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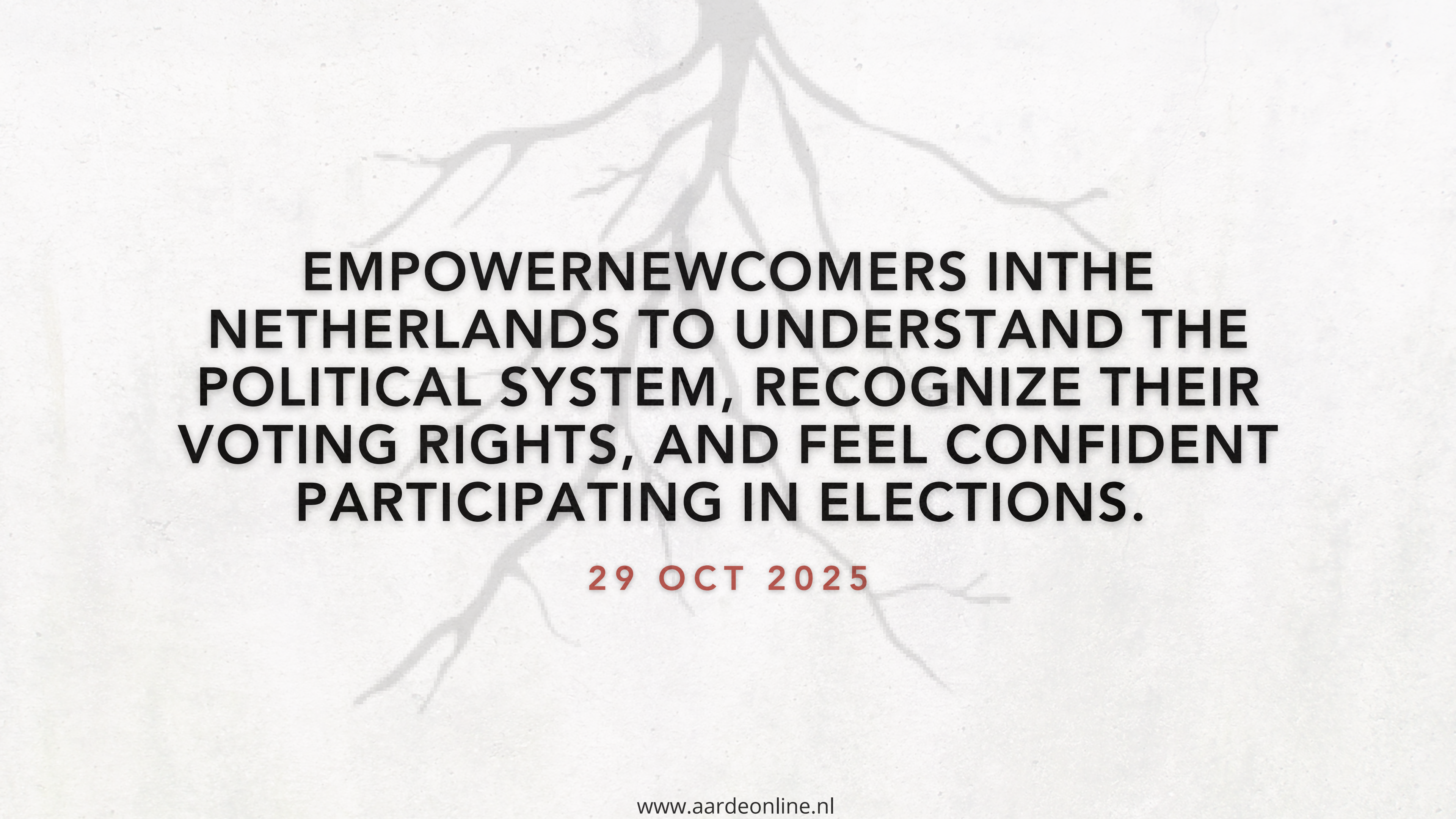


