

Chapter 30. Application to Politics: Parliamentary Coalitions

- Brief Synopsis of the Chapter
- Dutch Parliamentary Coalitions
- Dutch Policy Spaces

Chapter Summary

- Straffin argues that bargaining sets are a suitable model for understanding coalition formation in government
- Couple this with Riker's *minimum winning* coalition
- He introduces the concept of policy spaces to explain bargaining in Norwegian politics
- The concept is somewhat challenged however since these models often predict "external coalitions" which leave out the moderates
- Now, lets apply these ideas to Dutch politics

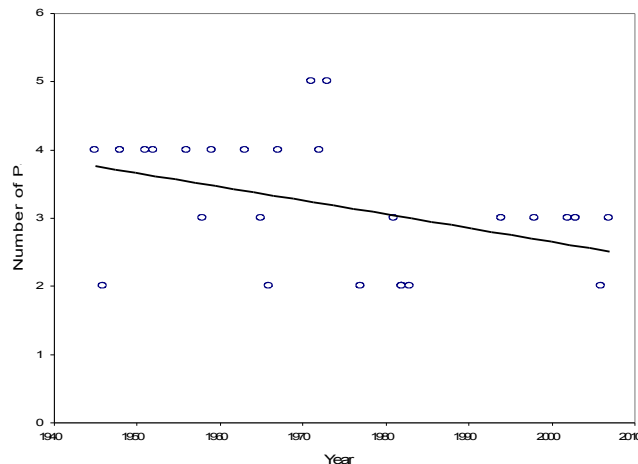
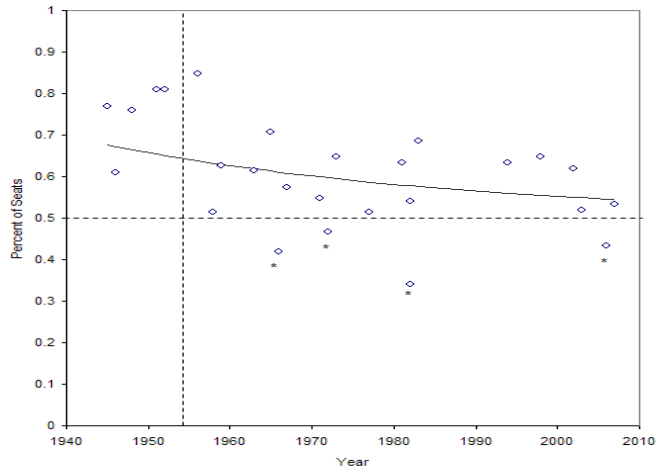
Dutch Cabinet Formation

- The Cabinet is the major executive body of the Netherlands; it initiates law and policy
- The Cabinet has between twelve and fourteen ministers, also usually heads of specific government ministries
- The privilege of creating the Cabinet goes to the winner of the general elections
- A majority of seats in the House of Representatives (Tweede Kamer) must be represented on the Cabinet
- There has never been a single party majority
- How to choose coalition partners?

Results of the Dutch 2006 General Elections

<u>Abbreviation</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Political Ideology</u>	<u>Seats</u>
CDA	Christian Democratic Appeal	Christian Democracy	41
PvdA	Labour Party	Social Democracy	33
SP	Socialist Party	Socialism	25
VVD	People's Party for Freedom and Democracy	Conservative liberalism/Liberalism	22
PVV	Party for Freedom	Conservative liberalism/Liberal conservatism	9
GL	GreenLeft	Green Politics	7
CU	ChristianUnion	Social-Christianity /Orthodox Protestantism	6
D66	Democrats 66	Social liberalism, Radicalism, Progressivism	3
PvdA	Party for the Animals	Animal rights/Animal welfare	2
SGP	Reformed Political Party	Conservatism, Reformed Christian	2
Total			150

Requirements for Cabinet Formation



- The number of parties included in the coalition and the size of the majority has steadily declined in post-war Dutch ministries ($p > 0.05$)
- This phenomenon is unexplained; perhaps greater party discipline, or greater party rewards for capturing ministerial posts
- Riker's *minimum winning* proposition holds
- Modern cabinets would prefer three or fewer parties to be involved, and a majority of 80 or less (if possible) (out of 150).

Top: Size of Majority, Bottom: Number of Parties.

