

## The Netherlands

Rice

The government of the Netherlands is a parliamentary democracy under a constitutional monarch (U.S. Department of State). The national government comprises three main institutions: the Monarch, the Council of Ministers (i.e., the Cabinet) and the States General (i.e., the parliament) (U.S. Department of State). The Queen's role is limited to the government formation and she does not actively participate in daily decision-making. Therefore, the cabinet of the Netherlands is the main executive body of the Dutch government.

Unlike the Westminster system, Dutch ministers cannot simultaneously be members of the parliament (U.S. Department of State), although many ministers are appointed from the parliament and ministers who are no longer supported by a parliamentary majority are also expected by convention to step down. After a general election, or if a cabinet resigns during a parliamentary term, the process of cabinet formation starts. Because of the multi-party system of the Netherlands, no single party has ever had a majority in parliament since 1900, and formation of a coalition of two or often three parties is always necessary.

Charles Joseph Maria Ruys de Beerenbrouck was called upon to head the government on September 9, 1918 and remained prime minister until June 29, 1925, when he became a President of the House of Representatives (the lower house in the parliament). De Beerenbrouck was a member of the AB (General Federation of Roman Catholic Voting Unions (later the RKSP)). De Beerenbrouck made his coalition with the ARP (the Calvinist Anti-Revolutionary Party) and the CHU (the Christian Historical Union).

Hendrik Colijn became the leader of the ARP (the Calvinist Anti-Revolutionary Party) and headed the government as prime minister from August 4, 1925 to March 8, 1926. Colijn formed his coalition with the RKSP (the Roman-Catholic Political Party (former the AB)) and the CHU. Since a leading party changed, we code the change from de Beerebrouck's government to Colijn's government as a SOLS change.

After Colijn's government had resigned the office, Dirk Jan de Geer formed a coalition government on March 8, 1926. He was a member of the Christian Historical Union (CHU) of Parliament. De Geer formed his coalition with the RKSP and the ARP. Although the membership of his coalition was same as previous government, we code this transition as a SOLS change since de Geer belonged to a different political party than Colijn. De Geer stepped down from office on August 10, 1929.

De Beerenbrouck, a member of the RKSP (Roman-Catholic Political Party (former the AB)), was returned to office on August 10, 1929 and served as prime minister until May 26, 1933. Beerenbrouck formed his coalition with the ARP and the CHU. Since Beerenbrouck and previous prime minister, Colijn, came from different political parties, we code his coalition formation as a SOLS change, even though its composition was same.

Colijn, a member of the ARP, returned office as prime minister on May 26, 1933. Until he left office on July 27, 1939, he made two cabinet shuffles and two coalition changes. Colijn II and III consisted of ARP, RKSP, CHU, Liberal Union (Vrijheidsbond –VB), and the VDB (Free Democratic League). Colijn IV consisted of ARP, RKSP, CHU, and Colijn V was formed by ARP and CHU. We code the leadership transition from Beerenbrouck to Colijn on May 26, 1933 as a SOLS change. In addition, I code a coalition membership change both from Colijn III to IV on June 24, 1937 and from Colijn IV to V on July 25, 1939 as minor SOLS changes ("Kabinet-

Colijn V (1939)"). Note that although we code a change in the coalition membership from Colijn IV to V as a minor SOLS change, Colijn V lasted less than 30 days (from July 25, 1939 to August 10, 1939).

De Geer, a member of the CHU, formed a coalition government on August 10, 1939. De Geer formed his coalition with RKSP, SDAP (Social Democratic Worker's Party), ARP and VDB. He was prime minister at the time of the German invasion of the Netherlands on May 10, 1940, which made the government to decide to flee to London. Archigos codes de Geer leaving office May 14, 1940 and does not code another leader of the Netherlands until 1945.

