and its significance. The results are displayed in table 4.7.

Table 4.7: Correlation between the number of party members and the campaign budget

	Campaign budget	
	<i>Pearson correlation (N=225)</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Number of party members	0.268	0.000

The Pearson correlation statistic indicates a positive relationship between the number of party members and the size of the campaign budget and is statistically significant at a 99 percent confidence interval. As a result, the first hypothesis can be confirmed.

The second hypothesis predicts that higher the number of party members, the more advertisements the party will place in local or regional newspapers. The third hypothesis predicts that the higher the number of party members, the more days will be devoted to flyer actions and canvassing. The results of these correlation tests are displayed in Table 4.8 and Table 4.9 respectively.

Table 4.8: Correlation between the number of party members and the number of advertisements.

	Advertisements	
	<i>Pearson correlation (N=293)</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Number of party members	0.053	0.369

Table 4.9: Correlation between the number of party members and the days the party devoted to flyer actions and canvassing.

	Flyer actions		Canvassing	
	<i>Pearson correlation (N=294)</i>	<i>Significance</i>	<i>Pearson correlation (N=294)</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Number of party members	0.010	0.868	-0.044	0.455

It is clear that hypotheses 2 and 3 have to be rejected, since the correlation coefficients are almost zero or even negative, while their levels of significance are poor. Although the number of party members is a positive indicator for the size of the campaign budget, it has no predictive value when it comes to the organization of the campaign activities involved in the analysis above.

The fourth hypothesis stated that the size of the municipality and the size of the campaign budget are positively correlated. This statement is based on the expectation that the municipality size and the number of party members are also positively related to each

other. This positive correlation is confirmed in Table 4.10. The test results of the correlation between the municipality size and the campaign budget are displayed in Table 4.11.

Table 4.10: Correlation between the municipality size and the number of party members.

	Party members	
	<i>Pearson correlation (N=300)</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Municipality size	0.207	0.000

Table 4.11: Correlation between the municipality size and the size of the campaign budget.

	Campaign budget	
	<i>Pearson correlation (N=229)</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Municipality size	0.111	0.095

While the correlation between municipality size and the number of party members is positive and statistically significant, the Pearson statistic in Table 4.11 indicates only a weak positive relationship between the municipality size and the height of the campaign budget. Moreover, the correlation is significant only at a 90 percent confidence interval. The hypothesis can be confirmed, but the positive relationship between the population numbers and the campaign budget is weaker than the positive impact of the number of party members.

The fifth hypothesis stated that the number of council members and the size of the campaign budget are positively correlated. In Figure 4.1, the average size of the campaign budget per number of council members is displayed graphically. Save for the deviation on the far right side of the figure, the bars show that the mean size of the campaign budget tends to be higher when the number of party seats, and thus the number of council members, is higher. In other words, the correlation between the number of council members and the size of the campaign budget seems to be positive. The Pearson correlation value and its significance confirm this observation (see Table 4.12).

Figure 4.1: Graphical relationship between the number of party seats and the mean size of the campaign budget

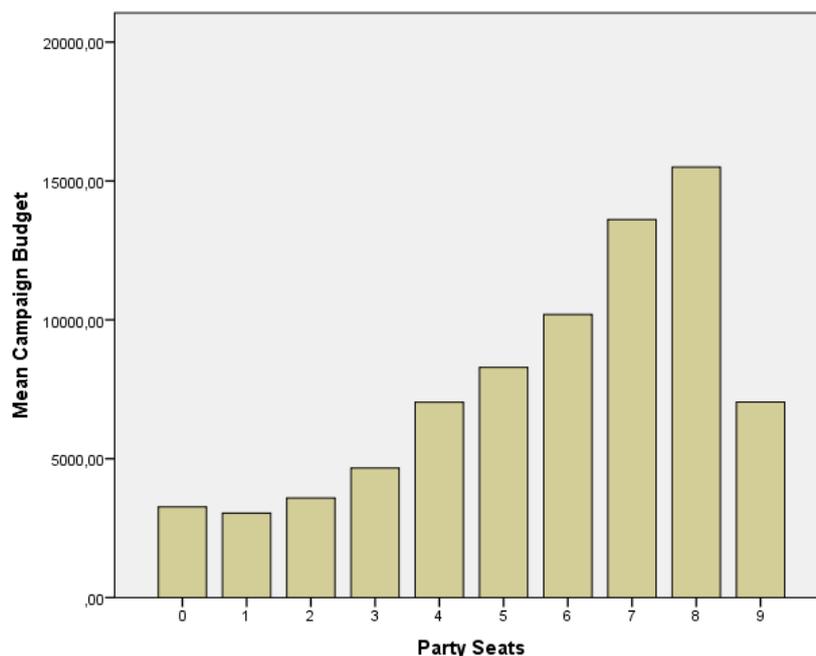


Table 4.12: Correlation between the number of council members and the campaign budget.

	Campaign budget	
	Pearson correlation (N=226)	Significance
Number of council members	0.483	0.000

The Pearson correlation value indicates a significant positive relationship between the number of council members and the height of the campaign budget. To control the height of the campaign budget for the size of the municipality, a new variable is created by dividing the amount of the campaign budget by the population number of the municipality involved. As a result, the size of the campaign budget per capita can be used to determine its correlation with the number of council members. In Figure 4.2, this relationship is displayed graphically. Also here, there seems to exist a positive correlation between the two variables. This supposition is confirmed when the Pearson correlation and its significance are computed (See Table 4.13).

Figure 4.2: Graphical relationship between the number of party seats and the mean size of the campaign budget per capita.

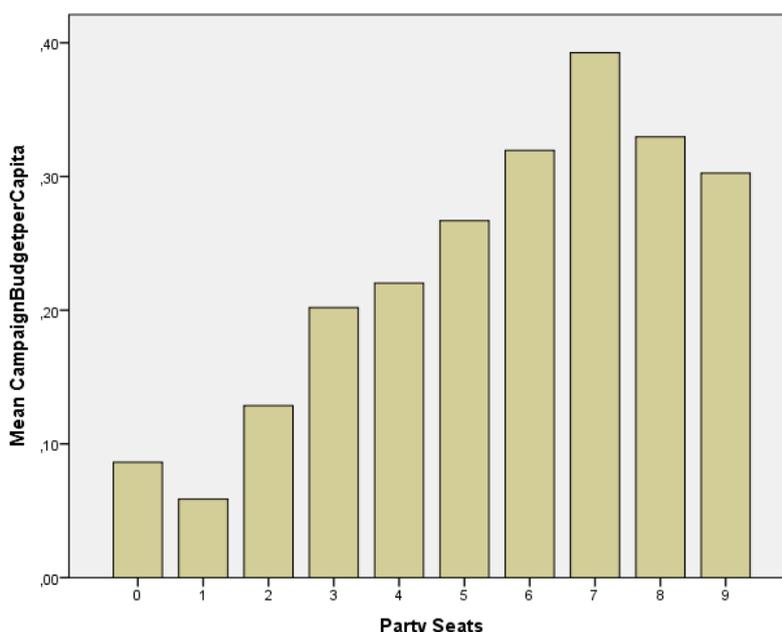


Table 4.13: Correlation between the number of council members and the campaign budget per capita.