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**EMPOWER NEWCOMERS IN THE
NETHERLANDS TO UNDERSTAND THE
POLITICAL SYSTEM, RECOGNIZE THEIR
VOTING RIGHTS, AND FEEL CONFIDENT
PARTICIPATING IN ELECTIONS.**

29 OCT 2025

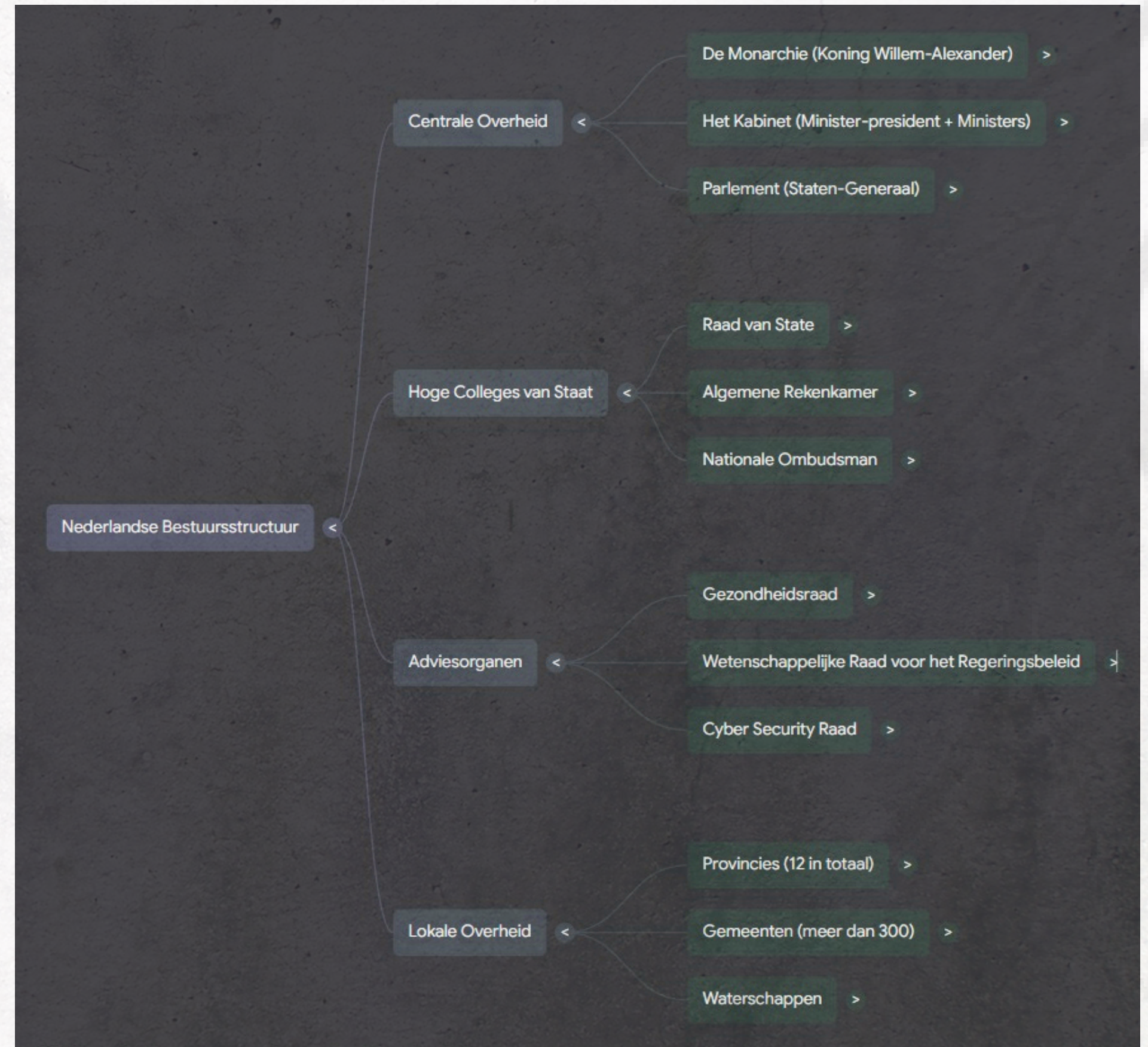
| THE POLITICAL SYSTEM IN THE NETHERLANDS

