

# PUBLIC AFFAIRS ACADEMY:

## *SESSION 2*

15.03.2024

# PUBLIC AFFAIRS ACADEMY:

## *SESSION 2*

Verwelkoming & introductie



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Comeos  
CEO

# **BELGIAN POLITICS AND ITS STAKEHOLDERS: A DEEP-DIVE**

**VBO-FEB Public Affairs Academy**

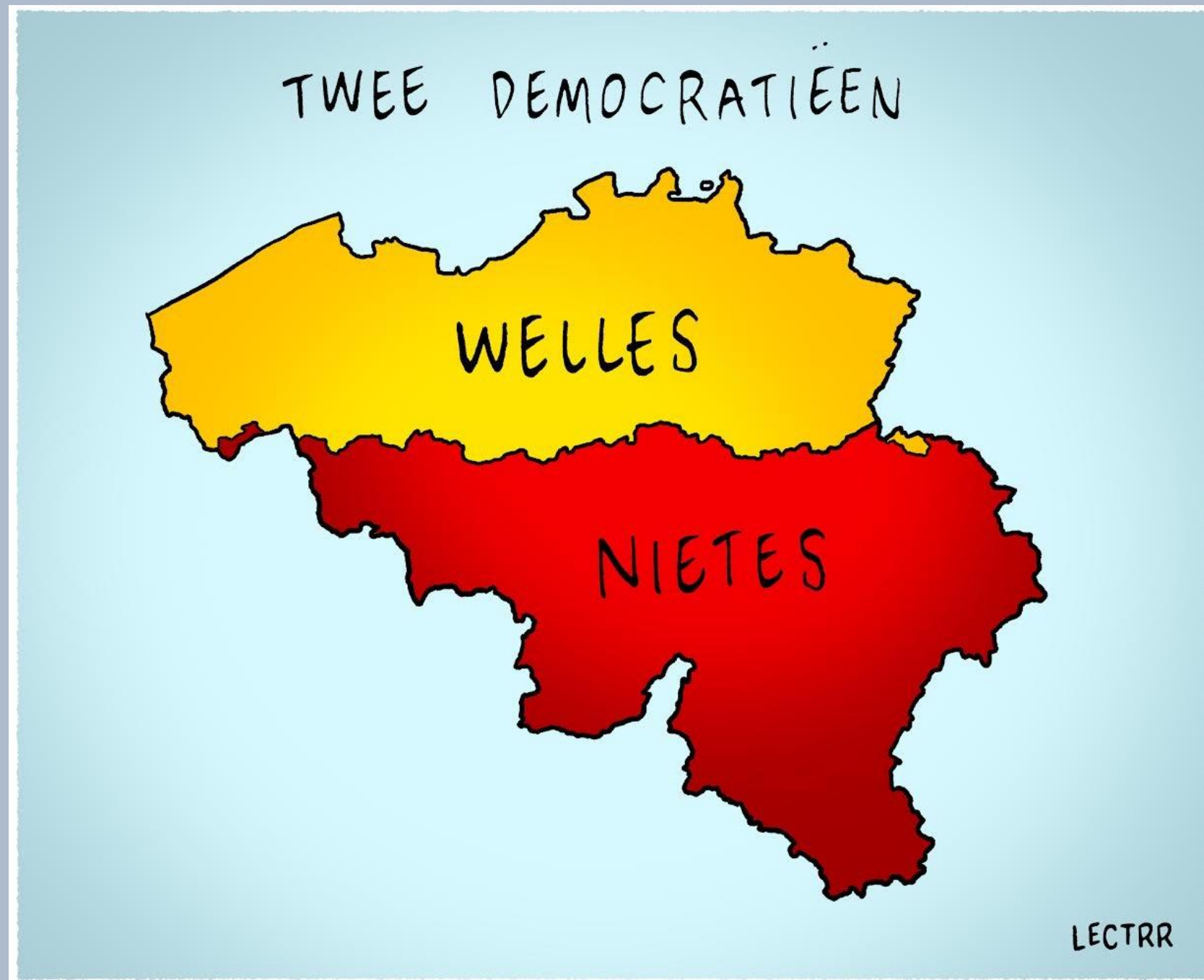
**15 March 2024**

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# The regional landscape





## Belgium at a glance

- **Formally:** complicated state structure, product of history and ongoing state reforms
- **Informally:** different languages, different political cultures, different public opinions, different media landscapes, ...
- Everything is **interconnected:** politics, media, civil society
- **Differences AND similarities** are not always what they seem to be at first sight...



## Interconnectivity

'Federale regering moet asymmetrisch arbeidsmarktbeleid voeren'



Wat met Vlaamse regering als N-VA niet federaal zit? "Ga CD&V en Open VLD vragen of ze nog achter regeerakkoord staan"

11 juli-speech

**Jan Jambon vindt dat het land hertekend moet worden: "Deze crisis heeft nogmaals getoond dat onze staatsstructuur niet langer werkt"**



## Legal Reality

*"De macht om beslissingen te nemen behoort niet langer exclusief toe aan de federale regering en het federaal parlement. De leiding over het land is nu in handen van verschillende partners, die onafhankelijk hun bevoegdheden uitoefenen in hun domeinen."*

## Political Reality

# The Flemish Community





Which word comes to mind when you're thinking about "Flemish Politics & PA"?







## The Flemish Region, put in perspective... (1)

- Flemish regionalisation = initially a project driven by **language, culture, identity** (>< FR speaking Belgium)
- Dream of a **'Flemish nation'** (which does not necessarily equal independence!)



# flanders' technology



Gent Ghent Gand Gent  
3-7 mei May mai Mai '83

Regional Political  
Landscape

## The Flemish Region, put in perspective... (2)

- Flemish regionalisation = also driven by the region's **economic** 'success'
- **Efficiency and effectiveness** therefore also became a mantra of the new Flemish government
- Gaston Geens (first chairman of the 'Flemish executive', 1981-1991):  
"wat we zelf doen, doen we beter"
  - Striving for a more efficient and effective government...
  - ...or symbol of Flanders' arrogance and complacency?



## The Flemish Region, put in perspective... (3)

Excerpts from Min.-Pres. Jambon's September Declaration (2021):

- “We zijn het aan onszelf verplicht om de crisis aan te grijpen om het nog **BETER te doen**. Om nog **meer ambitie** aan de dag te leggen, nog **meer creativiteit**, nog **meer daadkracht**.”
- “**Het ambitieniveau NOG hoger leggen**. De opportuniteiten die na de coronacrisis op ons bord komen, met **BEIDE HANDEN** grijpen.”
- “Met 4,3 miljard euro kan Vlaanderen zich **UIT** de crisis en **NAAR de top investeren**.”
- Mijn voltallige regering wil **de ambitie NOG verhogen**. Behalve investeren, moeten we ook durven **HERVORMEN**. Bakens verzetten, heilige huisjes aanpakken.
- De Vlaamse regering zal het **structureel tekort** van 1,8 miljard euro nog deze legislatuur **halveren**.
- Mijn regering zal alles uit de kast halen om **NOG meer mensen aan de slag** te krijgen en een werkzaamheidsgraad van 80% te bereiken.

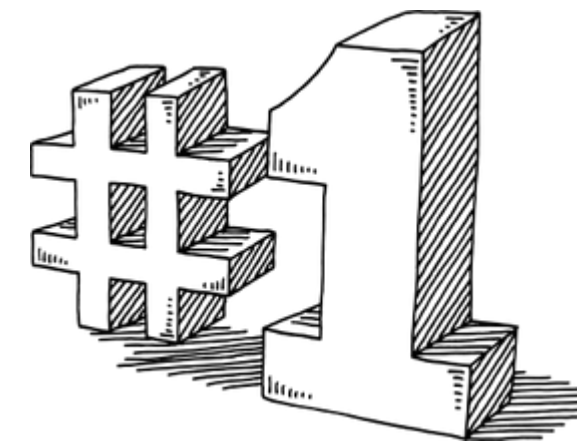
## Ideology

- Flanders is generally very self-centered
- Perception of being an example for others, being a leading region, etc.
- Flanders focuses on its own 'identity'
- Ambition to apply a 'managerial style' to the Flemish government... resulting in a 'ambtelijke beleidscultuur'

Flanders

v.