	Campaign budget per capita	
	Pearson correlation (N=226)	Significance
Number of council members	0.434	0.000

When controlled for the municipality’s population size, the correlation coefficient between the number of council members and the size of the campaign budget per capita remains positive and statistically significant at a 99 percent confidence interval. Thus, the fifth hypothesis can be confirmed.

The sixth hypothesis stated that the number of aldermen and the size of the campaign budget are positively correlated. The results of the correlation test are displayed in Table 4.14.

Table 4.14: Correlation between the number of aldermen and the campaign budget.

	Campaign budget	
	Pearson correlation (N=229)	Significance
Number of aldermen	0.218	0.001

The relationship between the number of aldermen and the height of the campaign budget is positive and statistically significant at a 99 percent confidence interval, but is much weaker than the relationship between the number of council members and the height of the campaign budget. When this relationship is controlled for the municipality size by considering the campaign budget per capita (see Table 4.15), this observation still holds.

Table 4.15: Correlation between the number of aldermen and the campaign budget per capita.

	Campaign budget per capita	
	<i>Pearson correlation (N=229)</i>	<i>Significance</i>
Number of aldermen	0.335	0.000

The strength of the correlation and the level of significance increases, but does still not meet the correlation levels of the relationship between the number of council members and the size of the campaign budget. The sixth hypothesis can also be confirmed, but needs the remark that the number of council members is much stronger correlated with the size of the campaign budget than the number of aldermen.

The seventh hypothesis stated that the size of the campaign budget is the largest amongst localist parties. This expectation is based on the assumption that localist parties gain, on average, the most votes at local elections, resulting in the highest average number of party seats. The second column in Table 4.16 confirms this claim.

Table 4.16: The average number of party seats, campaign budget size and campaign budget per capita per party category.

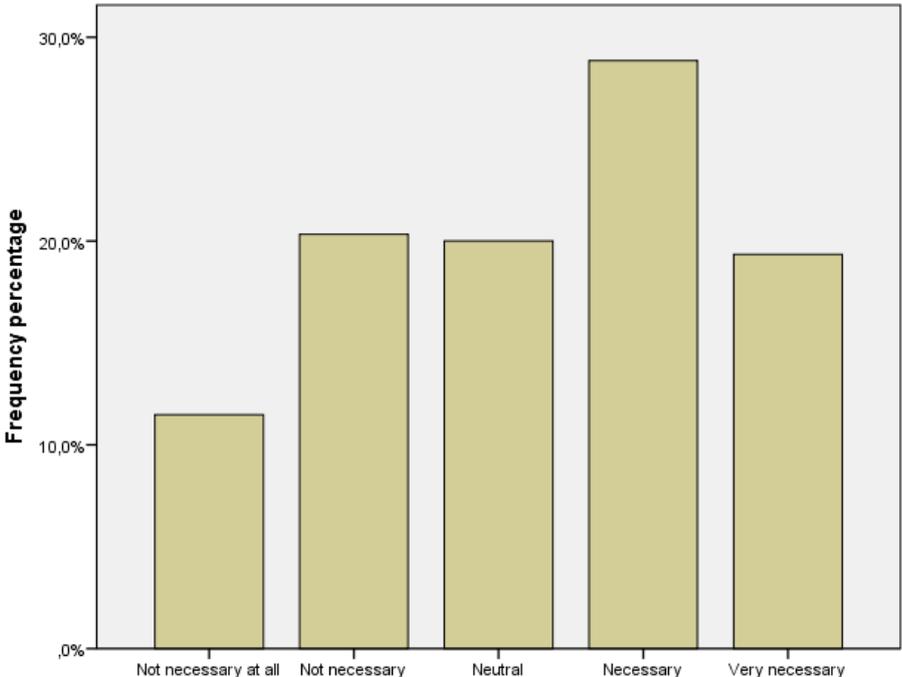
Party category	Average number of party seats	Average size of the campaign budget	Average campaign budget per capita
Localist party	3.51	€ 5,594	€ 0.1996
Protest party	2.84	€ 7,017	€ 0.1369
Ideological party	2.74	€ 4,669	€ 0.1815
Interest party	2.43	€ 2,982	€ 0.0623
Personal list	2.08	€ 6,279	€ 0.1464

In Table 4.16, the average numbers of seats per party category are hierarchically ordered. Per party category, also the average size of the campaign budget (rounded to whole euros) is included. To control for municipality size, the average size of the campaign budget per capita is calculated as well. Without controlling for population size, the protest parties in the sample seem to have, on average, the largest campaign budget size. When controlled for the population size, however, localist parties seem to have the largest average size of the campaign budget per capita. The seventh hypothesis, thus, can be confirmed, although it has to be noted that the expectation only has predictive power when municipality size is taken into account.

4.5 THE NECESSITY AND DESIRABILITY OF PUBLIC FUNDING

The survey contained a series of questions on the necessity and desirability of public funding of independent local parties. Regarding the necessity of public party funding, one-third of the respondents answered that public funding is not necessary (at all). While twenty percent is neutral, more than 45 percent of the respondents answered that public funding is (very) necessary. The graphical distribution of the opinions is displayed in Figure 4.3.

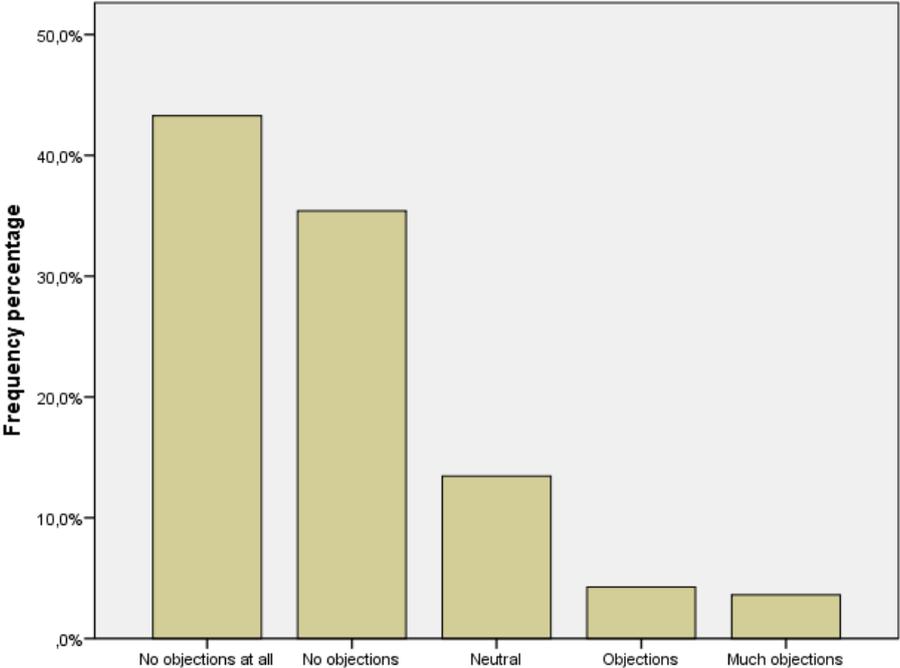
Figure 4.3: The respondent’s opinion on the necessity of public funding.