KEY CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DUTCH SYSTEM:

- THE NETHERLANDS IS A CONSTITUTIONAL MONARCHY AND A PARLIAMENTARY DEMOCRACY.
- THE KING IS THE HEAD OF STATE, BUT HIS ROLE IS CEREMONIAL.
- REAL POWER LIES WITH ELECTED OFFICIALS.
- IT IS A CONSENSUS-BASED SYSTEM; MULTIPLE PARTIES WORK TOGETHER TO GOVERN IN ONE COALITION.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE DUTCH SYSTEM:

The Netherlands is governed by various political bodies on different levels:



DIRECTLY ELECTED BODIES IN THE NETHERLANDS

Body	Who elects them?	What they do (short)
House of Representatives (Tweede Kamer)	All citizens (national elections, every 4 years)	Makes laws, controls the government, and represents the people.
Provincial States (Provinciale Staten)	Citizens of each province (every 4 years)	Decide on regional matters; elect the Senate.
Municipal Councils (Gemeenteraden)	Citizens of each municipality (every 4 years)	Decide on local issues like housing, welfare, and services.
Water Boards (Waterschappen)	Citizens in water districts (every 4 years)	Manage water safety, dikes, sewage, and flood control.

PARLIAMENT AND SENATE (TWEEDE KAMER & EERSTE KAMER)

Understanding the Dutch Parliament Key Points:

1- Tweede Kamer (House of Representatives) – 150 members, directly elected by the people, every 4 years, a 76 seats majority is needed, Main legislative body.

Historical note: since 1919, all citizens 18+ can vote.