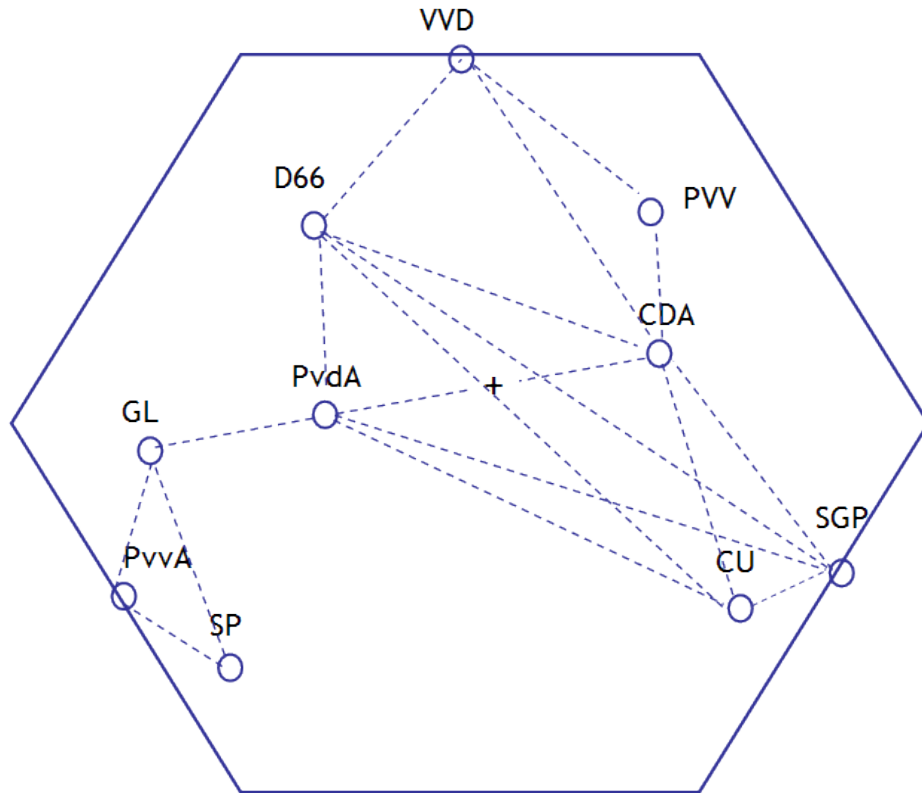
Possible Minimum Winning Coalitions

<u>Coalition</u>	<u>Seats</u>
CDA-PvdA-SP	99
CDA-PvdA-VVD	96
CDA-SP-VVD	88
CDA-PvdA-PVV	83
CDA-PvdA-GL	81
CDA-PvdA-CU	80
CDA-PvdA-D66	77

There are only seven coalitions which:

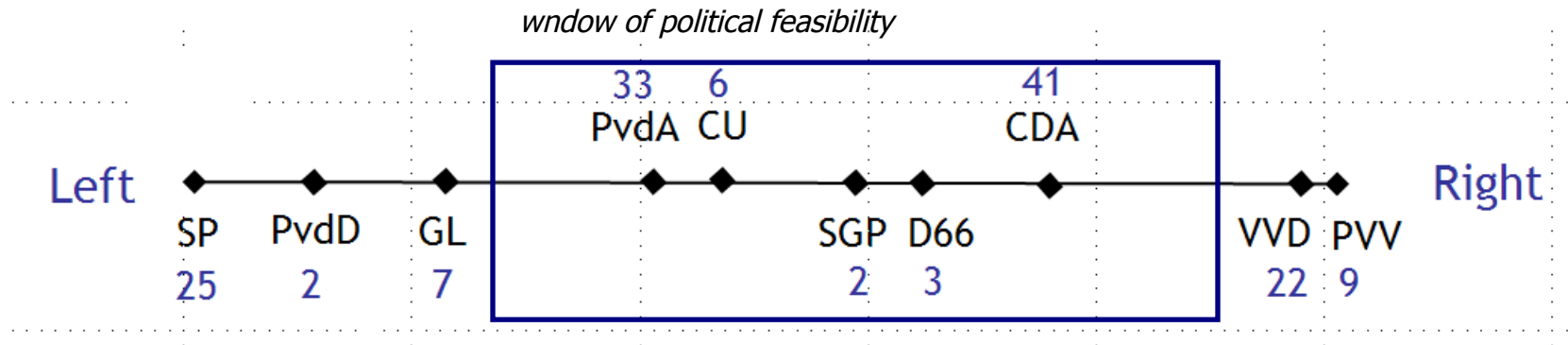
- Are minimal
- Have three or fewer parties
- Include the CDA, the nominal winner of the elections

A Multi-Dimensional Policy Space for the Netherlands



- Policy spaces set limits on the space of possible swaps
- Straffin provides a Norwegian example
- We can parameterize Dutch politics based on Benoit and Lavier (2006)
- Polled experts about values of European (and other) political parties
- There are actually three significant dimensions, including a dimension of social liberalism and a dimension of EU Governance