Many respondents arguing that public funding of their party activities is not necessary indicate that they have electoral success even without subsidies. They have alternative sources of income, such as membership fees, contributions from council members and donations and use that means to fund their election campaign. As a result, public funding would be superfluous. This argument is subscribed by Euser during his interview. Common arguments of proponents and opponents of public funding from the survey involve the disadvantaged position of independent local parties vis-à-vis local divisions of national parties. Many respondents criticize the fact that the principle of equal treatment is not applicable to the situation of independent local parties. Even when respondents indicate that they do not need public funding of their election campaigns, they still think it is unfair that the local divisions of national parties can receive subsidies, while independent local parties cannot.

The survey showed that not all independent local parties in this study's sample consider public funding as a necessary policy change. However, when asked whether they have objections to a possible obligation to publish donations in return for public funding, the vast majority of the respondents (almost 80 percent) answered that they have (absolutely) no trouble in publishing their donations (see Figure 4.4).

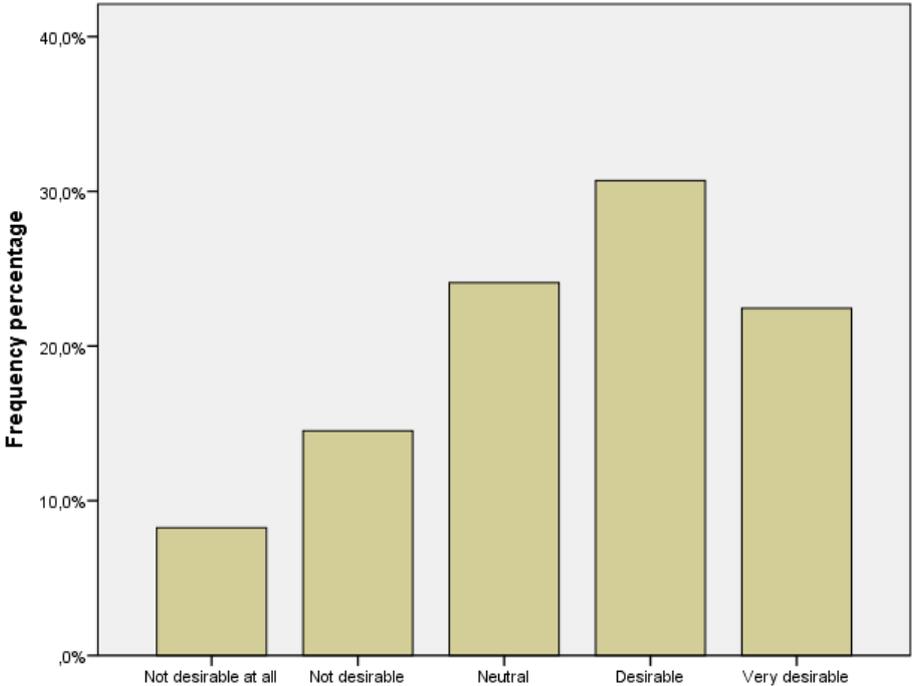
Figure 4.4: The respondent's objections to possible obligations to publish donations.



91 respondents (30%) declared they already publish the donors and the size of donations to their party. The principle of transparency is the key word in many answer explanations. “We have nothing to hide” is an often heard claim, while others fear that a lack of transparency will result in conflicts of interest and the risk that political power can be acquired by financial means. Although not all respondents consider public funding as a necessary development, the most respondents do not regard possible obligations to publish private donation as a constraining demand.

More than half of the respondents regarded public funding of independent local parties is a (very) desirable development, while only a quarter thinks this is a (very) bad idea. The graphical distribution of the opinions is displayed in Figure 4.5.

Figure 4.5: The respondent’s opinions on the desirability of public funding.

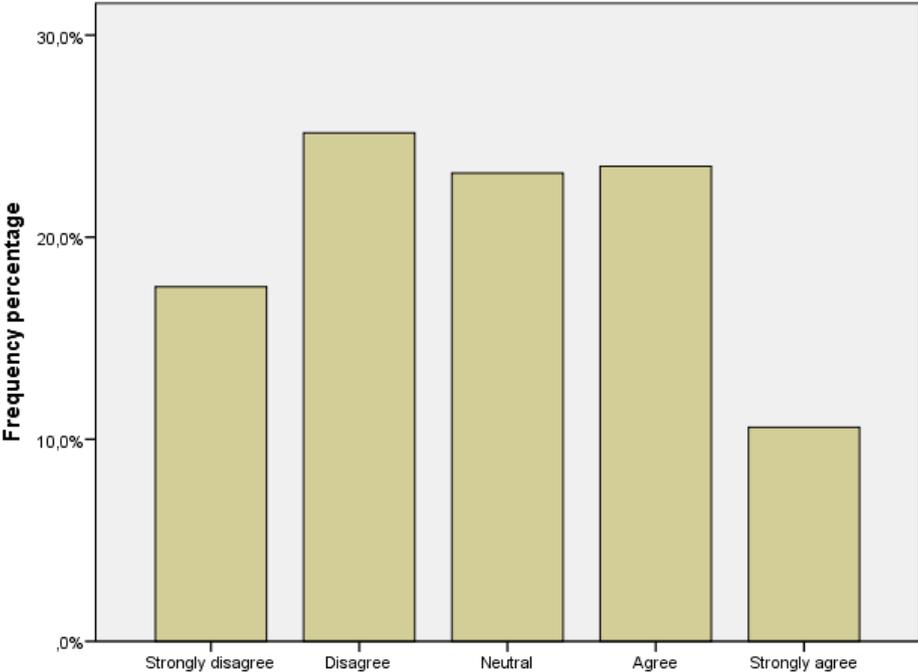


Arguments against public funding include the risk that independent local parties will lose their independency. On the other hand, the principle of equal treatment is at stake when only national parties receive subsidies while independent local parties do not. Many respondents criticize the unequal treatment of parties arguing that “what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander” should be the leading principle. This latter motto is not only applicable to the proponents of public funding, but is also used by opponents, arguing that

no political party should receive subsidy at all. They think political parties have to take care of their own business without any help from the government. This principle has to be applied to all political parties and not only to the independent local ones.

