

# Dutch Politics

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# Form of government

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The Netherlands has been

- a constitutional monarchy since 1815 and
- a parliamentary democracy since 1848

Head of state is the monarch, at present Queen Beatrix.

She has a role in the formation of the government and in the legislative process.

The executive power is formed by the Dutch cabinet, which consists of around 13 ministers and as many state secretaries (junior-ministers).

Head of the government is the prime minister, Jan Peter Balkenende.

# Queen Beatrix

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# Prince Willem-Alexander and family

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# Jan Peter Balkenende

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# Political institutions

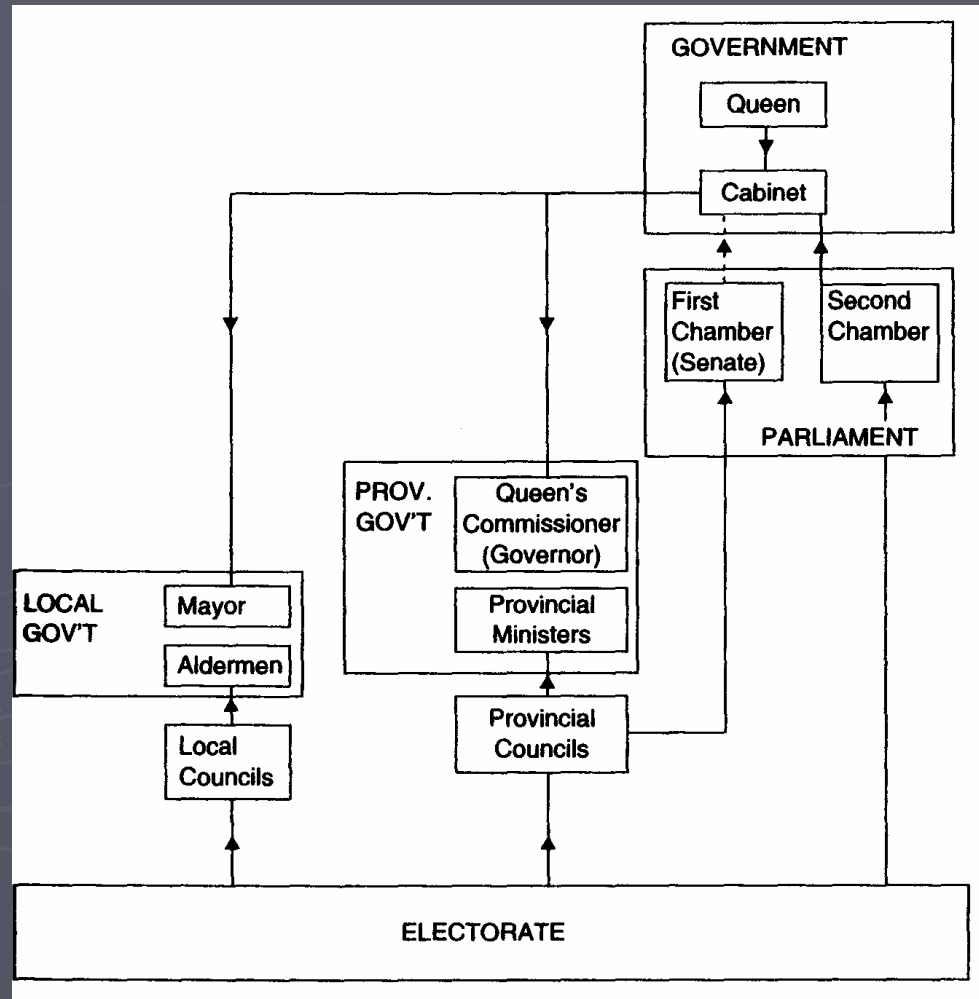
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- Monarchy
- Cabinet
  - Prime Minister
  - Council of Ministers
- Parliament (States General)
  - First Chamber : 75 members,  
elected indirectly by provincial  
councillors
  - Second Chamber : 150 members,  
elected directly every 4 years



The Hague's Binnenhof

# Political institutions



# Political Parties

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- CDA (Christen-Democratisch Appèl) centre-right Christian Democratic party
- PvdA (Partij van de Arbeid) social democratic centre-left Labour Party
- SP (Socialistische Partij) Socialist Party
- VVD (Volkspartij voor Vrijheid en Democratie) People Party for Freedom and Democratie - conservative liberal party
- PVV (Partij voor de Vrijheid) Party for Freedom – anti-Islam nationalist conservative party
- GL (GroenLinks) Green-Left – environmentalist, green, leftwing ideals
- CU (Christen Unie) Christian Union - orthodox protestant party
- D66 (Democraten 66) Democrates 66 – social-liberal radical party
- PvdD (Partij voor de Dieren) Party for Animals – animal rights, environmental issues

# Recent political history

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1994 :  
- CDA lost its dominant position  
- „Purple“ cabinet was formed by the VVD, D66 and PvdA  
- government introduced legislation on abortion, euthanasia and gay marriage

2002:  
- „purple“ coalition lost majority  
- rise of the new political party List Pim Fortuyn (LPF)  
- Pim Fortuyn was shot dead a week before elections  
- LPF entered parliament with 1/6 th of the seats  
- Cabinet: CDA, VVD and LPF, prime minister J.P. Balkenende

After 87 days this coalition fell apart (conflicts within LPF)

2003:  
- LPF lost almost all ist seats  
- cabinet: CDA, VVD and D66 („Balkenende II“)  
- ambitious program of reforming the welfare state, the health care system and immigration policies.

# Recent political history

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- 2004:
- Theo van Gogh, dutch film director, was murdered in Amsterdam by an islamist
  - that causes arson attacks on mosques, christian churches were in turn targeted in vandalism and arson attacks
  - this initiated general discussion about the cohabitation of different cultures and religions and the dutch integration and immigration politic
- 2005:
- the Dutch electorate voted in a referendum against the proposed European Constitution by a majority of 62%
- 2006:
- Cabinet fell as D66 voted in favour of a motion of no confidence against minister of immigration and integration Rita Verdonk
  - „Balkenende III“ caretaker cabinet was formed by CDA and VVD
  - General elections in November 2006
  - Socialists became third largest party
  - PdvA lost a quarter of ist seats
  - after difficult negotiations the Cabinet „Balkenende IV“ was formed by the CDA, the PdvA and the CU