



Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands

Summaries in English

N.A.

Citation

Summaries in English. (1977). Summaries in English. *Acta Politica*, 12: 1977(2), 284-285. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3451833>

Version: Publisher's Version
License: [Leiden University Non-exclusive license](#)
Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/3451833>

Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Nuclear energy in the Netherlands

by H. J. M. de Vries, K. T. Uitham, G. J. Zijlstra

After World War II the development of nuclear energy for the production of electricity was strongly promoted by the governments of the industrialized countries. Nuclear electricity production promised to be the solution for the problem of fossil energy shortage.

Until the early seventies the development of nuclear power was not an element of public discussion; mainly due to a rather general consensus of opinion among those involved, viz. nuclear industry, electricity utilities, research establishment, government institutions and parliament.

The last few years however, large scale introduction of nuclear energy is challenged more and more by pressure groups outside these institutions. In this article an outline of the main issues in the development of nuclear energy in the Netherlands is given. The role of those research organizations, advisory committees, companies and utilities participating in decision making concerning nuclear developments is discussed. As an extension of the historical approach, we present a network analysis of the institutions actively involved in the field of nuclear energy. The units of the network are those research organizations, government organizations and -committees, companies and utilities, which participate in the nuclear development. The lines between these units are their personal linkages on a decision-making level. Results are compared with those from the historical analysis.

The main conclusion of the article is that the dutch government was strongly influenced by the opinions of the nuclear industry and the utilities in her nuclear policy. A structure of influence and coordination has developed, which is based on personal linkages and which strengthened the position of industry and has made it very difficult for alternative opinions on the nuclear development to reach the decision-making level.

Municipal Elections 1974

by K. Ditttrich and R. van den Helm

As part of a larger research project on Dutch local politics the authors report some preliminary findings that result from a comparison of the 1970 and 1974 municipal elections. For this reason all municipalities were classified in six types of urbanization and all party lists were divided into four categories: 1. separate local lists of national parties, 2. combined local lists of national parties, 3. combined lists of national parties and local groups, and 4. purely local lists (a large percentage of this last category is constituted by independent roman-catholic lists, outside the Catholic People's Party, in the two southern provinces).

In view of the heavy preponderance of rural municipalities (table 1) it is not surprising that all the major parties (quantitatively) have a rural basis and that only a few smaller parties have a typically urban character.

In both years the average number of competing lists per municipality was 5.85; in table 2 it is shown that the number of competing lists increases as the urbanization score gets higher. Tables 4 and 5 indicate to what degree parties are competing in the elections and whether all types of urbanization (or provinces) are uniformly 'covered' by the various parties. The patterns of competition within and between blocs of parties present a very fragmented picture; usually 3 to 5 blocs compete and monopolies are virtually non-existent.

With respect to turnout it was found that (esp. in municipal elections) the more inhabitants in a municipality, the lower the turnout rate (table 7). This means an advantage for those parties that mainly concentrate their power base in the more rural areas, i.e. the confessional parties; in table 9 it is shown that the confessional parties in general and the three christian-democratic parties in particular benefit most from the higher turnout rates in the rural areas.

Municipalities are classified (table 10) according to the degree to which national parties are getting the votes instead of local lists. This measure of political 'nationalization' again stresses the unequal coverage of the major national parties and the strong position of the independent lists. From table 11 one can see that the percentage of municipalities where the national political cleavages dominate the local elections is growing, but that the more rural municipalities lag far behind the cities. A measure of polarization is given in table 12: the combined percentage of votes cast for PvdA/PAK and VVD is taken as an indicator for the supersession of the less politicized confessional parties and independent lists (cf. the commuter municipalities and the larger cities).

Finally, the political commentators from 1974 are commented upon. In the first place, it is shown (table 14) that the results given by the Dutch National Press Bureau (ANP) were based upon a completely non-representative selection of municipalities with respect to the types of urbanization: the larger cities were overrepresented, while the more rural municipalities were heavily underrepresented. This resulted in a false picture of the election figures; the most striking feature being the falling off of the independent lists (that actually got 20 % of the votes). In the second place, it is argued that municipal elections have such unique characteristics (esp. patterns of coverage and differential turnout rates) that comparisons with elections on other political levels (either provincial or national) are impossible, both from a scientific and from a political viewpoint. Most commentators unfortunately failed to appreciate this point.