Regarding the question whether the municipalities should take care of public funding of the parties in their city councils, there are no great differences to observe, although a slight majority rejects Plasterk’s proposal. However, most answers are clustered around the center, implying that the most respondents do not have a strong opinion on this topic.

Figure 4.6: The respondent’s opinion on the question whether the municipalities should subsidize the parties in the city councils.



Arguments that speak in favor of municipal subsidizing are that the national government should subsidize national parties, while local governments should subsidize independent local parties. Opponents think public funding of political parties should not be a municipal task and argue that municipalities are financially dependent on the national government. At this moment, local governments have to deal with the decentralization of important policy tasks in the area of social security and health care, while receiving a lower budget from the national government. As a result, opponents fear Plasterk’s proposal is financially unfeasible.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 ANSWER TO THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This study addresses the question how the election campaigns of independent local parties in the Netherlands are organized and funded. The answer on this question is structured around three sub questions, namely (1) what are the most important activities in the election campaigns of independent local parties in the Netherlands, (2) what are the most important sources of income in the funding of the election campaigns of independent local parties in the Netherlands and (3) what are the opinions of independent local parties in the Netherlands on the necessity and desirability of public funding of their party activities?

The most important campaign activities include placing campaign boards and posters throughout the whole municipality, participating in election debates, flyer actions (mainly at markets and in shopping malls), publishing the election program on the party website, performing in local radio or television shows, advertising in local or regional newspapers, and enhancing party familiarity via Facebook. The activities enumerated here are applicable to the election campaigns of more than four out of five independent local parties in this study's sample. The three most important campaign activities (placing campaign boards, participating in election debates, and flyer actions) are applicable to the election campaigns of more than 90 percent of the respondents.

Regarding the financial component of the election campaign, a distinction can be drawn between expenses and incomes. The most parties have spent their money on placing campaign boards and posters, advertising in local newspapers, flyer actions, and the spread of the election program. The most money per party is spent on advertisements in local newspapers and canvassing. The average amount of money spent on other expenditures is the highest of all categories, but it is difficult to trace each amount back to a specific kind of expenditure. When a specific look is taken on these other expenditures, the category contained also several activities that could be headed under one of the other categories as mentioned in the survey.

Most parties have received money for their campaign budget from council member contributions, membership fees and private member donations. The most money per party is received from council member contributions, alderman contributions and membership

fees. On average, other sources of income also generate a large amount of income, but also here, when asked to the specific sources of income in this category, many respondents provided income sources that could be headed under one of the survey categories, such as membership fees and donations.

In the theoretical framework, seven hypotheses are proposed, each containing possible explanatory factors on the organization and funding the election campaigns of the Dutch independent local parties in this study's sample. The strength and significance of the correlation with the number of party members, the municipality size, the number of council members and aldermen, and the party type are determined in several correlation tests.

The number of party members and the height of the campaign budget are positively correlated, implying that when the number of party members is higher, the average amount of money in the campaign budget tends to be higher as well. There is no significant correlation between the number of party members and the organization of the election campaign. The Pearson correlation between party membership numbers and the number of advertisements during the election campaign on the one hand, and the number of days the party has devoted to flyer actions and canvassing on the other hand, has proven to be very weak and statistically insignificant. While the correlation between municipality size, as measured in population numbers, and the number of party members is positive and statistically significant, there exists only a weak positive relationship between the municipality size and the height of the campaign budget, which is significant only at a 90 percent confidence interval. Although the hypothesis involved can be confirmed, the positive relationship between the population numbers and the size of the campaign budget is weaker than the positive impact of the number of party members on this budget.

The relationship between the number of council members and the size of the campaign budget has a high correlation coefficient and is statistically significant, implying that the mean size of the campaign budget tends to be higher when the number of party seats, and thus the number of council members, is higher. Also when controlled for the municipality's population size, the correlation coefficient between the number of council members and the size of the campaign budget per capita remains positive and statistically significant at a 99 percent confidence interval. The correlation between the number of aldermen and the size of the campaign budget is also positive and statistically significant. When controlled for municipality size, the strength of the correlation and the level of

significance increases, but does still not meet the impact level of the number of council members. In sum, the number of council members is much stronger correlated with the size of the campaign budget than the number of aldermen.

The expectation that the size of the campaign budget is the highest amongst localist parties is tested by calculating the average size of the campaign budget (rounded to whole euros) per party category. To control for municipality size, the average size of the campaign budget per capita is calculated as well. It was found that without controlling for population size, the protest parties in the sample seem to have, on average, the largest campaign budget. When controlled for the population size, however, localist parties seem to have the largest average size of the campaign budget per capita. It was very problematic to include party type as a predictive variable in the analysis. Not only it was difficult to propose hypotheses on a well-supported or common sense basis, a closer look at the data also showed that no less than two-thirds of the respondents were labeled as localist parties. When contrasted with the other four party categories, localist parties were overrepresented in the sample. The party classification has proven to be a significant distinction between independent local parties in the Netherlands, as showed by Boogers, Lucardie and Voerman (2006), but also to be a problematic measure to incorporate in this study's explanatory analysis of the organization and funding of the party's election campaigns.

Regarding the necessity of public funding, one-third of the respondents answered that public funding is not necessary (at all). A larger proportion of 45 percent, however, answered that public funding is (very) necessary. It could be regarded as surprising that the main argument for both sides of the spectrum seems to be the same, namely the unequal treatment of independent local parties in contrast with the national parties. Many respondents criticize the fact that the principle of equal treatment is not applicable to their situation since national parties receive subsidy while they don't. Also the respondents that indicate that they do not need public funding of their election campaigns do think it is unfair that the local divisions of national parties can receive subsidy. When it comes to possible obligations to publish the donors and size of the campaign budget as a necessary demand in return for public party funding, the vast majority of the respondents has (absolutely) no objections against publishing their donations. The principle of transparency is the key word in many answer explanations. Thirty percent of the respondents declared they already publish the donors and the size of donations to their party.

Regarding the desirability of public funding, about the half of the respondents think that public funding of independent local parties is a (very) desirable development, while only a quarter thinks this is a (very) bad idea. Arguments against public funding include the risk that independent local parties will lose their independency. Simultaneously, according to many respondents, the principle of equal treatment is at stake when only local divisions of national parties can receive subsidies, while independent local parties cannot. Just as in the discussion on the necessity of public funding, many respondents, proponents as well as opponents of public party funding, criticize this unequal treatment of independent local parties vis-à-vis local divisions of national parties. While proponents of public party funding argue that both kinds of parties should receive subsidy, opponents think that political parties have to take care for their own business. This latter principle, however, has to be applied to all political parties and not only for the independent local ones.