other regions/countries

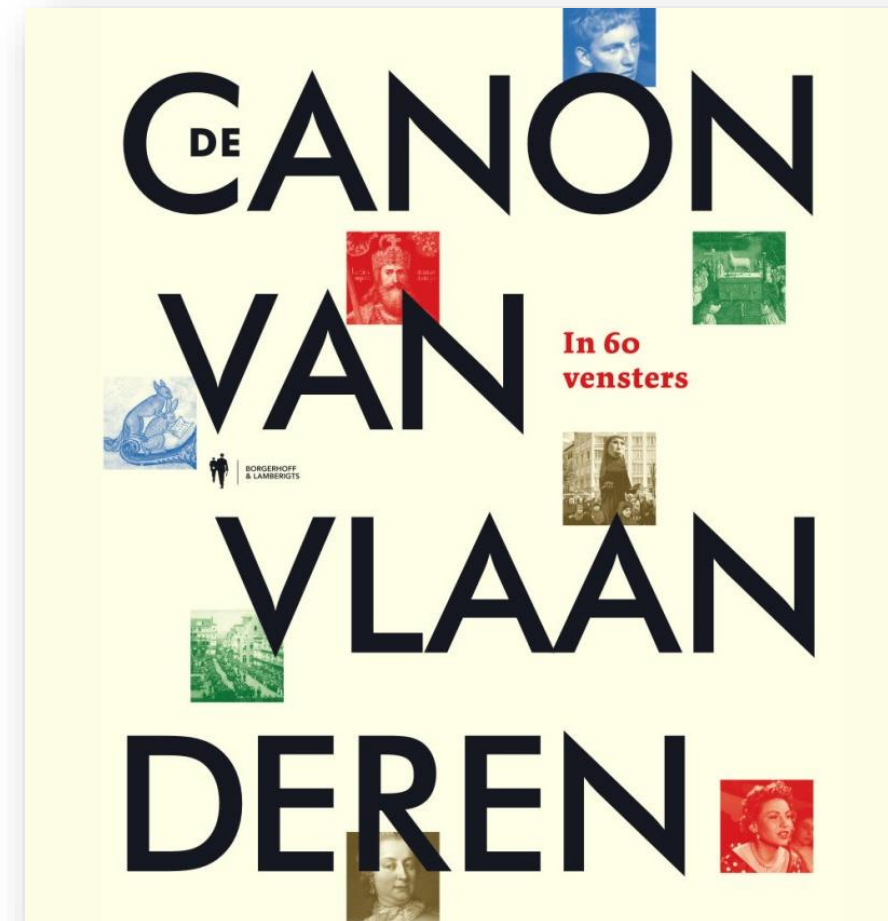


Dogmatism

Pragmatism

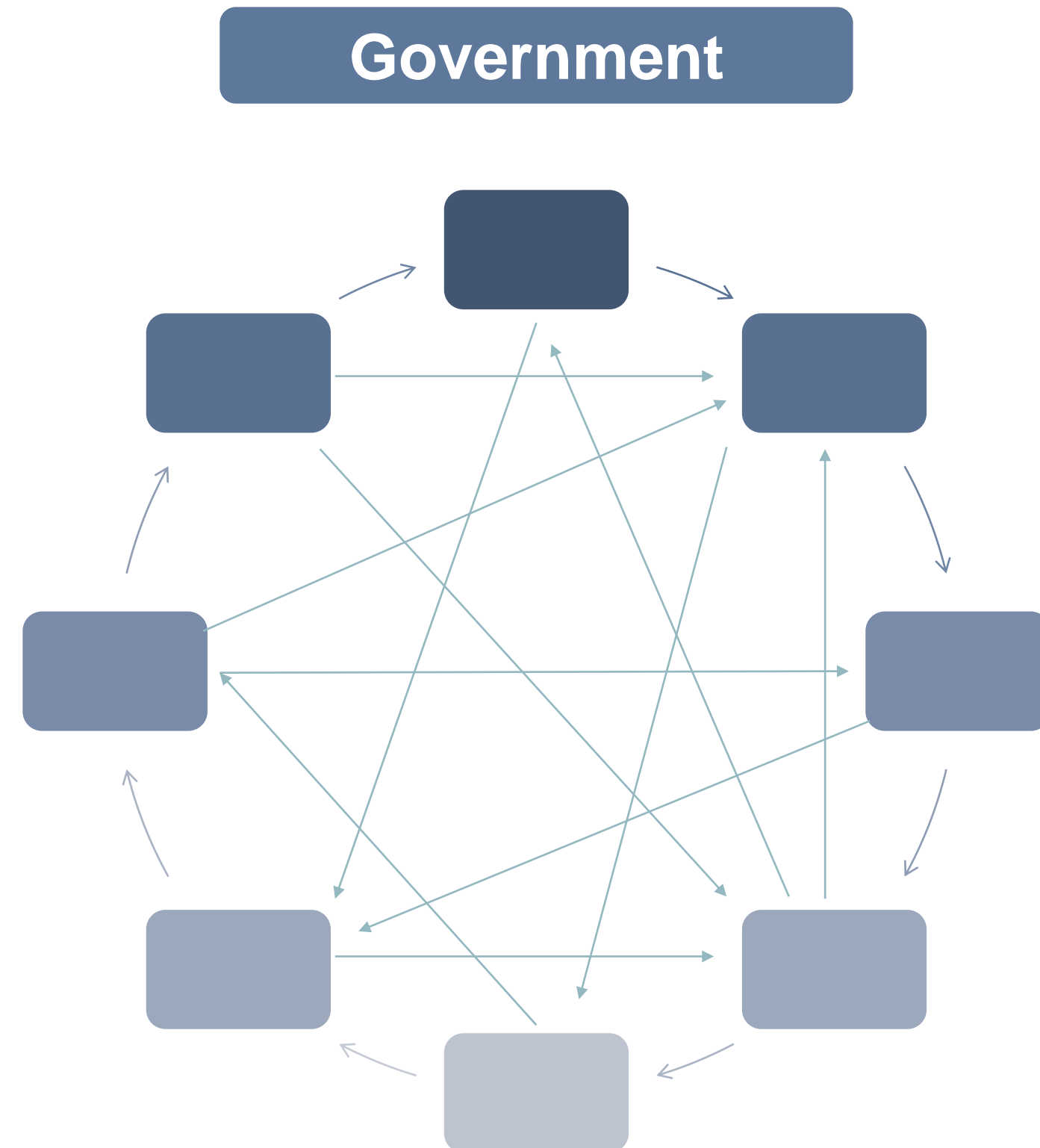


## Flanders focuses on its own 'identity'



## Ideology

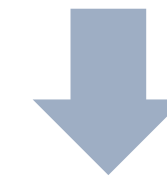
- Focus on a strong private sector
- Privatisation of public enterprises
- Liberalism/Laissez-faire market



## Ideology

- Government/NGOs and corporations have a good understanding with each other
- Many formal *and* informal 'consultation platforms'

**Government/NGOs** v. **Corporations**



Dogmatism

Pragmatism



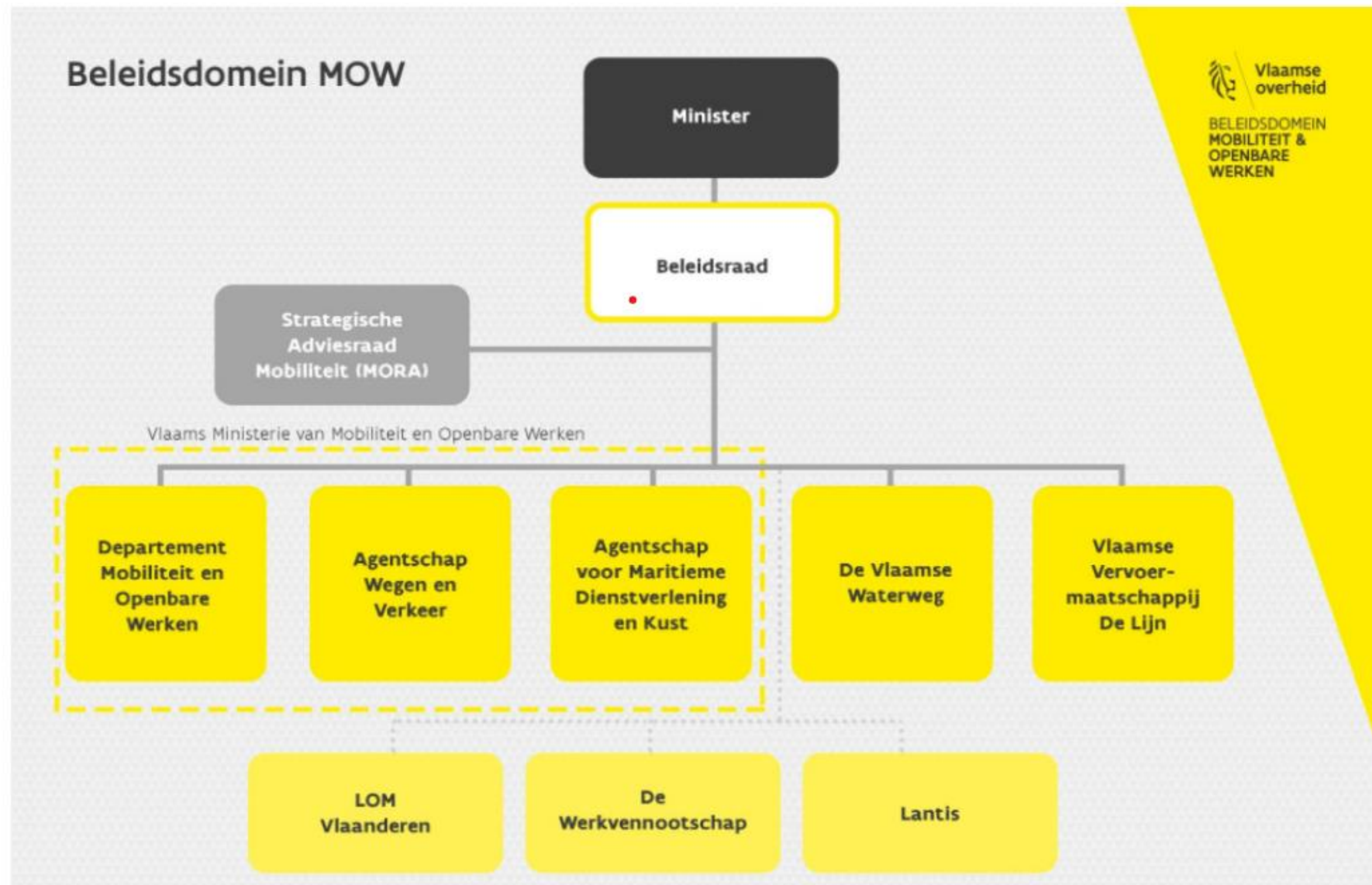
## Wat we zelf doen, doen we beter?



**N-VA zendt haar  
kabinetszonen uit naar  
Vlaamse administratie**



## Wat we zelf doen, doen we beter?





## Wat we zelf doen, doen we beter?



**IN KAART: Vlaanderen bestaat uit 15 nieuwe regio's,**



## The Flemish Government is a collegial body

- The **entire government** must give its approval
  - less focus on the KERN as the main decision-making body.
- Strong involvement of all ministers.
- To have **more impact**?
  - Spread outreach across all ministers.



## The Flemish Government is very transparent

- Comprehensive minutes of every decision made by the council are recorded.
- Following the Council meeting, all documents related to each decision are made available online every Monday at 14:00.

The screenshot shows the website 'Vlaanderen | BESLISSINGEN VLAAMSE REGERING'. The main header features a photograph of a building with a statue and the text 'Vlaamse Regering' and 'Beslissingen van de Vlaamse Regering'. Below the header, there is a search bar and filters. The search results show 29,911 results. The first result is titled 'Ministerraad - Plan Vlaamse Veerkracht van 01 maart 2024'. The description of this result is: 'Plan Vlaamse veerkracht: herverdeling middelen binnen digitale zorg- en ondersteuningsproject Alivia 2024-2026'. It is dated '1 maart 2024 op voorstel van viceminister-president Hilde Crevits'. The text continues: 'De Vlaamse Regering neemt kennis van de actuele stand van zaken van de uitwerking van het digitale zorg- en ondersteuningsproject Alivia en van de herverdeling van al vastgelegde relancemiddelen op dit digitaliseringsproject. Alivia is een belangrijk digitaliseringsproject om doelgerichte, geïntegreerde zorg in Vlaanderen te faciliteren. De voorgestelde herverdeling heeft geen impact op het...'

## A culture of 'advice and consultation'

116 advisory bodies



Vlaamse Adviesraad voor  
Innoveren & Ondernemen





# Policy cells: large regional differences





## Good to know for Flemish PA

- **Difference between dream and desire:** Flanders' self-perception and ambitions do not necessarily equal reality!
- Flanders forms more of a **political and societal 'unity'**:
  - Region and Community were merged (only one government and one parliament)
  - Political structure overlaps with societal reality (one public opinion, one media and cultural landscape, the dream of 'one identity and nation')
- Flanders is different from the other regions, yet still very Belgian...
- **Openness for external input / Public Affairs**, but this also comes with a challenge: generally **many people** around the table, slowing down the process
- Benchmarking: Flanders likes to compare itself to the Nordic (Scandinavian) countries.



# Agenda political week



Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<p><b>Party bureaus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Positioning</li><li>- Debrief</li><li>- Check opinion</li></ul>	<p><b>IKW</b></p>	<p><b>DAB</b></p>	<p><b>KERN</b></p>	<p><b>Council of Ministers</b></p>
<p><b>Commission meetings in Parliament</b></p>		<p><b>Commission meetings</b></p> <p><b>Plenary session in Parliament</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Questions / actuality debate</li><li>- Discussion law propositions</li><li>- Considerations, voting, resolutions, motions</li></ul>	<p><b>Commission meetings in Parliament</b></p>	

# The Walloon Region & the Wallonia-Brussels Federation



**As start: little reminder...**

**Don't put all francophones in a Walloon bag!**



## Trends

**Franstalige nieuwszender LN24 begin september van start**



## **The political reality in FR Belgium, at a glance...**

### **Accounts are in deep red**

An alarming budget situation

### **All to the left**

Francophone political landscape  
redder than ever

### **A fragmented institutional landscape**

Region, communities, Cocof,...