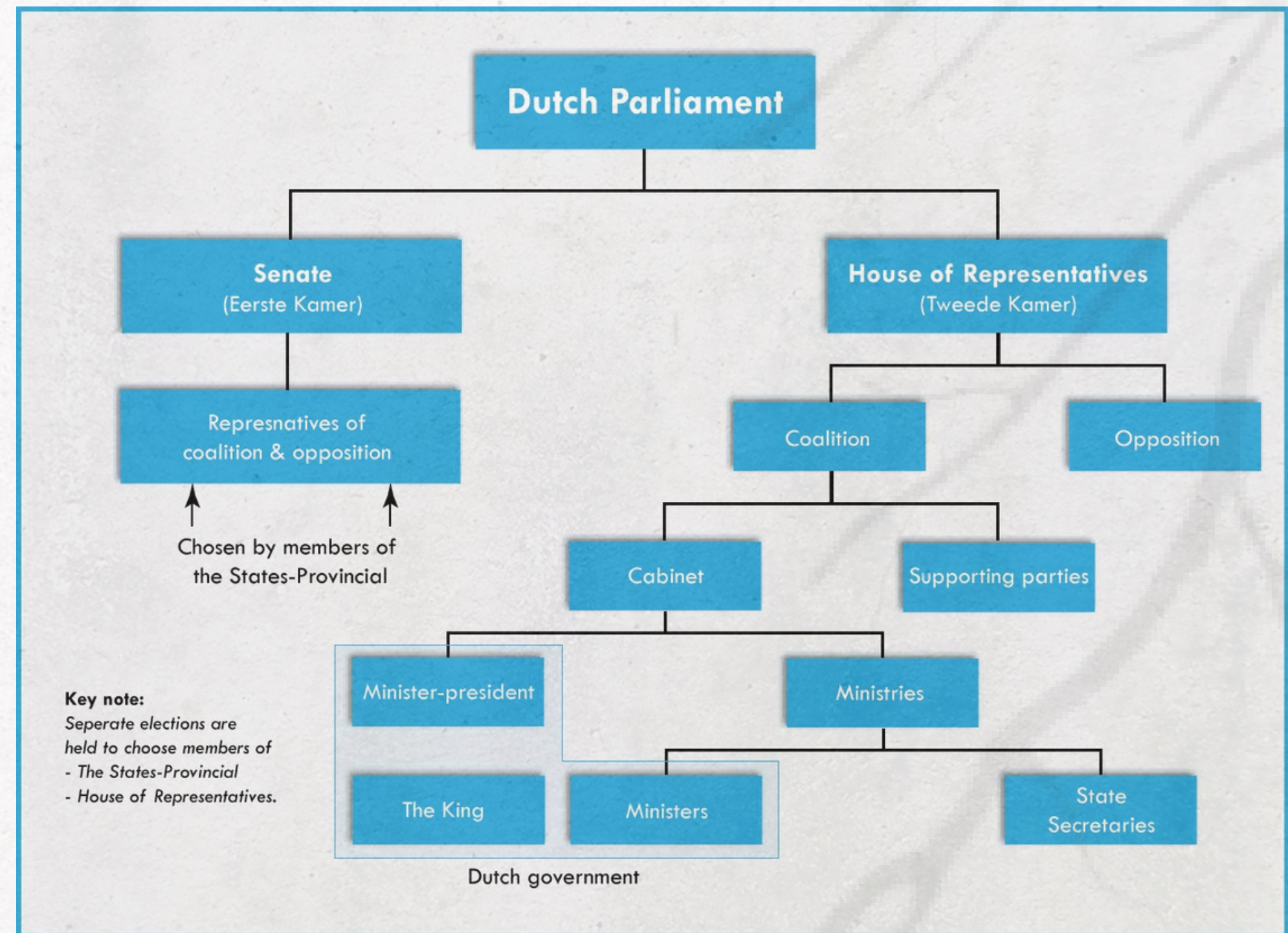
Key Functions

- Make laws → Submit motions, debates, amends, votes on bills (together with cabinet & Senate).
- Control the government → questions ministers, monitors decisions, can force resignation.
- Represent the people → brings citizens' concerns and ideas into politics.

2 - Eerste Kamer (Senate) – 75 members, indirectly elected by provincial councils every 4 years

Key Functions

- Approve or reject laws → checks bills after the Tweede Kamer; cannot amend them.
- Check quality of legislation → looks at legality, feasibility, and consistency.
- Monitor government policy (limited) → debates and written questions on main policy lines.



COALITION FORMATION

Why do Dutch parties always work together?

Key Points:

- 1- No single party usually gets a majority (76 seats).
 - 2- After elections, parties negotiate to form a coalition (this can take weeks or months).
 - 3- Verkenner, Informateur & Formateur — special roles in coalition formation.
- Verkenner → explores possible coalition options.
 - Informateur → leads negotiations between parties to reach an agreement.
 - Formateur → usually the future PM, assigns ministries and selects ministers.
 - Since 2012 → these roles are appointed by the Tweede Kamer, not the King

4- The coalition agreement sets the core goals and policy direction for the new government.
I.e. reduction in unemployment, a cleaner environment without damaging the economy, more money for education