When it comes to the question whether the national government or the municipalities should take care for public funding of the parties in their city councils, there are no great differences to observe, although a slight majority rejects Plasterk's proposal. However, most answers are clustered around the center, implying that most respondents do not have strong opinions on this topic. In sum, in the discussion on the necessity and desirability of public party funding, the most central argument of proponents as well as opponents, and the most important message of the Dutch independent local parties in this study's sample, is that independent local parties and (local divisions of) national parties should be treated the same.

5.2 DISCUSSION ON THE RESULTS

As discussed in the data and results section, a major bias is involved in the classification of the five party categories, since localist parties are overrepresented in this study's sample. This could indicate that the sample respondents just form an unreliable reflection of the population of Dutch independent local parties. It could also be the case that the classification in this study has not been executed properly, in the sense that too many parties have been labelled as localist while they belonged to another category in practice. In any case, this classified sample cannot be easily regarded as a representative sample for the whole population of Dutch independent local parties and consequently, it is hard to draw general conclusions on the basis of this distinction.

Pinto-Duschinsky refers to the right point when he argues that “it is hard to draw a distinct line between the campaign costs of party organizations and their routine expenses” (Pinto-Duschinsky 2002, 70). While contributions of council members and aldermen are specifically meant for the campaign budget, it could be hard to make a distinction between campaign incomes and regular party incomes when it comes to, for example, membership fees. A party receives membership fees every month or year, but maybe not every respondent makes a proper distinction between the part that has been spent on campaign methods and the part that is spent on regular party expenditures. More in general, it could be hard for some respondents to determine which expenses are the costs of which campaign method, while it could also be difficult to distinguish between the general party income and the campaign revenues. The intertwining character of the sums of money as used in the analysis is a significant critique on the reliability of the conclusions based on these amounts.

A second reason why it is problematic to consider the exact amounts of money as a solid ground for valid conclusions, is the fact that asking to the sums of money the parties involved have spent and collected during their last election campaign was the most sensitive component of this study. The dataset consisted of 306 responses, but a substantial proportion of the respondents have not filled in the actual amounts of money. A certain part of them regarded the actual amounts of money they spent and collected as confidential information. This resulted in many open spaces in the database and many different answers. When compared with the amounts of money, the frequency percentages of the campaign activities, the campaign expenditures and the sources of income provide the most reliable results. The frequency percentages were calculated by dividing the number of respondents that filled in an actual amount of money of more than zero by the total number of respondents. No matter what the amount exactly was, the number of respondents that have spent money on a particular activity or have received money from a particular source of income, provide a general overview of the most important expenditures and income sources.

To draw general conclusions herein, the most value lies not hidden within the exact amounts of money in the database. Instead, the global averages and especially the ranking order of campaign activities, expenditures and revenues, as presented in this thesis, provide far more reliable guidelines to determine which campaign activities, which kind of expenditures and which sources of income are the most relevant in the election campaign of the Dutch independent local parties in this study's sample.

One of the main pitfalls when determining the correlation between two variables is assuming that correlation indicates causality. In all statistical tests in this study, correlations are proven or contradicted, but no conclusions about their causality could be drawn. For example, when the correlation between the number of party members and the height of the campaign budget has proven to be positive and significant, it is valid to state that there is a statistical relationship between the two variables. This does not mean, however, that an increase in one variable causes an increase in the other variable *by definition*. Of course, this could be the case, and regarding the explanatory discussion around, for example, the correlation between the number of council members and the size of the campaign budget, the relationship is likely to be causal. However, to draw general conclusions about a possible causality between two correlating variable, the relationship should always be investigated in further detail. Qualitative research and case studies could be the appropriate methods in doing so.

5.3 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In this study, is it chosen to focus solely on the election campaigns of independent local parties and not on those of the local divisions of national parties. The two arguments for this decision, as discussed in the introductory section of this thesis, involve (1) the consideration that independent local parties form an interesting and important research subject due to their electoral success and the fact that they are subject in the discussion on the regulations of donations and public funding of party activities and (2) the fact that at the same moment, the body of academic knowledge on this topic is almost zero. As a result of this focus, however, this thesis lacks a comparison with local divisions of national parties and is consequently not able to thoroughly discuss possible differences between them. The next step, thus, could be a comparative analysis of the organization and funding of the election campaigns of independent local parties on the one hand and local divisions of national parties on the other hand.

Such an inquiry should be able to answer the question to what extent the fact that local divisions of national parties are able to receive public subsidy really makes a difference for the organization and (especially) the funding of their election campaigns. For example, a comparison could be made between the most important campaign activities and sources of income of independent local parties and those of the local divisions of national parties. A

topic that may also get attention is the time scope of the election campaigns and the differences between national parties and independent local parties. As Euser indicated in the interview, many independent local parties campaign at the streets and markets every Saturday, even outside the campaign period. It is, however, unknown to what extent these campaign methods are representative for the whole population of independent local parties. This thesis lacks an analysis of these subjects, but these topics could be interesting to investigate in the future. In this regard, this study has provided only a modest foundation to spark new studies in this field of research.

5.4 FINAL REMARKS

Dundas argues that “in recent years, the spotlight in election organization has been very much on campaigns. This has led to more political parties adhering to codes of conduct and subscribing to greater transparency in campaign financing” (Dundas 2011, 746). Transparency is a broadly supported principle among scholars and respondents, and among proponents and opponents of public party funding. One of the main criticisms on the Wfpp was that parties at the local and regional level were not included in the regulations to create more transparency within private donations to political parties. According to Koole, if the new, stronger regulations are limited to national party organizations, they can easily be circumvented by donating money to local or regional party organizations. To design a proper mechanism to enhance transparency within private donations to political parties, all three Dutch levels of government have to be included (Koole 2011, 235).

This study started with the discussion on the disadvantaged position of independent local parties vis-à-vis local divisions of national parties when it comes to public party funding. Furthermore, the recent discussions on a possible extension of the Wfpp were outlined. This study has shown that not all independent local parties in the sample regard public party funding as a necessary policy change. However, the majority of them think that public funding of independent local parties is a desirable development. The main argument of proponents of public party funding does not have to be that they need the public means to compensate their current disadvantaged position *by definition*. Rather, they want a level playing field, in which independent local parties and local divisions of national both receive public subsidies. The main argument of opponents of public funding of independent local parties is not that they do not want to publish the donors and size of private donations to

their party. Rather, they think no party at all should receive public means to fund their election campaigns.