### **A come-back from Les Engagés?**

Could have a pivotal position



Which is, according to you, the most influential city in Wallonia?

## **Capital issues**

- Regional “battles” inside Wallonia
- “Sous-regionalism: a persistent curse
- Wallonia does not include Brussels ... but the French Community does

**Tour de Wallonie: Namur, la capitale politique et siège de tous les pouvoirs**

**Liège, la capitale économique**

**Charleroi, capitale sociale de la Wallonie**

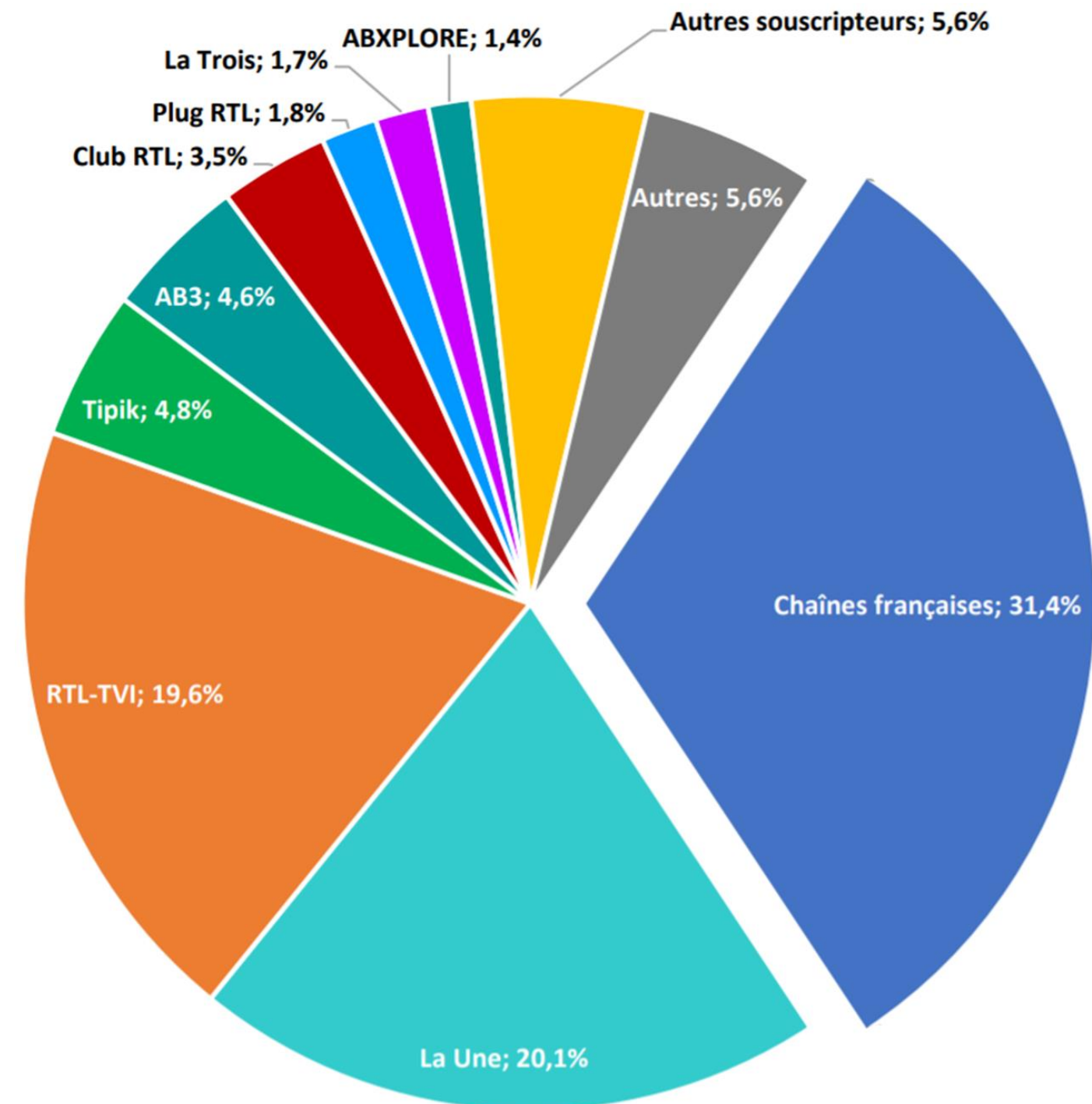
**VERVIERS, CITÉ DE LA LAINE ET  
CAPITALE WALLONNE DE L’EAU**

**Pas de master de médecine à l’UMons et à l’UNamur  
: le "non" de la ministre de l’Enseignement Valérie  
Glatigny divise la majorité**

**Gouvernement fédéral : Sarah Schlitz seule Liégeoise à être  
retenue**

## Identity

- French-speaking part of Belgium is strongly interested in and influenced by French media, politics, culture, etc
- This is not the same in Flanders (vis à vis The Netherlands)
- Common language is more important than regional identity





## E.g.: Reusable tableware in fast-food restaurants



**2023 : PLACE À LA VAISSELLE  
RÉUTILISABLE DANS LES FAST-FOODS !**



**EN JANVIER LES EMBALLAGES JETABLES  
SERONT INTERDITS DANS LES FAST-FOODS (QUI  
NE SONT PAS TOUT À FAIT PRÊTS)**

**Zakia Khattabi propose aux restaurants de 'fast  
food' d'utiliser de la vaisselle réutilisable**



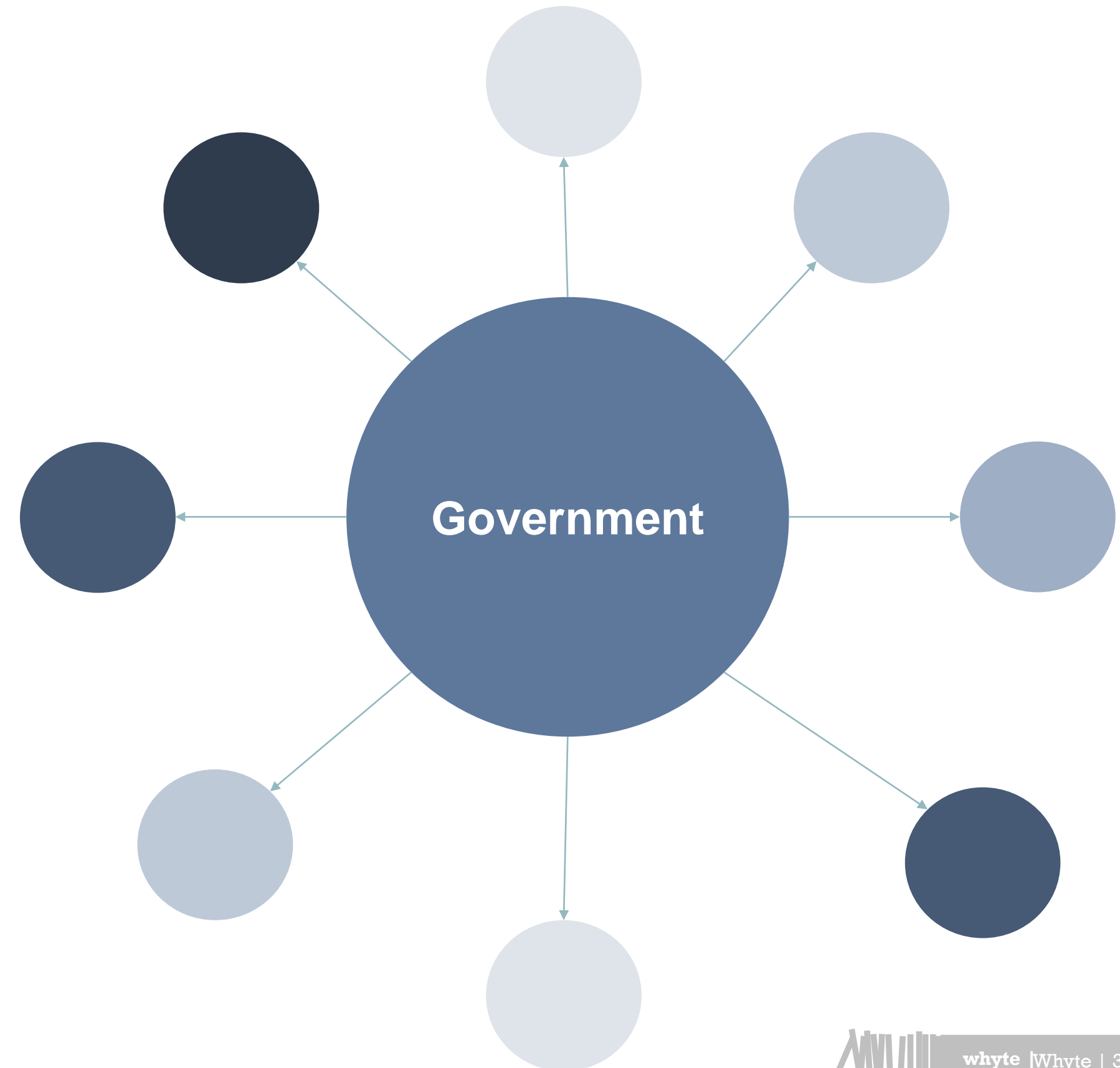
**La vaisselle réutilisable comme solution d'avenir  
pour réduire la quantité de déchets**

**LE SOIR**

**Bientôt de la vaisselle réutilisable dans  
les fast-foods belges**

## Ideology

- Strong public sector
- Public to play a role in economy
- Strong investment in economy: FN, Sonaca, “pôles de compétitivité”
- Ambiguous relationship between private & public/political worlds



# Plan Marshall, Wallonia Clusters & Get up Wallonia!

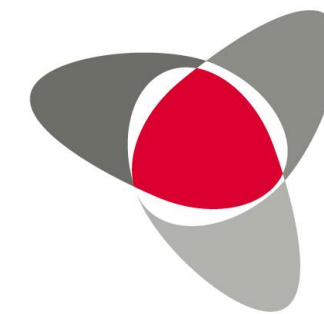


## Le Plan

Un budget ( 2,9 milliards d'euros ), une période (2015-2019), cinq axes prioritaires

Le Plan Marshall 4.0 mobilise un budget de 2,9 milliards d'euros sur la période 2015-2019.

Il se concentre sur 5 axes prioritaires pour le redéploiement économique wallon et la structuration d'une véritable politique industrielle.



## Wallonia Clusters

### The Clustering Policy – Detailed History

The Business clusters and the Competitive clusters are complementary tools for the Walloon economic development. They both fit in the same logic of the Government's policy consisting in the willingness to create the conditions needed to build clusters in the Walloon Region.