De Geer continued as prime minister of the Dutch government-in-exile in London. He proposed a peace settlement that was strongly opposed by Queen Wilhelmina, and so De Geer stepped down on September 4, 1940 (Lentz 1999, 313). Following the capitulation of the Low Countries, having been appointed by Queen Wilhelmina, Pieter S. Gerbrandy, a member of the ARP, succeeded de Geer as prime minister of Dutch government-in-exile on September 4, 1940. Gerbrandy was also served in turn as minister of justice, the Colonies, and the general conduct of the War. His government returned to the Netherlands following the liberation of the country. He and his cabinet announced their resignations in February 1945, and he was replaced as prime minister by Willem Schermerhorn on June 25, 1945.

Since the Germans attacked the Netherlands on 10 May 1940, Fedor von Bock, an officer in the German military, and his units were overrunning the Netherlands (Following the coding rules specified paragraph 2 in page 16, we do not code a leadership transition from de Geer (regular government) to von Bock (occupation government) as a SOLS change, since the country lost its independence at this time). During the German occupation in the Netherlands, Seyss-Inquart, a Nazi official in Germany, was appointed Reichskommissar for the Occupied Netherlands in May 1940, controlling the administration of the country with defending the interests of Germany. He supported the Dutch NSB and allowed them to create a paramilitary. Other political parties were banned in late 1941 and many former government officials were imprisoned.

As noted above, after the liberation of the Netherlands, Willem Schermerhorn, a founder of the Labor Party, was selected to head an interim coalition government as prime minister on June 24, 1945. Schermerhorn formed his coalition with SDAP, KVP (Catholic People's Party) and ARP (a SOLS change). Following the coding rules specified paragraph 2 in page 16, we do not code a leadership transition from Seyss-Inquart (occupation government) to Schermerhorn as a SOLS change, since the country regained its independence as a result of the end of German occupation and this was an interim government). He retained the position until general election could be held and stepped down on July 2, 1946.

The first post-war elections were held in 1946 and resulted in the KVP getting the most votes but not enough for a majority. Under instruction from Queen Wilhelmina, Louis Beel, a member of KVP, formed a coalition government uniting the KVP and the PvdA. Beel, became Prime Minister July 3, 1946 and served as Prime Minister until August 7, 1948. During the 1946-1948 time period, Beel maintained the same SOLS. Dr. Louis Beel represented the KVP (at the head of a coalition including the less represented PvdA). Accordingly, this was a change of SOLS for the Dutch government. Dr. Beel served in the position until 1948, when new elections put the PvdA back in power at the head of a parliamentary coalition (including the KVP, People's Party for Freedom and Democracy (VVD), and the Christian Historical Union (CHU)) with Willem Drees as their Prime Minister. Drees served consistently until his cabinet broke up

in 1958; the only minor SOLS change in time was 1952, when the ARP replaced the VVD as a coalition partner.

Dr. Beel formed a provisional cabinet in 1958, with a coalition of the KVP, ARP, and CHU. This cabinet does not represent a SOLS change, because it was formed explicitly to set the stage for elections. In 1959, elections were held; the same coalition from above plus the VVD came to control the government with Jan Edward de Quay as the Prime Minister. His personal party was the KVP, and they stayed at the head of the coalitions in power for some time to come. This is a SOLS change.

1959 through 1963 and 1963 through 1965 were administrations under de Quay and Victor Merijnen in which the KVP led the above coalition. In 1965, a minor SOLS change occurred when the CHU and VVD dropped from the coalition and the PvdA was added; this was not a major change because the new prime minister, Joseph Cals, was still a member of the KVP.

On April 14, 1965, the Marijnen cabinet collapsed and fellow KVP party member Jo Cals became the new Prime Minister. Along with the new prime minister came a new cabinet consisted of the KVP, PvdA, and ARP. On November 22, 1966, the Cals cabinet was brought down when its financial policies were attacked. Replacing Cals as prime minister was Jelle Zijlstra of the ARP party as a caretaker government until elections could be held in 1967. Since the Zijlstra cabinet is just a caretaker government, there is no SOLS change.

Control and SOLS shifted in 1967, when general elections were held. They resulted in another win for the KVP. The new prime minister was now Petrus de Jong, a member of the KVP and the new cabinet consisted of the KVP, ARP, CHU, and VVD; this occurred on April 5th. However, this was only a minor SOLS change.