Plasterk's edit of the Wfpp is meant to include also the independent local parties under the law's regulations. This edit could be considered as a first step to create a level playing field between independent local parties and local divisions of national parties. The vast majority of the independent local parties in this study's sample do not have objections against possible obligations to publish private donations to their party. However, this development in isolation will not create a level playing field, since in this new situation, independent local parties do still not qualify for public funding. When the results of this study accurately reflect the actual opinions of the independent local parties in the Netherlands, they will *not* regard it as unfair when they are going to be forced to publish private donations to their party. However, it is most likely that they *will* regard it as unfair when not at least some form of public party funding is included as a return.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBS	<i>Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek</i> Central Bureau for Statistics
D66	<i>Democraten '66</i> Democrats '66
EVA	<i>Echt voor Albrandswaard</i> Truly for Albrandswaard
GL	<i>GroenLinks</i> GreenLeft
PLP	<i>Platform Lokale Partijen</i> Platform of Local Parties
PvdA	<i>Partij van de Arbeid</i> Labor Party
PVV	<i>Partij Voor de Vrijheid</i> Party for Freedom
SP	<i>Socialistische Partij</i> Socialist Party
VPPG	<i>Vereniging van Plaatselijke Politieke Groeperingen</i> Association of Local Political Factions
VVD	<i>Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie</i> People's Party for Freedom and Democracy
Wfpp	<i>Wet financiering politieke partijen</i> Law on the funding of political parties
Wsp	<i>Wet subsidiëring politieke partijen</i> Law on subsidizing political parties

APPENDIX 2: SURVEY QUESTIONS (DUTCH)

The online survey consisted of several blocks, as displayed below. The questions and answer options will be displayed in Dutch.

Inleiding

Hartelijk dank dat u uw medewerking wilt verlenen aan mijn afstudeeronderzoek naar de verkiezingscampagnes van onafhankelijke lokale partijen in Nederland. Ik wil voorafgaand ten eerste benadrukken dat alle enquêtes volledig anoniem verwerkt zullen worden. De antwoorden die u geeft zullen in de analyse op geen enkele wijze terug te voeren zijn op u of uw partij.

De enquête zal ongeveer 10 tot 12 minuten van uw tijd in beslag nemen. Het is mogelijk om het invullen van de enquête te onderbreken en het op een later tijdstip te vervolgen. Mocht u over de enquête in het bijzonder of het onderzoek in het algemeen nog vragen of opmerkingen hebben, neem dan gerust contact op via afstudeeronderzoekbergwerff@gmail.com.

Nogmaals hartelijk dank voor uw medewerking!

Met hoogachting, en vriendelijke groet,

Justin Bergwerff

Blok 1

Allereerst volgen enkele Inleidende vragen.

- Wat is de naam van uw politieke partij?
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid
- In welke gemeente is uw partij actief?
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid
- Hoeveel leden had uw partij per 1 januari 2014? U kunt hierbij alleen antwoorden in cijfers en niet met woorden.
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Hoeveel raadszetels telde uw gehele gemeenteraad per 1 januari 2014? U kunt hierbij alleen antwoorden in cijfers en niet met woorden.
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Hoeveel zetels daarvan bezette uw partij vóór de gemeenteraadsverkiezingen van 19 maart 2014? U kunt hierbij alleen antwoorden in cijfers en niet met woorden.
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)

- Hoeveel wethouders had uw partij in het college van B & W tijdens de raadsperiode 2010-2014? U kunt hierbij alleen antwoorden in cijfers en niet met woorden.
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)

Blok 2

Deze enquête gaat over de verkiezingscampagnes van onafhankelijke lokale partijen in Nederland en de wijze(n) waarop deze gefinancierd worden. Bij de financiering van verkiezingscampagnes is het onderscheid tussen landelijke partijen en onafhankelijke lokale partijen zeer relevant: anders dan landelijke partijen krijgen lokale partijen immers (nog) geen subsidie. In de afgelopen maanden zijn er in de media diverse voorstellen verschenen om hierin verandering te brengen. Zo opperde Minister Plasterk om de partijen in de gemeenteraad voortaan door de gemeenten te laten subsidiëren.

De volgende vragen zullen gaan over de noodzakelijkheid en wenselijkheid van publieke financiering van uw partij.

- In hoeverre acht u dergelijke publieke financiering voor de campagneactiviteiten van uw partij noodzakelijk?
 - Meerkeuze (één antwoord mogelijk):
 - [Absoluut niet noodzakelijk] [Niet noodzakelijk] [Neutraal] [Noodzakelijk] [Zeer noodzakelijk]
- Kunt u uw antwoord toelichten?
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid
- Momenteel hoeft u de omvang en donateur van giften aan uw partij niet bekend te maken. Zou u er bezwaar tegen hebben als u in ruil voor publieke financiering door de staat de giften aan uw partij openbaar zou moeten maken?
 - Meerkeuze (één antwoord mogelijk):
 - [Absoluut geen bezwaar] [Geen bezwaar] [Neutraal] [Bezwaar] [Groot bezwaar]
- Kunt u uw antwoord toelichten?
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid
- In hoeverre vindt u publieke financiering van onafhankelijke lokale partijen in het algemeen en uw partij in het bijzonder wenselijk?
 - Meerkeuze (één antwoord mogelijk):
 - [Absoluut niet wenselijk] [Niet wenselijk] [Neutraal] [Wenselijk] [Zeer wenselijk]
- Kunt u uw antwoord toelichten?
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid
- In hoeverre vindt u dat de gemeente zorg moet dragen voor de financiering van alle lokale partijen?
 - Meerkeuze (één antwoord mogelijk):
 - [Absoluut niet mee eens] [Niet mee eens] [Neutraal] [Mee eens] [Zeer mee eens]

- Kunt u uw antwoord toelichten?
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid

Blok 3

De volgende vragen zullen gaan over uw campagneactiviteiten van de afgelopen gemeenteraadsverkiezingen van 19 maart 2014.