A travers *Get up Wallonia !*, le Gouvernement entend :

- Gérer l'urgence sanitaire ;
- Diminuer au maximum les impacts économiques et sociaux de la crise ;
- Relancer l'activité socio-économique afin de produire un cercle vertueux de progrès ;
- Renforcer la résilience de notre société et sa capacité à relever de nouveaux défis.



# Wallon clusters & “poles of competitiveness”



# Case study: leverage Wallonia's public eco-system



# WE - Wallonie Entreprendre, the new Walloon economic tool

*Willingness to rationalize  
Wallonia's public eco-system with  
the fusion of different agencies to  
economic development*





## Wallonia favors direct democracy

- More power to civil society
  - Organization of referenda /public consultation
  - Consequence: constant debate and uncertainty
- Possibility in the Walloon Parliament to introduce petitions (1000 signatories) – Led to auditions in some cases (Liège Airport, Deposit, etc.)
- Walloon citizen panel for the climate (2021)
- Project to install a permanent citizen panel next to Parliament (as in German community)



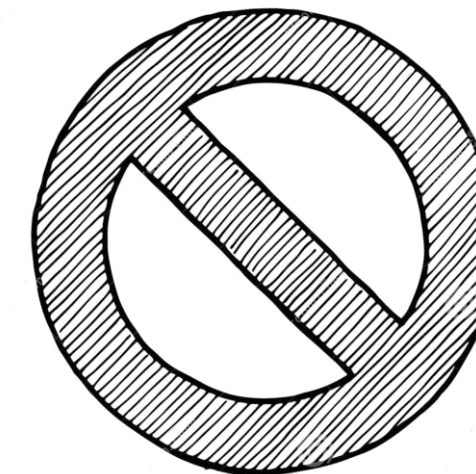
## Ideology

- Government/NGOs tend to see corporations as “the devil”
- Part of civil society very close to political ideologies/parties

**Government/NGOs**

v.

**Corporations**



Dogmatism

Pragmatism

## Governance

- The Walloon policy cells count approximately **639 FTEs**, which is much more compared to the Flemish government (266)
- **SPW**: reactive (vs 'taking initiatives') in most cases, understaffed, external help can be appreciated





## Networking

- **Networking and social talk** is extremely important in Wallonia. When working within the Walloon political atmosphere, there are certain **events** that you must attend to develop your business contacts and to make your name known. The **importance of such events is much heavier compared to Flanders.**



Les Festivals de Wallonie

# Agenda political week



FÉDÉRATION  
WALLONIE-BRUXELLES

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

Thursday

Friday

## Inter-cabinets

### Party bureaus

- Positioning
- Debrief
- Check opinion

### Commission meetings in Parliament

### Chiefs Cab

### Commission meetings Plenary session (every 2 weeks)

- Questions / actuality debate
- Discussion law propositions
- Considerations, voting, resolutions, motions

### Council of Ministers

### Commission meetings in Parliament

### Commission meetings in Parliament

# The Brussels Region





## **A separate region with its own identity!**

**Inwoners van Brussel hebben niet één identiteit, maar leven vooral opgesloten in hun eigen wijken en culturen. Dat blijkt uit een studie van de Koning Boudewijnstichting en het Brussels Gewest bij meer dan 1.000 inwoners van de hoofdstad. Het is de eerste keer dat het 'Brussels gevoel' op die schaal onderzocht wordt.**

**John Kerry: “Je suis Bruxellois. Ik ben Brussels”**

**le socialiste Rudi Vervoort a affirmé que « Bruxelles s'est émancipée du carcan des deux communautés. » C'est sur cette affirmation que semble se fonder l'accord de son nouveau gouvernement : la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale est devenue adulte et, pleine de confiance en elle, elle choisit sa propre voie, au nez et à la barbe de ses belles-mères flamande et francophone.**

**Geen Vlaming, Belg of Marokkaan, maar Brusselaar**

**Volgens onderzoekers van de VUB doet de Brusselse identiteit het zo goed bij jongeren in de hoofdstad omdat die niemand uitsluit. 'Brussel is als een blanco canvas, dat eenieder op zijn manier kan invullen.'**

## **The political reality in FR Belgium, at a glance...** **Also valid for bilingual Brussels**

**Accounts are in deep red**  
An alarming budget situation

**All to the left...and right**  
Evolution of FR/NL political  
landscapes will change usual game

**A fragmented institutional  
landscape**  
Region, communities, Cocof,...

**A come-back from Les Engagés?**  
Could have a pivotal position

## ...but with some specificities

### **Specific coalition constitution**

Separate discussions FR/NL, then “merge” process

### **A divided city**

Wealthy South, poor and poorer North

### **A much more fragmented institutional landscape**

1 region, 2 communities, 19 municipalities, 6 police zones, 3 community commission, public “agencies”

### **An increasing polarised political landscape**

PTB & NVA on the rise



# Agenda political week



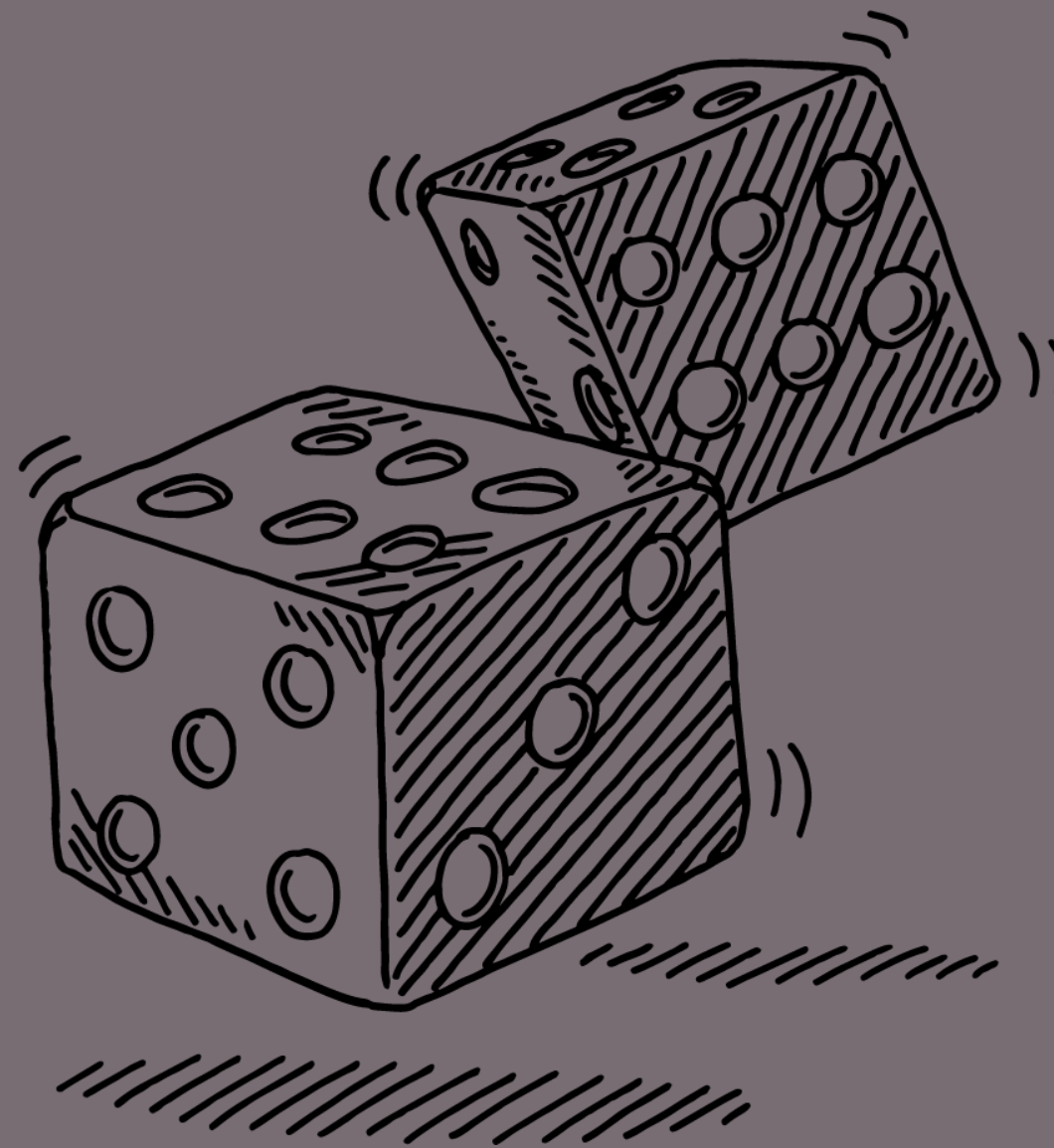
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## Before you dive into Belgian PA...

- You are dealing with very different coalitions (regional / community / federal level)
  - For the same topic, you need to assess the situation for each government/parliament
  - Do not assume that the same party will take the same position in every government/parliament
- Beware of cultural sensitivities
  - Ability to communicate in the language of the respective region (French/Dutch or even German) is a must but is not enough
- Politics and PA are very much 'news driven'... but 'breaking news' in one region may be a 'non-event' in another region!
- In summary: you may need different PA strategies for every level and geographical region

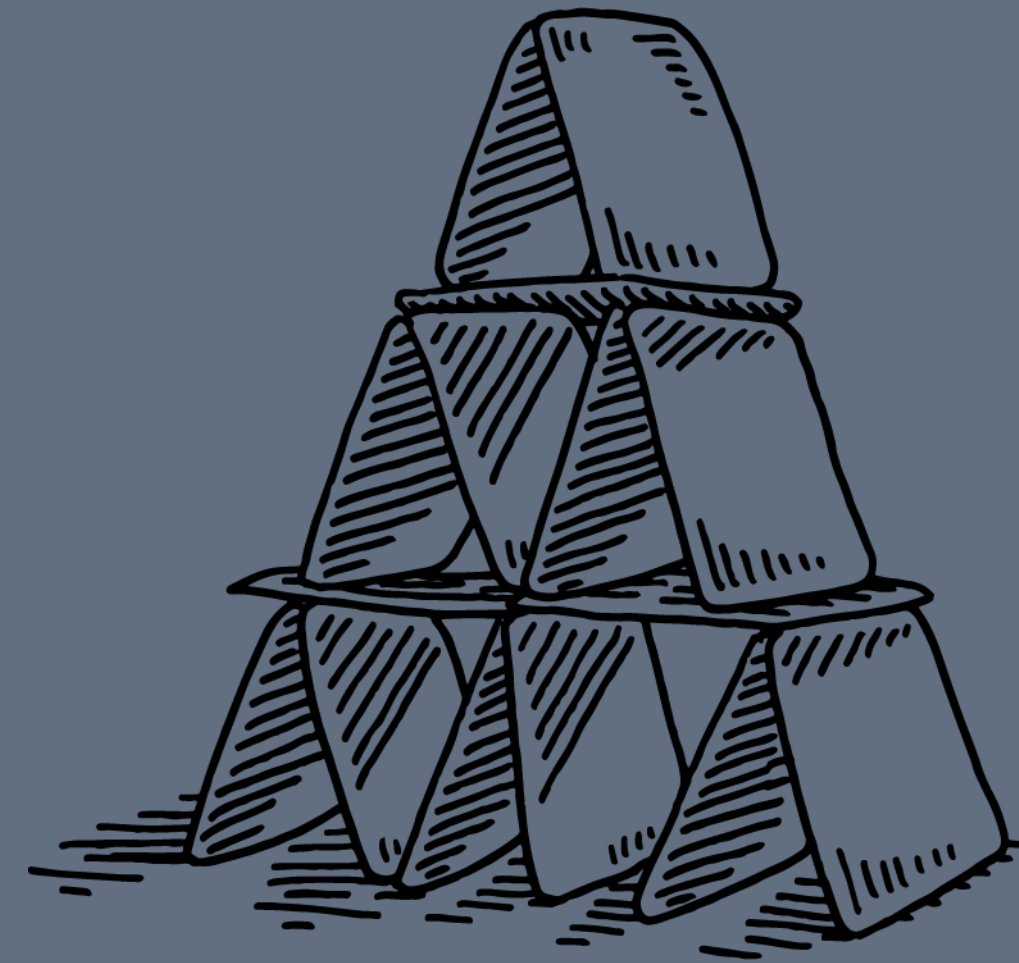


# Break





# Political Parties and their inner working



Which political party do  
you think is the easiest to  
influence?