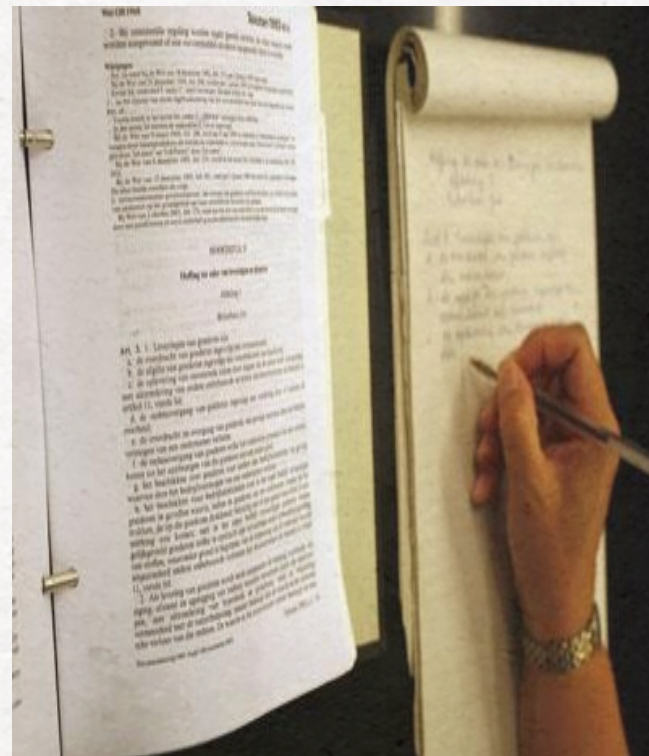


POLICY-MAKING PROCESS

How are decisions made?

Key Points:

- 1- The Cabinet or MPs propose laws.
- 2- Tweede Kamer debates, amends, and votes (usually on Cabinet proposals).
- 3- The Eerste Kamer approves or rejects them.
- 4- Many policies come from coalition agreements, so voting matters!



POLITICAL PARTICIPATION – PARTIES & MEMBERS