Piet de Jong's coalition saw the addition of the Democratic Socialists '70 (DS70) party, and it continued to rule under the new administration of Barend Biesheuvel and the ARP, to which he belonged, in 1971. This change is coded as a transfer of SOLS. In 1972, a minor SOLS change occurred when the DS70 was dropped from the ruling coalition. Major SOLS change occurred again in 1973; a new government led by the PvdA and including the KVP, ARP, Political Party of Radicals (PPR), and Democrats '66 (D66) took control under the leadership of Prime Minister Joop den Uyl. Den Uyl's coalition lasted until 1977.

In 1977, a new coalition took hold under Dries van Agt of the Christian-Democratic Appeal (CDA). From 1977 to 1981, the coalition was simply the CDA and VVD. From 1981 to May of 1982, it was the CDA, PvdA, and D66. Finally, from May of 1982 to November of 1982, it was only the CDA and D66. As van Agt was the Prime Minister for this whole period, the 1977 transition is coded as a SOLS change, but the following two are only minor.

In November of 1982, the CDA retained power, but they installed a new prime minister and gained a different coalition partner. The transition to Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers and the new coalition of the CDA and VVD is coded as a minor SOLS change. This situation stayed constant until 1989, when the Lubbers cabinet dropped the VVD from its coalition and replaced it with the PvdA (representing another minor SOLS change).

1994 saw a major SOLS change from Lubbers to Prime Minister Willem Kok, who led a coalition of the PvdA, VVD, and D66 parties. This government ruled until 2002, when Jan Peter Balkenende became prime minister with a coalition of parties including the CDA, VVD, and a new party called Pim Fortuyn List (LPF). This obviously denoted a SOLS change as well. Balkenende has been the prime minister since 2002, but there have been minor changes: in 2003

the LPF was replaced by the D66, in 2006 the D66 itself was dropped, and finally, in 2007, the CHU and PvdA joined the CDA in government.

## Sources

Cahoon, Ben. "Netherlands." World Statesmen.org. 2000. Web. 31 May 2010.  
<<http://worldstatesmen.org/Netherlands.htm>>.

Coles, Harry L., and Albert K. Weinberg. "Civil Affairs: Soldiers Become Governors Chapter XVIII." U.S. Army Center Of Military History. United States Military. Web. 31 May 2010. <<http://www.history.army.mil/books/wwii/civaff/ch28.htm>>.

Haine, W. Scott. 2000. *The History of Holland (The Greenwood Histories of the Modern Nations)*, London: Greenwood Press.

"Kabinet-Colijn V (1939)." 2011. Leiden University Parliamentary Documentation Centre.  
<http://www.denederlandsegrondwet.nl/9353000/1/j9vvihlf299q0sr/vh8lnhrp8wry> via  
*Nederlandse Grondwet*, <http://www.denederlandsegrondwet.nl/>

Lentz III, Harris M. (1999) *Encyclopedia of Heads of States and Governments 1900 through 1945*, North Carolina: MacFarkand and Company.

Leiden University Parliamentary Documentation Centre 2011. *Parlement & Politiek; Regering; Kabinetten per tijdvak*: <http://www.parlement.com/> Parlement & Politiek. University of Leiden. Web. 31 May 2010. <<http://www.parlement.com/>>.

U.S. Department of State. 2011. "Background Note: The Netherlands."  
<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/3204.htm#gov> (accessed April 30, 2011).

Woldendorp, Jaap, Hans Keeman, and Ian Budge. 2000. *Party Government in 48 Democracies: Composition – Duration – Personnel*. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, Netherlands.

Pre-1945 coded by Naoko Matsumura (Rice) on 05/08/2011  
Post-1945 coded by multiple coders

Pre-1945 revised by Ashley Leeds (Rice) on 06/13/2012  
Pre-1945 revised by Eelco van der Maat (Vanderbilt) on 09/02/2012

Post-1945 updated by Matt DiLorenzo (Vanderbilt) on 07/17/2012

Combined by Matt DiLorenzo (Vanderbilt) on 07/12/2013  
Edited by Andrew Wood (Rice) on 5/24/2014