# Roots in Pillarization: past or present?

The image displays a grid of logos for political parties and their associated pillar organizations, organized into six vertical columns. Each column represents a political party, with its main logo at the top and its constituent pillar organizations below. The parties and their associated organizations are:

- PS (Parti Socialiste):** FGTB (Ensemble, on est plus forts), Solidarité mutualité.
- VOORUIT:** ABVV (Samen sterk), Socialistische Mutualiteiten.
- cd&v:** ACV, BOERENBOND, beweging.net, CHRISTELIJKE MUTUALITEIT.
- open vld:** ACLVB CGSLB, M.
- ecolo:** Les Engagés (POUR UNE SOCIÉTÉ RÉGÉNÉRÉE), CSC, MUTUALITE CHRETIENNE, caritas Francophone.
- MR:** ACLVB CGSLB, M, UCM.



# Roots in Pillarization: past or present?



**Vogels: "Verzuiling verhindert beter welzijnsbeleid"**

do 27/03/2014 - 07:36 Dieter Bauwens

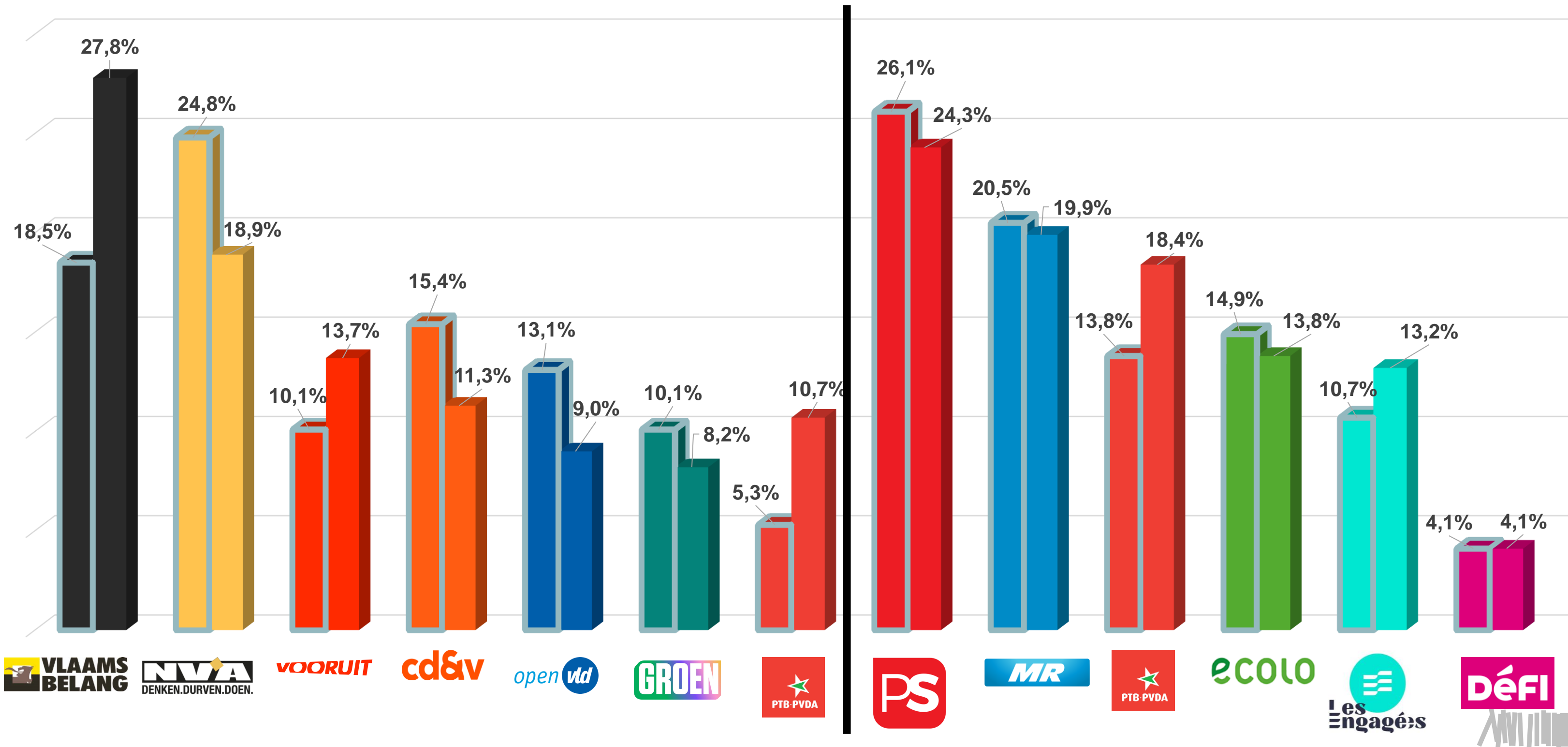
De verzuiling verhindert een beter en efficiënter welzijnsbeleid. Dat zegt Mieke Vogels (Groen) in haar boek, "De rekening van de verzuiling", waarin ze zelf ook een aantal voorstellen doet om tot een beter welzijnsbeleid te komen en de wachtlijsten aan te pakken. In mei stapt het Vlaams Parlementslid na dertig jaar uit de actieve politiek.



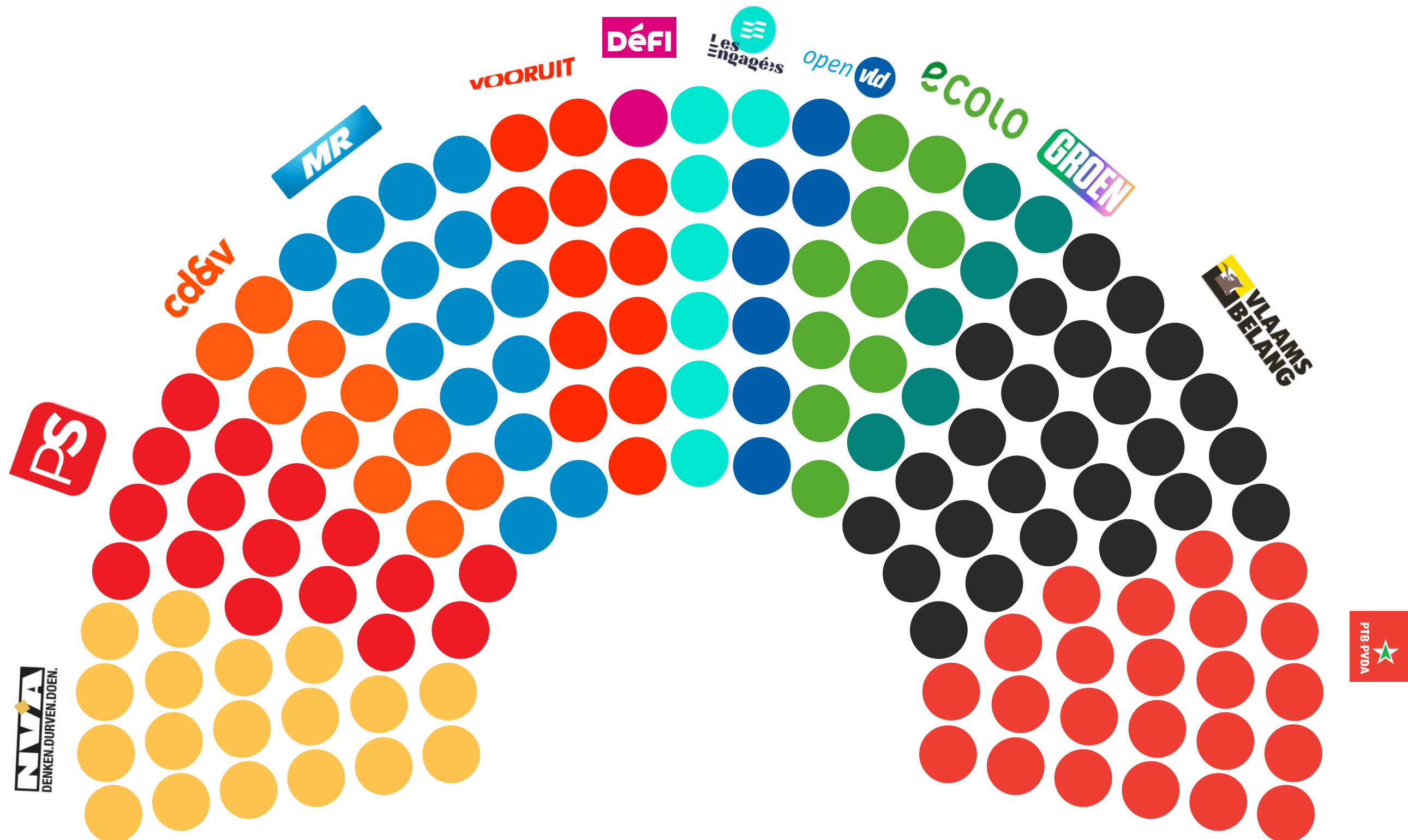
**Volkspartij zonder zuil**

De N-VA is de nieuwe volkspartij van Vlaanderen. Maar is Bart De Wever geen reus op lemen voeten? In België regeert het middenveld, dat weet iedereen. Hoe kan een partij zich dan zonder de steun van een eigen, breed vertakte zuil bewegen op het schaakbord van de macht? 'De sympathy vote heeft de partij al, maar nu moet ze dat ook nog weten om te zetten in de juiste contacten.'