Who can join politics and how?

Key Points:

1- Proportional Representation Without a Threshold

Tweede Kamer operates under a pure proportional representation system with a single nationwide list.

Each seat corresponds to approximately 0.67 % of the votes.

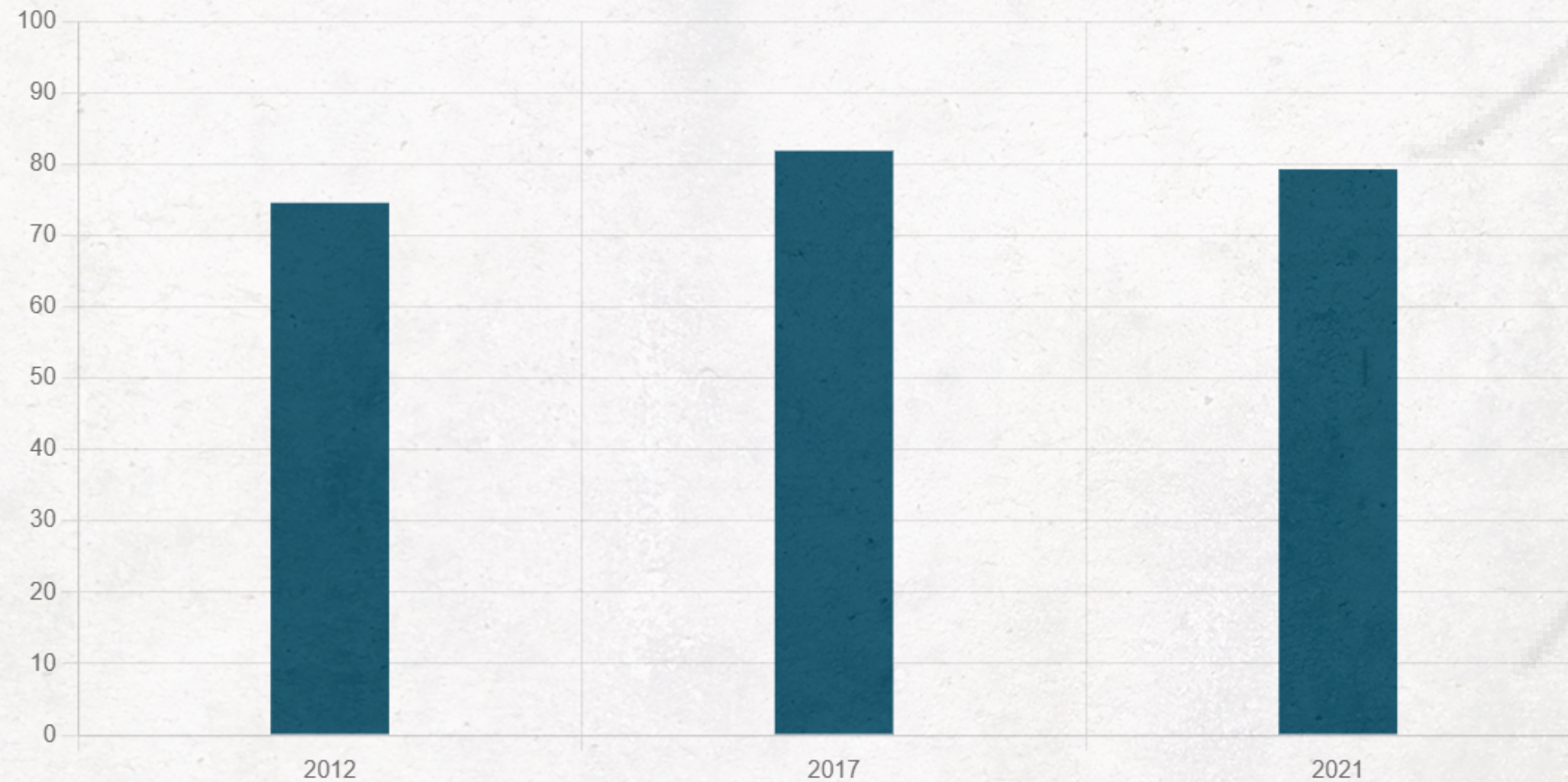
This allows even very small parties to enter parliament.

