**Political / electoral system**

Germany - consensus democracy (DONE).

Moreover, the Dutch political system, like its German counterpart, is widely regarded as a consensus democracy (Hendriks, 2017). Indeed, the Dutch political system bears the label of the ‘Polder Model’ to describe its consultatory, consensus-oriented *modus operandi* of decision-making. With this in mind, one could argue that the Dutch political system – like its German counterpart – is less conducive to the polarising discourse of identity politics.

The Italian political system – in contrast to its Dutch and German counterparts – represents a less consensual form of governance. Without digressing too much on debates pertaining to electoral studies, most scholars agree that the Italian party system is deeply polarised ideologically (Bosco *et al*., 2021). Indeed, the Italian political system is characterised by – what several scholars label as – ‘polarised bipolarism’ (Ieraci, 2007) which denotes a model of party competition in which two poles are formed by coalitions of parties (Bosco et al., 2021). The much publicised ‘dealignment’ and ‘destructuration’ of the Italian party system comprises unstable coalitions and splits among weak and internally divided parties that can no longer rely on party loyalty from voters (Magone, 2014:3 04). In short, relations across and within parties – and even within ruling coalitions[[1]](#footnote-1) – are highly polarised which partly explains Italy’s high turnover of governments. One could argue that Italy’s highly polarised, and destabilised political system is more conducive to the (euro)nationalist-populist rhetoric of identity politics.

**Poland**

Loosely speaking, we can say that Polish politics (and society for that matter) is more polarised than its Dutch and German counterparts. The consensus view is that polish parties are deeply divided ideologically, which can be explained, in part, by the roots of the Solidarity Movement[[2]](#footnote-2). Polish society is also polarised on divisive, emotively charged issues related to, *inter alia*, abortion, gay rights, EU membership, and the role of the Catholic Church in modern society. The rise of the far right in Poland both reflects and accentuates societal divisions. Although Poland has a history of coalition governments – as is customary in electoral systems based on proportional representation – parties in Poland, and Central and Eastern Europe, in general, tend to form coalitions within distinct ideological blocs (Savage, 2013). In other words, parties form ideologically homogenous rather than disparate coalitions, which, I suspect, heightens the polarisation of debate[[3]](#footnote-3). The deep polarisation of Polish politics and society, arguably, creates a propitious environment for nationalist-populist rhetoric to thrive.

https://aceproject.org/main/english/es/esy\_pl.htm

https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01402382.2013.797239

Mixed electoral system.

Poland? Polarising politics. Deep ideological splits probably have roots in solidarity movement. Polarisation of debate on symbolic issues, gay rights, abortion, rule of law, EU membership, role of Catholic church? Populist right tend to emphasize polarisation of political forces - national good and EU bad.... polarisation of polish society. More coalitions based in ideological blocs (Savage)

<https://aceproject.org/main/english/es/esy_pl.htm>

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01402382.2013.797239>

Hendriks, F. (2017). Polder politics: The re-invention of consensus democracy in the Netherlands. Routledge.

Lobo, M. C. (2015). Party dealignment and leader effects. Personality politics, 148-66.

Sartori, G. (2015). 5. European Political Parties: The Case of Polarized Pluralism. In Political Parties and Political Development. (SPD-6) (pp. 137-176). Princeton: Princeton University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400875337-006>

Ieraci, Giuseppe. 2007. Governments and Parties in Italy. Parliamentary Debates, Investiture Votes and Policy Positions (1994–2006), Leicester: Troubador.

Germany - consensus democracy (DONE).

The Dutch political system, like its German counterpart, is widely regarded as a consensus democracy (Hendriks, 2017). Indeed, the Dutch political system often bears the label of the ‘Polder Model’ to describe its consensus-oriented, consultatory form of decision-making. With this in mind, one could argue that the Dutch political system – as with the German case – is less conducive to the polarising discourse of identity politics (DONE).

In Italy,

Far right tend to create division and tend to be antithesis of consensus politics (<https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/far-right-grows-in-opposition-to-dutch-consensus-politics/>)

Italy - more polemical, dealignment + destructuration, ideological/polarised/strong left-right ideological fragmentation. Historically too (communists vs fascista) Italy as breeding ground for populist political communication? Polarised pluralism. Mixed electoral system. More ideologically polarised.

Hendriks, F. (2017). Polder politics: The re-invention of consensus democracy in the Netherlands. Routledge.

1. The 2018 *Movimento 5 Stelle* – *Lega* coalition under the first Conte cabinet comes to mind. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Need to add further explanation. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. These sentiments are shared by Ieraci (2007) who claims that patterns of party competition in Poland and the CEEC region conform to a ‘polarised bilateral distribution’ model patterns of party competition. In other words, there is little or no overlap between the two opposing ideological blocs. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)