A One-Dimensional Model of Dutch Political Parties

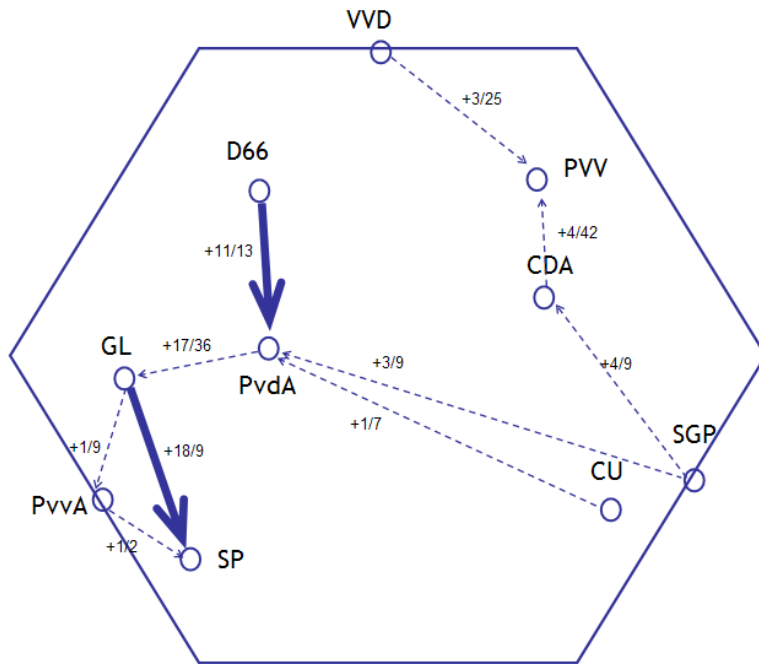


- The Netherlands Parliamentary process is heavily constrained by the need to achieve a majority
- One dimension (right versus left) is sufficient

Potential Coalitions Evaluated

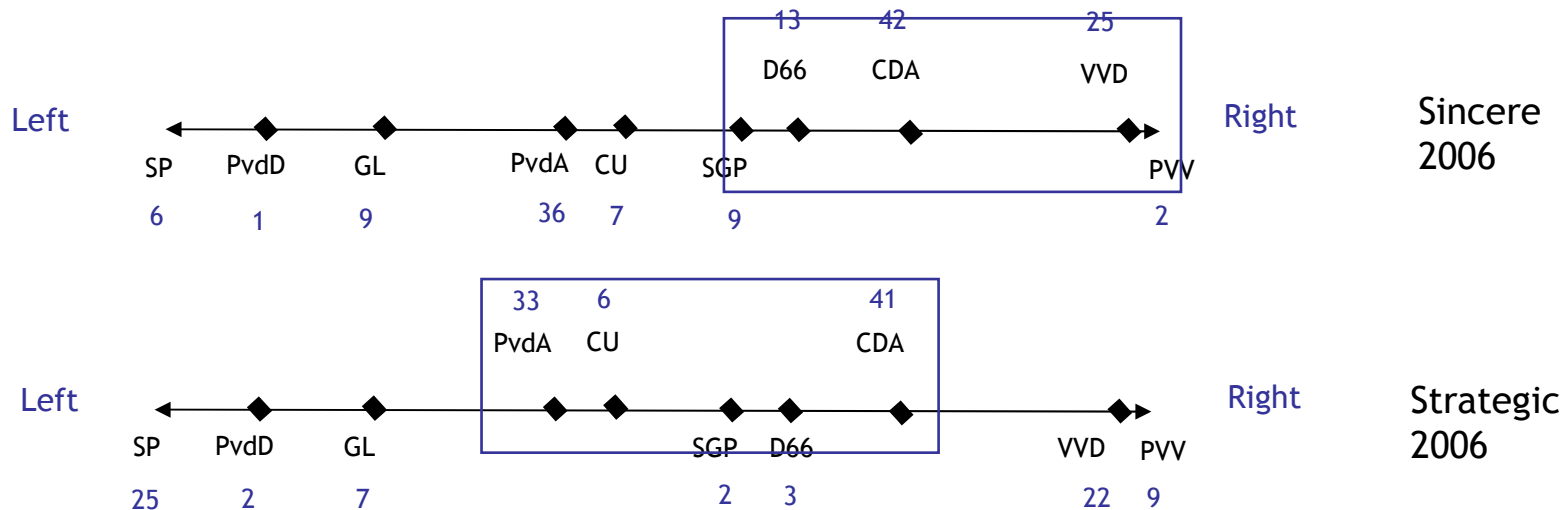
<u>Coalition</u>	<u>Seats</u>	<u>Evaluation</u>
CDA-PvdA-SP	99	Excessive
CDA-PvdA-VVD	96	Feasible but Excessive
CDA-SP-VVD	88	Infeasible
CDA-PvdA-PVV	83	Infeasible
CDA-PvdA-GL	81	Infeasible
CDA-PvdA-CU	80	Feasible but Minimal
CDA-PvdA-D66	77	Minimal

Strategic Voting: How it Might Have Happened



- A realignment along the “second axis” of Dutch politics
- Possibly one in four Dutch voters voted strategically
- Progressives on the left lost confidence and defected from D66
- GroenLinks became an important conduit for extra votes

Strategic Voting: What Did it Accomplish?



Bargaining and the Coalition Process

- There doesn't appear to be much opportunity for bargaining in the Dutch process
- However we should turn to the minority players in parliament who are probably able to extract considerable concessions
- Consider D66 who are against the Iraq War, and caused the collapse of the government