# What to expect in 2024?



# Seat distribution based on poll-results.

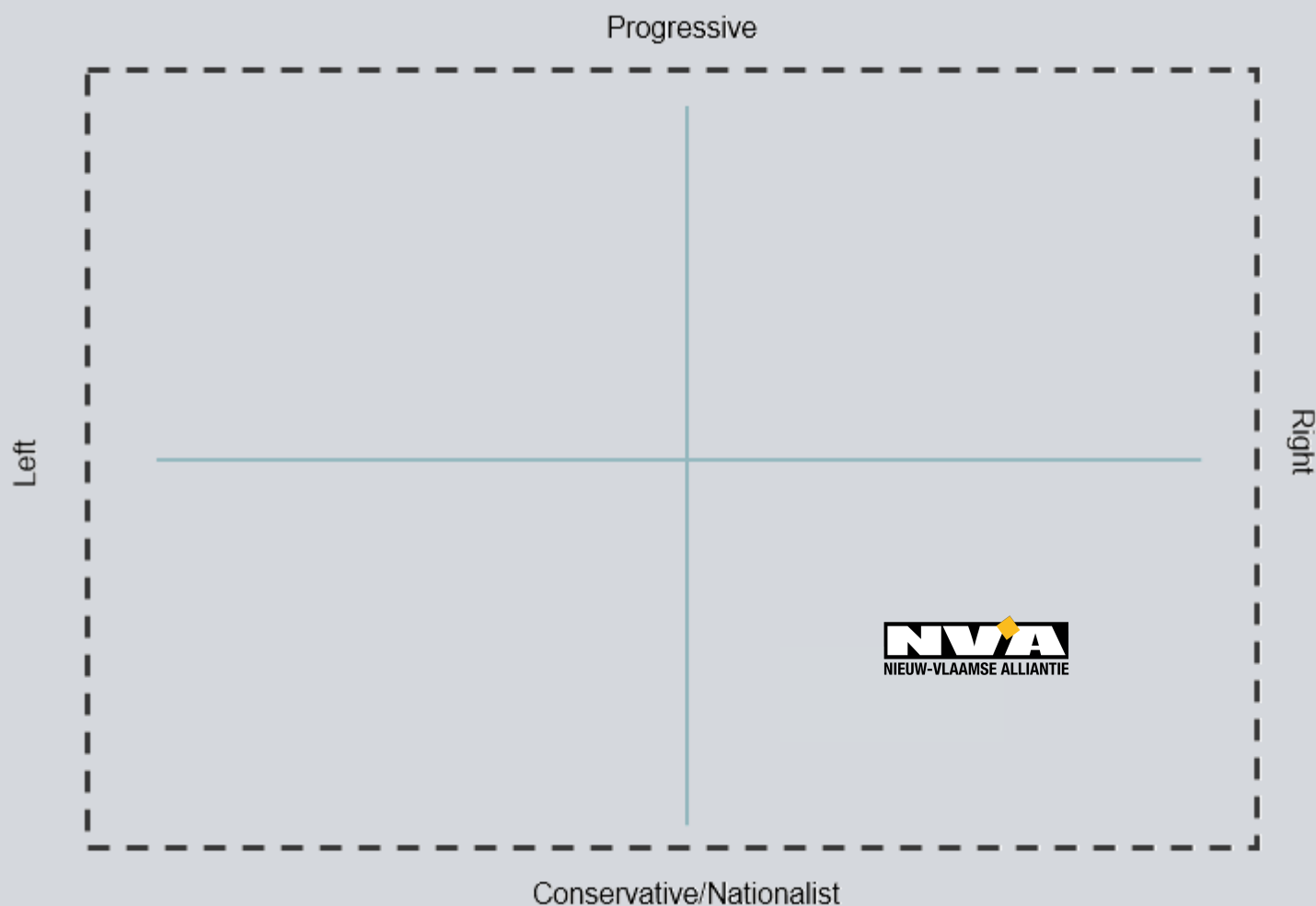


Party	2024	2019	
N-VA	18	24	-6
PS	16	19	-3
cd&v	10	12	-2
MR	15	14	+1
Vooruit	12	9	+3
Les Engagés	7	5	+2
Open Vld	7	12	-5
Ecolo	10	14	-4
Groen	6	7	-1
PTB-PVDA	23	12	+11
Vlaams Belang	25	18	+7
DéFi	1	2	-1

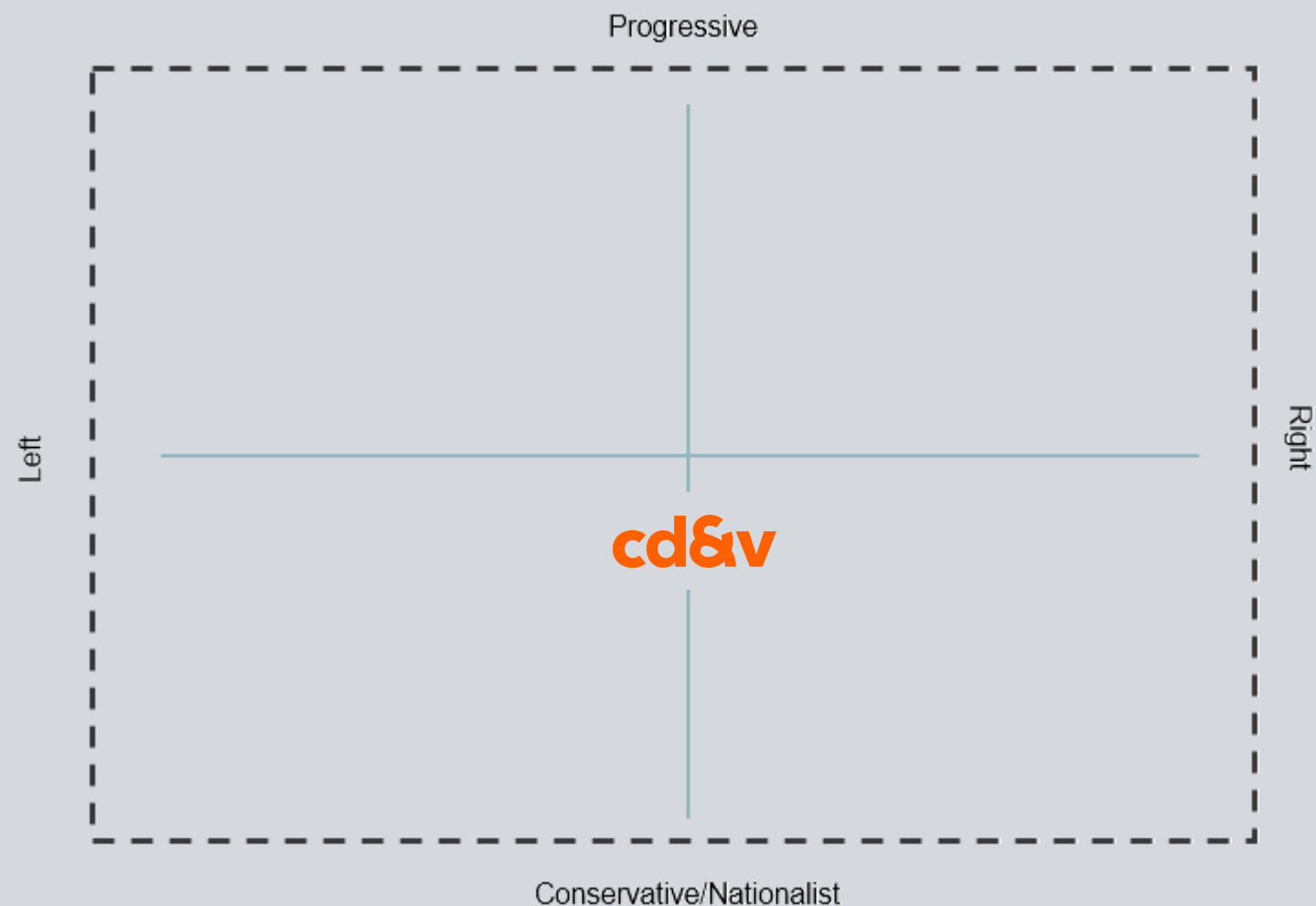


## Specificities of N-VA

- Conservative and nationalist, but with progressive stances in ethical discussions (LGBTQ)
- Very **centralized**, **strict** and **disciplined** party management
  - E.g. during outreach, the party itself will suggest additional individuals to join a meeting based on their expertise.
- Each member of parliament **follows their own topics** and is the "**expert**" on it.
  - For public affairs, it is crucial to know who is tracking the topics that are important to you.
- Very well organised study dept. The organisation of the party and its study department are very transparently available on the website.
- Openly available for engagement with businesses and organisations.