- Op welke manier heeft uw partij het verkiezingsprogramma verspreid?
 - Meerkeuze (meerdere antwoorden mogelijk):”
 - [Algemeen gepubliceerd op uw website] [Alleen verspreid onder leden] [Alleen op verzoek verspreid] [Huis-aan-huis bezorgd] [Anders, namelijk ...] [Niet van toepassing / weet niet]
- Op welke manier heeft uw partij campagneborden en/of –borden geplaatst?
 - Meerkeuze (één antwoord mogelijk):
 - [Door de gehele gemeente] [In een deel van de gemeente] [Anders, namelijk ...] [Niet van toepassing / weet niet]
- Hoe vaak heeft uw partij advertenties in lokale of regionale kranten geplaatst?
 - Meerkeuze (één antwoord mogelijk):
 - [1 keer] [2 keer] [3 keer] [4 keer of vaker] [Niet van toepassing / weet niet]
- Hoe vaak hebben kandidaatsraadsleden van uw partij televisie- of radio-optredens gehad in lokale media?
 - Meerkeuze (één antwoord mogelijk):
 - [1 keer] [2 keer] [3 keer] [3 keer] [4 keer] [5 keer] [6 keer] [7 keer of vaker] [Niet van toepassing / weet niet]
- Op hoeveel dagen heeft uw partij flyeracties uitgevoerd tijdens de verkiezingscampagne?
 - Meerkeuze (één antwoord mogelijk):
 - [1-2 dagen] [3-4 dagen] [5-6 dagen] [7-8 dagen] [9-10] [11-12] [meer dan 12 dagen] [niet van toepassing] [weet niet]
- Op welke locatie(s) heeft uw partij geflyerd?
 - Meerkeuze (meerdere antwoorden mogelijk):
 - [Marken / winkelcentra] [Belangrijke verkeers/OV-knooppunten] [Andere specifieke locaties, namelijk ...] [Niet van toepassing / weet niet]
- Op hoeveel dagen heeft uw partij gecanvast (het van deur-tot-deur kiezers werven door aan te bellen)?
 - Meerkeuze (één antwoord mogelijk):
 - [1 dag] [2 dagen] [3 dagen] [4 dagen] [5 dagen of meer] [Niet van toepassing / weet niet]

- Hoe vaak hebben kandidaatsraadsleden van uw partij deelgenomen aan verkiezingsdebatten?
 - Meerkeuze (één antwoord mogelijk):
 - [1 tot 2 keer] [3 tot 4 keer] [5 tot 6 keer] [7 tot 8 keer] [9 tot 10 keer] [11 tot 12 keer]
[meer dan 12 keer] [Niet van toepassing / weet niet]
- Heeft uw partij tijdens de verkiezingscampagne een campagnefilm gemaakt en deze via (bijvoorbeeld) Internet verspreid?
 - Meerkeuze (één antwoord mogelijk):
 - [Ja] [Nee]
- In hoeverre heeft uw partij gebruik gemaakt van sociale media om de bekendheid van uw partij te bevorderen?
 - Meerkeuze (meerdere antwoorden mogelijk):
 - [Berichten/foto's op Facebook] [Berichten/foto's op Twitter] [Anders, namelijk ...]
[Niet van toepassing / weet niet]
- Hoeveel openbare partijbijeenkomsten heeft uw partij tijdens de verkiezingscampagne georganiseerd?
 - Meerkeuze (één antwoord mogelijk):
 - [1] [2] [3] [4] [5 of meer] [Niet van toepassing / weet niet]
- Zijn er nog andere campagnemethoden van toepassing geweest op uw campagne, die niet in de bovenstaande vragen zijn behandeld?
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid

Blok 4

Kunt u per onderstaande activiteit aangeven hoeveel geld in hele euro's uw partij aan de bewuste activiteit hebt besteed? Wanneer u niet in staat bent de exacte bedragen te achterhalen, kunt u ook een bedrag naar schatting invullen. Wanneer u geen geld aan de bewuste activiteit hebt besteed, vult u dan een 0 in. Wanneer de bedragen u geheel onbekend zijn, laat u dan s.v.p. het vak leeg. U kunt onderstaande vragen alleen antwoorden in cijfers en niet met woorden.

- Verspreiden van een verkiezingsprogramma
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Plaatsen van campagneborden en –posters
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Advertenties plaatsen in een lokale/regionale krant
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Organiseren van openbare partijbijeenkomsten
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Televisie/radio-optredens in lokale media
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)

- Flyeracties
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Deur-tot-deur canvassen
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Deelname aan verkiezingsdebatten
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Maken en verspreiden van een campagnefilm
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Bekendheid bevorderen via sociale media
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Andere campagneactiviteiten
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)

Blok 5

Het laatste deel van de enquête zal gaan over de financiering van uw campagneactiviteiten van de afgelopen gemeenteraadsverkiezingen. Ik wil hierbij nogmaals benadrukken dat al uw antwoorden anoniem en vertrouwelijk verwerkt zullen worden en dat geen van de antwoorden tot u of tot uw partij te herleiden is.

- Hoe groot was het campagnebudget van de afgelopen gemeenteraadsverkiezingen in euro's? U kunt hierbij alleen antwoorden in cijfers en niet met woorden.
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)

Kunt u bij onderstaande inkomstenbronnen aangeven hoeveel zij aan dit budget hebben bijgedragen, gemeten in hele euro's? Wanneer u niet in staat bent de exacte bedragen te achterhalen, kunt u ook een bedrag naar schatting invullen. Wanneer u geen inkomsten uit de bewuste bron heeft gegenereerd, vult u dan een 0 in. Wanneer de bedragen u onbekend zijn, laat u het vak dan s.v.p. leeg. Net als bij de uitgaven zijn de onderstaande vragen over inkomsten alleen te beantwoorden met cijfers en niet met woorden.

- Contributie van leden
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Particuliere giften van leden
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Particuliere giften van niet-leden
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Afdrachten van raadsleden
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Afdrachten van wethouders
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)

- Afdrachten van partijbestuurders
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- (Deel van de) fractievergoeding
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Gemeentelijke ondersteuning
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Rendement uit eigen vermogen
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Andere inkomstenbronnen
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid (alleen cijfers)
- Wanneer u bij de vorige vraag een bedrag heeft ingevuld, welke inkomstenbron(nen) is/zijn dat geweest?
 - Open antwoordmogelijkheid
- Worden de donateurs en omvang van giften aan uw partij openbaar gemaakt?
 - Meerkeuze (één antwoord mogelijk):
 - [Ja] [Nee]

Slotopmerking

Hartelijk dank voor uw medewerking aan deze enquête! Mocht u over de enquête in het bijzonder of over het onderzoek in het algemeen nog vragen of opmerkingen hebben, neemt u dan gerust contact op via j.bergwerff@umail.leidenuniv.nl. U kunt de enquête afsluiten door op “volgende” te klikken.

APPENDIX 3: SURVEY QUESTIONS (ENGLISH)

The online survey consisted of several blocks, as displayed below. The questions and answer options will be displayed in English.

Introduction

Thank you very much for assisting my master thesis study on the election campaigns of independent local parties in the Netherlands. Preliminary, I would like to emphasize that all surveys will be processed anonymous. During the analysis of the results, your answers will not be linked to you or your party.

This survey will take 10 to 12 minutes of your time. It is possible to interrupt the survey and to continue at a later moment. If you have questions about the survey in particular or my research in general, please do not hesitate to contact me via afstudeeronderzoekbergwerff@gmail.com.

Thank you very much again for your cooperation!