(13,473,750 eligible voters * 0,67% = 90.274,125 votes are a seat at the parliament) 4- Many policies come from coalition agreements, so voting matters!

2- Parties need to register with the Electoral Council (Kiesraad) and meet eligibility requirements.

3- Each party has a list of candidates, and voters choose among these during elections.

4- Members of Parliament (MPs) represent people, propose laws, and hold the government accountable.



Voter Turnout: 77.8%

The voter turnout for the Parliamentary Election in Netherlands 2023 was 77.8%



Polls, Candidates & Results

Latest polls, candidates & information on the Netherlands elections. Get an overview of historical results, the electoral system, and voter turnout.

 Elections in Netherlands

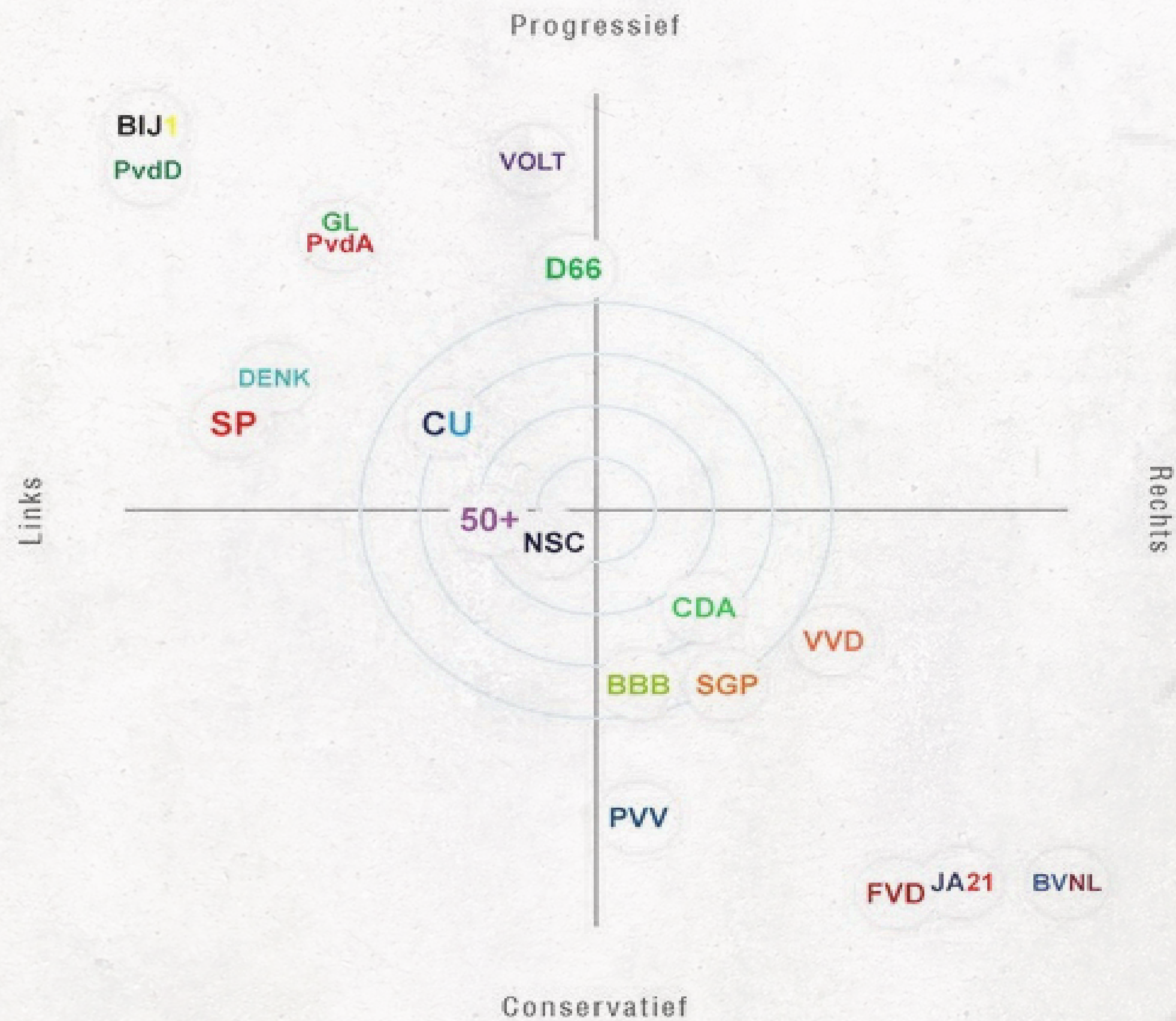
PARTY AGENDAS AND WHAT AFFECTS YOU

What do parties stand for?

Key Points:

- 1- Every party has a party program (verkiezingsprogramma).
- 2- Key topics for newcomers in comparative perspective:

- Asylum & Migration policy
- Access to housing
- Healthcare
- Education
- Employment and wages
- Integration
- Environment





Results of the Parliamentary Election in Netherlands 2023

Results & seat distribution | Coalition possibilities | Polling accuracy |
Statistics

VOTING AND YOUR VOICE

Why your vote matters!

Key Points:

- 1- If you have Dutch citizenship, you have the right to vote in national elections.
- 2- Direct Election: Members are elected directly by the people.
- 3- Party List Vote: Voters choose between party lists instead of individuals.
- 4- Proportional System: Seats are distributed in proportion to votes received.
- 5- One Round : The election is decided in a single round of voting.
- 6- Free Elections: are free, fair and competitive.

SUMMARY & MOTIVATION

Get Informed. Get Involved. { Gebruik je Stem! }

Key Message:

- 1- Get informed → learn about party programs and plans.
- 2- Cast your vote → choose the party that best represents you.
- 3- Tweede Kamer is elected → your party wins seats in parliament.
- 4- A coalition is formed → your party may join the governing coalition.
- 5- Government is created → ministers are appointed, possibly from your party.
- 6- Laws are proposed and debated → shaped by coalition agreements and party priorities, including your party.
- 7- Policies affect daily life → decisions made in parliament and government bring change to society, and to you.



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