cd&v



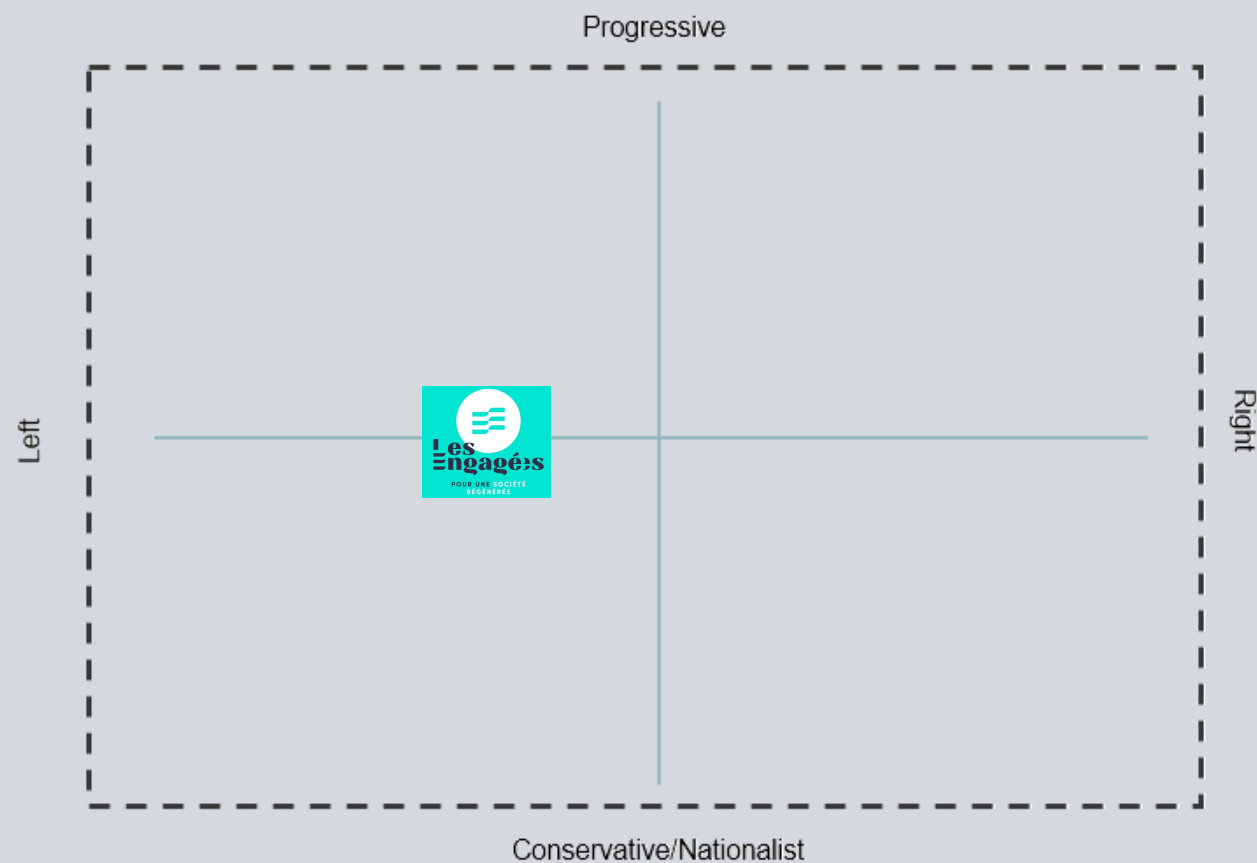
## Specificities of CD&V

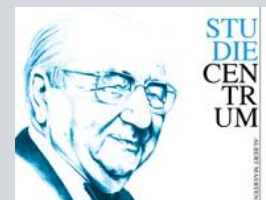
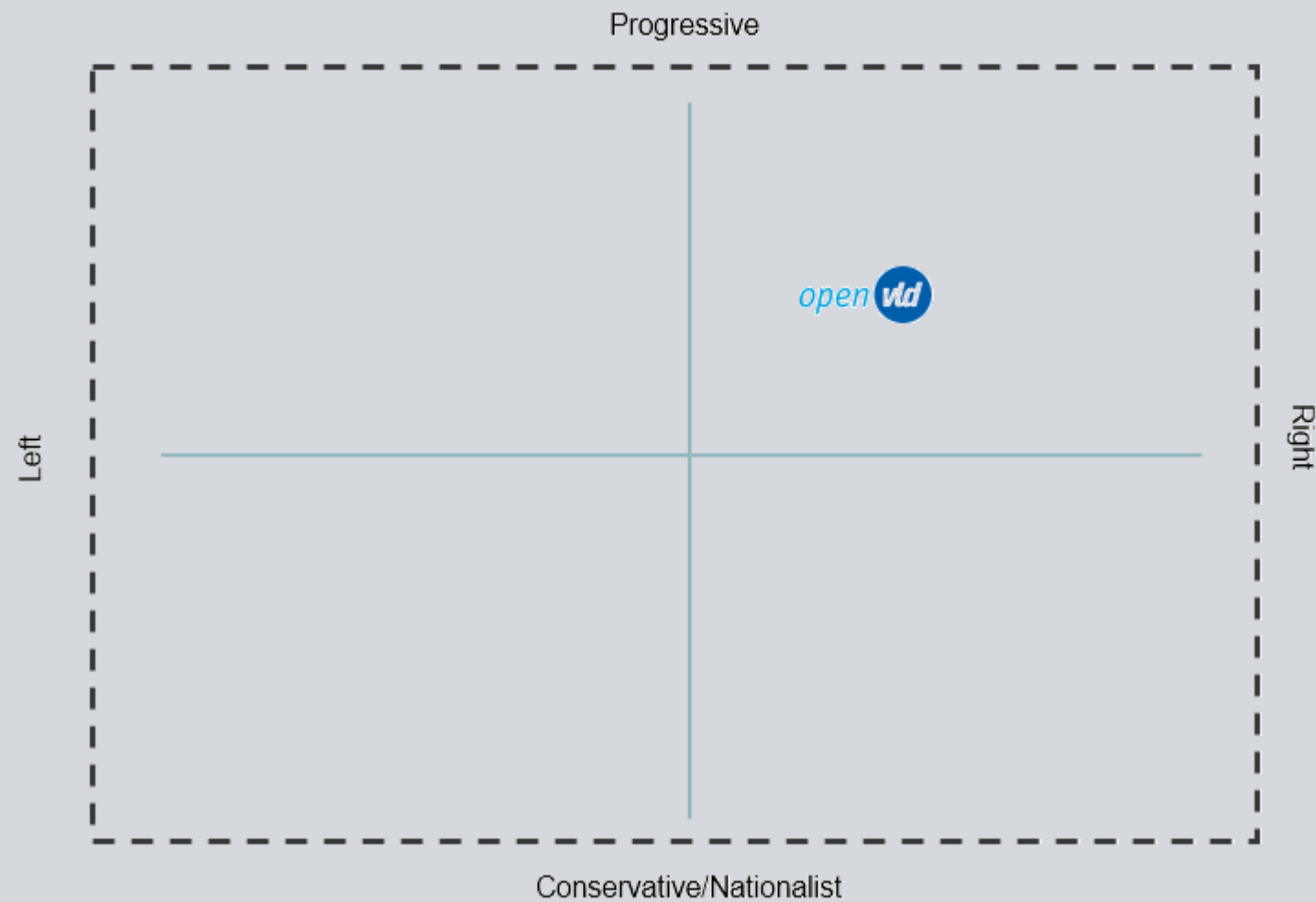
- Centrist Christian democrat party with 3 historic constituencies:
  - Employees, unions (left),
  - Self employed (right)
  - Agricultural organizations (right)
- Strong local presence (mayors) but absent in urban areas
- Boasted a robust study department but has been neglected in recent years in line with declining electoral strength.
- The organisation of the party and its study department are very transparently available on the website.
- Open for contact with the business sector, although the party has recently published a "transparency register" on its website.



## Specificities of Les Engagé.e.s

- Centrist humanist (ex-christian) democrat party
- Strong local presence (65/287 mayors) but weak in main urban areas (Charleroi, Liège, Brussels, Mons).
- Differences from CdH in terms of energy, taxation and employment
- Strong come-back (in polls). Could play a pivotal role at regional & federal levels
- PA approach: weaker study centre than before, identify party leader on each topic (ex: Energy: Brussels MP Christophe De Beukelaer)



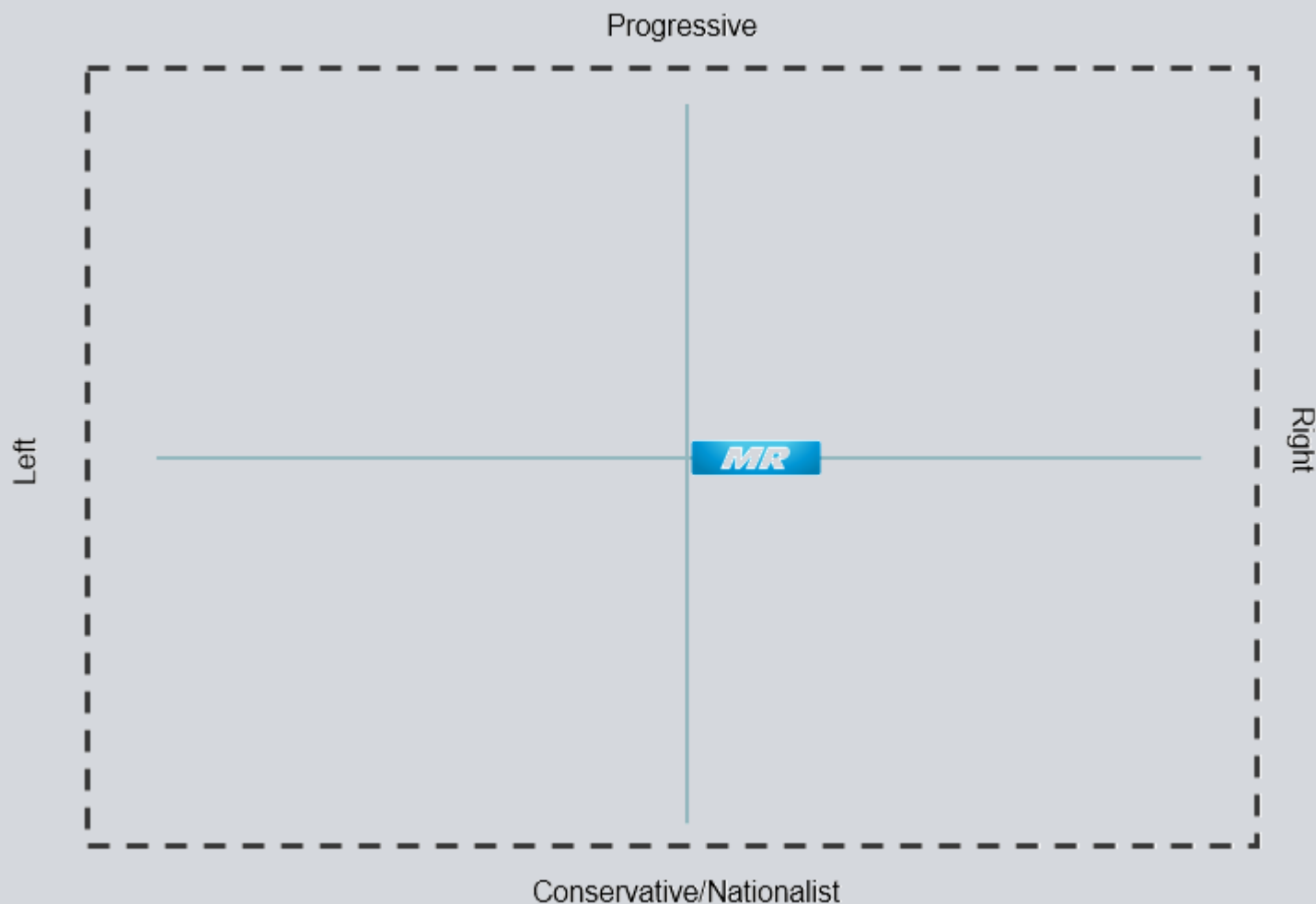


## Specificities of Open Vld

- Progressive regarding societal issues; right oriented regarding economic topics
- Suffered from N-VA's rise (neo-liberal competition)
- No strict party discipline: everybody his opinion
  - Prime Minister Alexander De Croo is the de facto leader of the party.
- No dedicated study department
  - Diverse group of staff members from the Flemish and Federal Parliament
  - No transparency regarding the composition on the website
- Openly available for engagement with businesses and organisations.