Justin Bergwerff

Block 1

The first block contains some introductory questions.

- What is the name of your political party?
 - Open answer.
- In which municipality does your party operate?
 - Open answer
- How many members did your party have at January 1st, 2014? It is only possible to answer in numbers.
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- How many council seats contained your city council at January 1st, 2014? It is only possible to answer in numbers.
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- How many of them were occupied by your party before the local elections of March 19th, 2014? It is only possible to answer in numbers.
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- How many aldermen of your party were present in the municipal executive between 2010 and 2014? It is only possible to answer in numbers.
 - Open answer (numbers only)

Block 2

This survey assesses the election campaigns of independent local parties in the Netherlands and the way(s) how these campaigns are funded. Regarding the funding of election campaigns, the distinction between national and independent local parties is significant: other than national parties, independent local parties cannot (yet) receive public subsidy. In the previous month, several propositions to alter this situation have appeared in the media. For example, Minister Plasterk suggested to make the municipalities responsible for the funding of the parties in their city councils.

The next questions will discuss the necessity and desirability of public funding of your party.

- To what extent do you consider public funding as a necessary development to fund the campaign activities of your party?
 - Multiple choice (one answer allowed):
 - [Not necessary at all] [Not necessary] [Neutral] [Necessary] [Very necessary]
- Can you explain your answer?
 - Open answer

- At this moment, you are not obligated to publish the size and donors of private donations to your party. Would you have an objection against obligations to publish donations to your party in return for public funding?
 - Multiple choice (one answer allowed):
 - [No objection at all] [No objection] [Neutral] [Objection] [Great objection]
- Can you explain your answer?
 - Open answer
- To what extent do you think public funding of independent local parties in general and your party in particular is a desirable development?
 - Multiple choice (one answer allowed):
 - [Not desirable at all] [Not desirable] [Neutral] [Desirable] [Very desirable]
- Can you explain your answer?
 - Open answer
- To what extent do you think the municipalities should be responsible for public funding of all local parties?
 - Multiple choice (one answer allowed):
 - [Strongly disagree] [Disagree] [Neutral] [Agree] [Strongly agree]

Block 3

The next questions will assess your campaign activities prior to the last local elections of March 19th, 2014.

- How did your party spread the election program?
 - Multiple choice (more than one answer allowed):
 - [Published on your website] [Only spread amongst party members] [Only spread at request] [Delivered door-to-door] [Other, namely ...] [Not applicable / do not know]
- How did your party place campaign boards and posters?
 - Multiple choice (one answer allowed):
 - [Throughout the whole municipality] [In a part of the municipality] [Other, namely ...] [Not applicable / do not know]
- How many times did your party place advertisements in local or regional newspapers?
 - Multiple choice (one answer allowed):
 - [1 time] [2 times] [3 times] [4 times or more] [Not applicable / do not know]
- How many times did candidate council members of your party perform at local television or radio shows?
 - Multiple choice (one answer allowed):
 - [1 time] [2 times] [3 times] [4 times] [5 times] [6 times] [7 times or more] [Not applicable / do not know]

- On how many days did your party executed flyer actions during the election campaign?
 - Multiple choice (one answer allowed):
 - [1 to 2 days] [3 to 4 days] [5 to 6 days] [7 to 8 days] [9 to 10 days] [11 to 12 days]
[More than 12 days] [Not applicable / do not know]
- On which location(s) did your party execute flyer actions?
 - Multiple choice (more than one answer allowed):
 - [Markets / shopping malls] [Important traffic / public transportation junctions]
[Other specific locations, namely ...] [Non applicable / do not know]
- On how many days your party canvassed (recruiting voters by ring door-to-door)?
 - Multiple choice (one answer allowed):
 - [1 day] [2 days] [3 days] [4 days] [5 days or more] [Not applicable/ do not know]
- How many times did candidate council members of your party participate in election debates?
 - Multiple choice (one answer allowed):
 - [1 to 2 times] [3 to 4 times] [5 to 6 times] [7 to 8 times] [9 to 10 times] [11 tot 12
times] [More than 12 times] [No applicable / do not know]
- Did your party produce and spread an campaign spot during the election campaign?
 - Multiple choice (one answer allowed):
 - [Yes] [No]
- To what extent did your party use social media to enhance the familiarity of your party?
 - Multiple choice (more than one answer allowed):
 - [Messages/photos on Facebook] [Messages/photos on Twitter] [Other, namely ...]
[Not applicable / do not know]
- How many public party meetings were organized by your party during the election campaign?
 - Multiple choice (one answer allowed):
 - [1] [2] [3] [4] [5 or more] [Not applicable / do not know]
- Are there any campaign methods applicable to your election campaign, but not discussed in the questions above?
 - Open answer

Block 4

Could you indicate how much money (in whole euros) your party has spent to each particular activity as listed below? When you are not able to determine the exact amounts, you can also fill in an estimated amount. When your party did not spend any money to the particular activity, please fill in a zero. When you are unfamiliar with the amounts, please leave the box empty. It is only possible to answer in numbers.

- Spreading the election program
 - Open answer (numbers only)

- Placing campaign boards and posters
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- Placing advertisements in local/regional newspapers
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- Organizing public party meetings
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- Performing in local television/radio shows
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- Flyer actions
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- Door-to-door canvassing
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- Election debates
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- Producing and spreading of a campaign spot
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- Enhancing familiarity by social media
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- Other campaign activities
 - Open answer (numbers only)

Block 5

The last part of the survey assesses the funding of your campaign activities during the last election campaigns. I want to emphasize again that your answers will be processed anonymously and confidential. Your answers will not be linked to you or your party.

- What was the size of your campaign budget (in whole euros) of the election campaign prior to the last local elections? It is only possible to answer in numbers.
 - Open answer (numbers only)

Can you indicate how much the sources of income as listed below have contributed to this budget (measured in whole euros)? When you are not able to determine the exact amounts, you can also fill in an estimated amount. When your party did not receive any money from the particular source of income, please fill in a zero. When you are unfamiliar with the amounts, please leave the box empty. It is only possible to answer in numbers.

- Membership fees
 - Open answer (numbers only)

- Donations from members
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- Donations from non-members
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- Council member contributions
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- Alderman contributions
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- Party executive contributions
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- Council fraction compensations
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- Municipal support
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- Equity return
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- Other income sources
 - Open answer (numbers only)
- When you filled in an amount at the previous question, which source(s) of income is/are involved?
 - Open answer
- Are donors and the size of their donations to your party published?
 - Multiple choice (one answer allowed):
 - [Yes] [No]

Final remark

Thank you very much again for your cooperation to this survey! If you have questions about the survey in particular or my research in general, please do not hesitate to contact me via afstudeeronderzoekbergwerff@gmail.com. You can exit the survey by pressing the “next” button.