**MIR**



## Specificities of MR

- Leader in defence of SME's
- Wide range of sensibilities from 'social liberalism' to classic right
- Break from the past with party leader Georges-Louis Bouchez (much more right-wing than before)
- Recurrent fights between “barons” & “clans”
- PA approach: Bouchez & his inner circle, cabinets

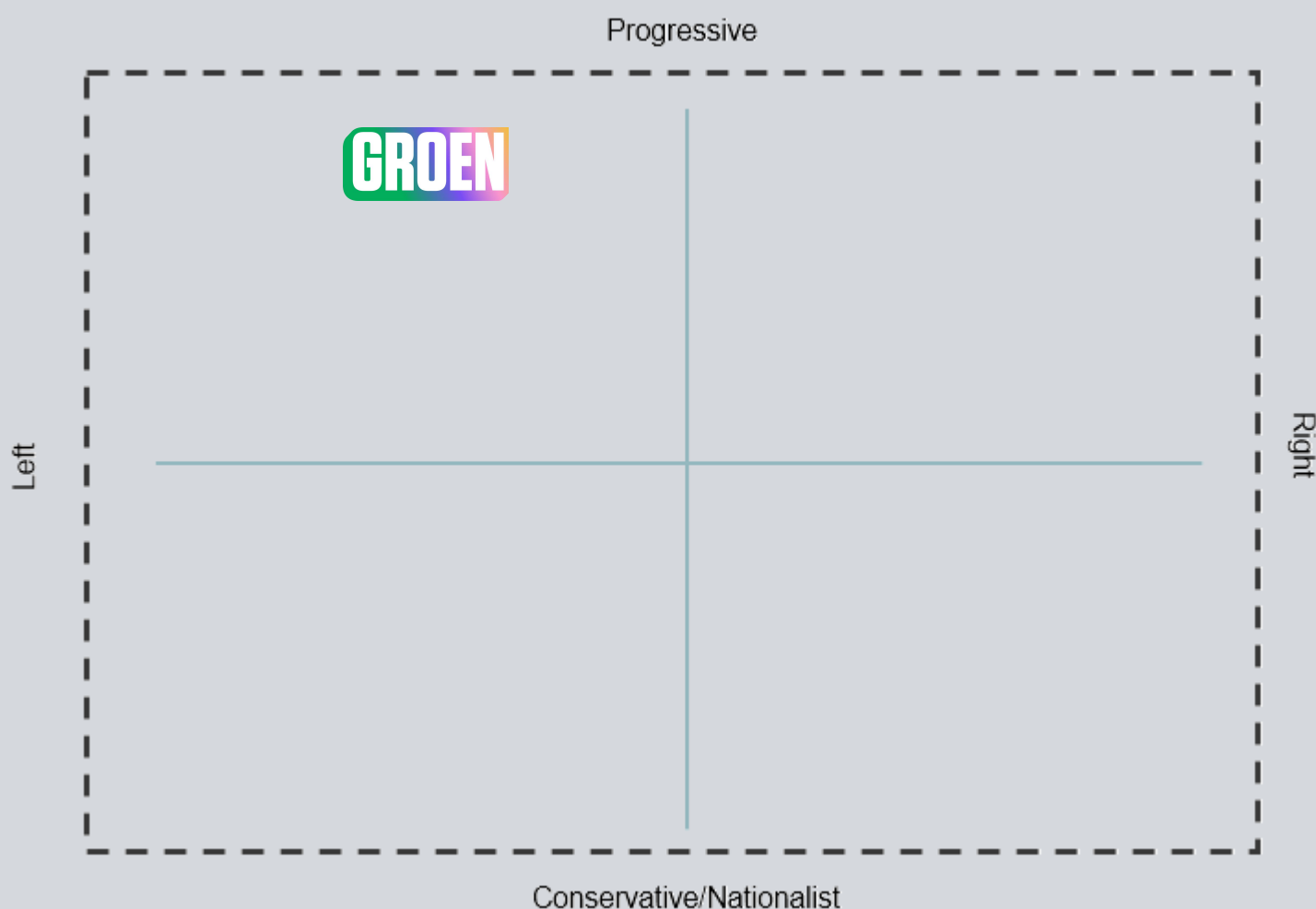


Centre Jean Gol



## Specificities of Groen

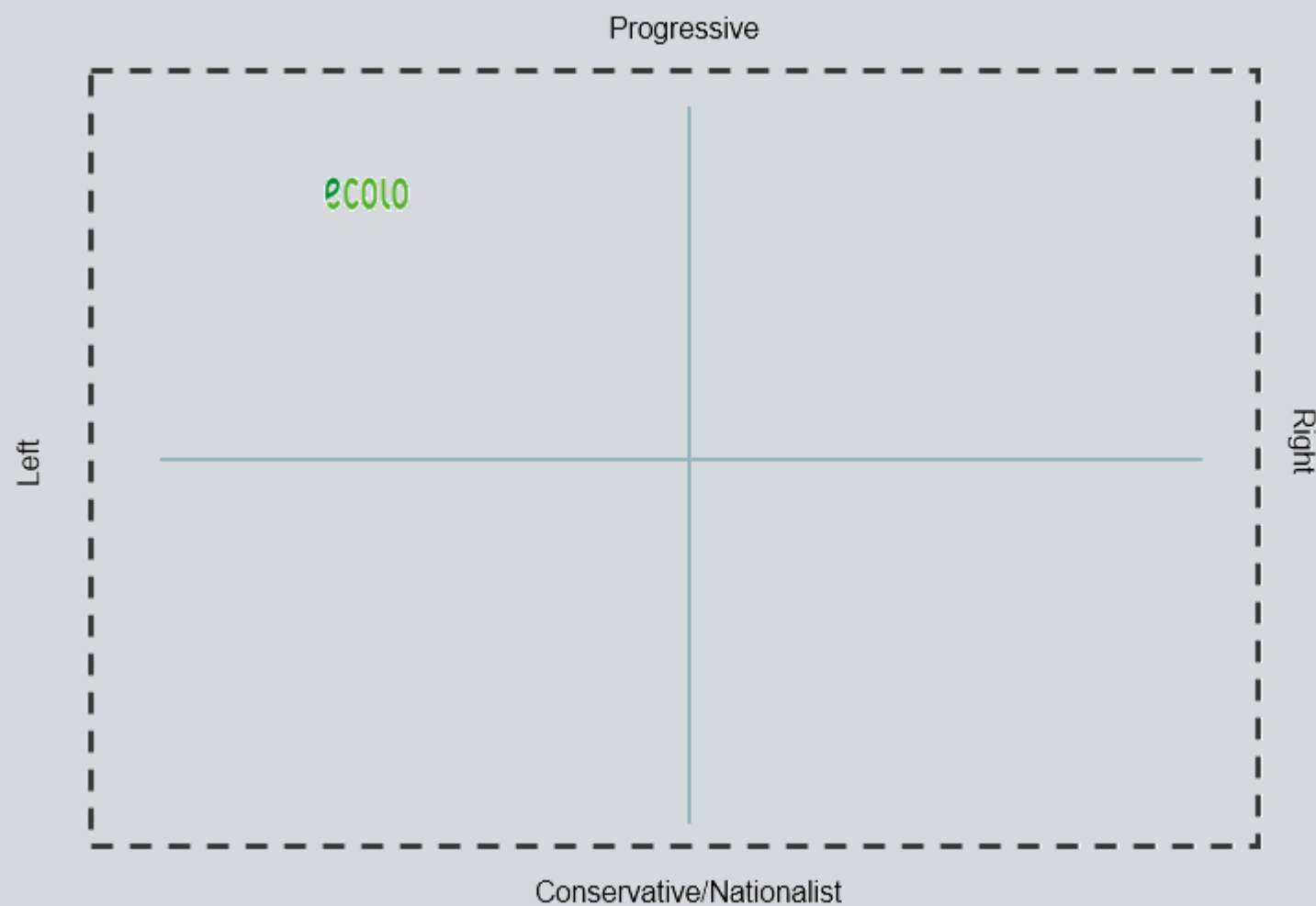
- Party faces a reputation of 'eternal promise'
  - Struggling with high expectations, low results
- Spread between federal government and Flemish opposition
- **Grassroots democracy:** party leadership sometimes struggles with decisions of member bodies.
  - Tension between "Groen" as a political party and "green" activists
- **Underdeveloped** study department: few structures for internal knowledge sharing.
  - No transparency regarding the composition on the website
  - Certain distance and suspicion towards outreach by companies





Centre Jacky Morael

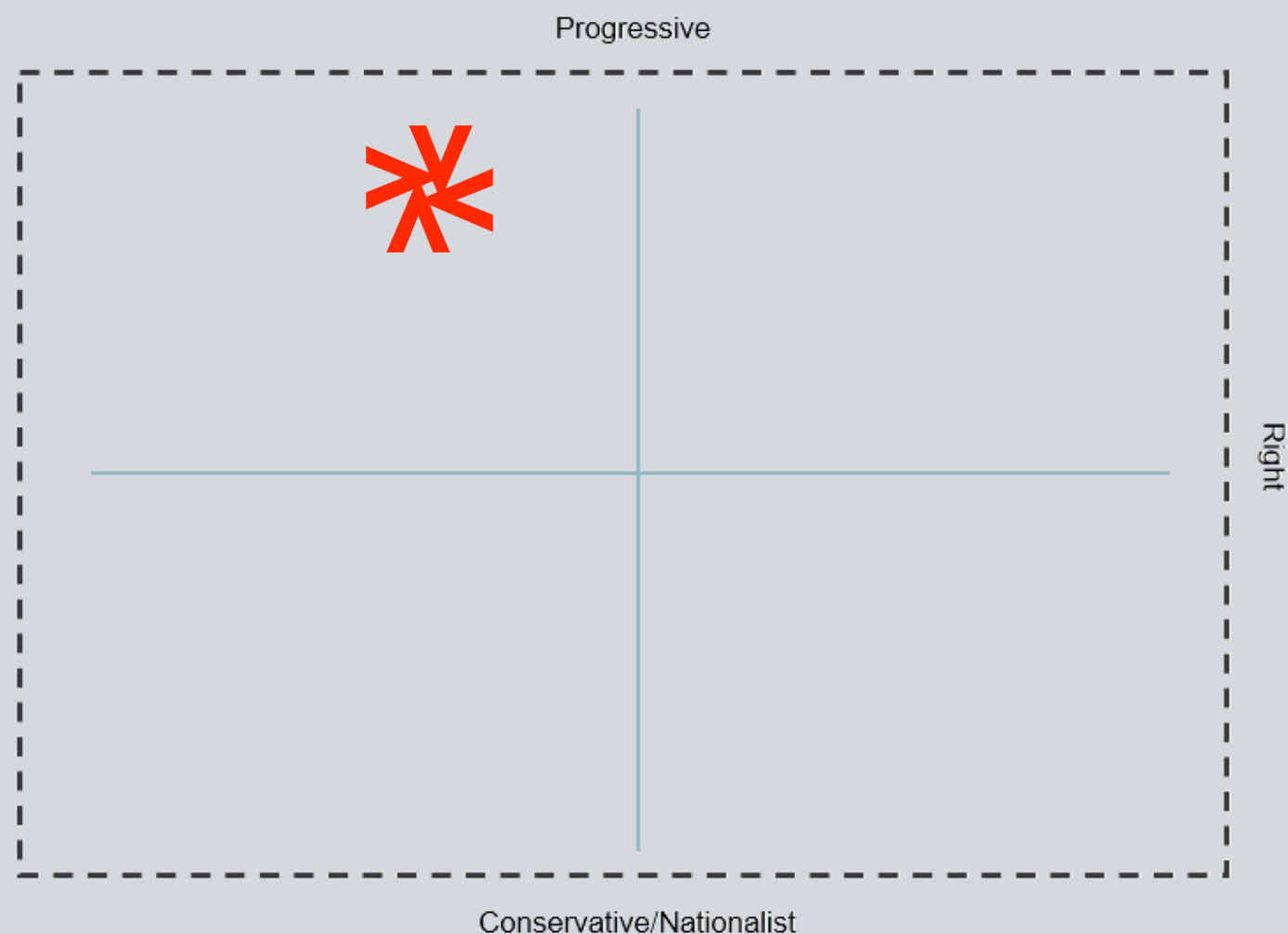
**ecolo**



## Specificities of Ecolo

- Close to students' and teachers' organisations
- Changing electoral performances from 10 to 20% depending on its governmental participation
- Frequent internal tension between 'realos' and 'fundis', and between left/laical and centrist (christians)
- Participative (e.g. ministers elected by members representatives after internal debate)
- PA approach: good question 😊: presidency, cabinets, local sections, study centre in making, Etopia

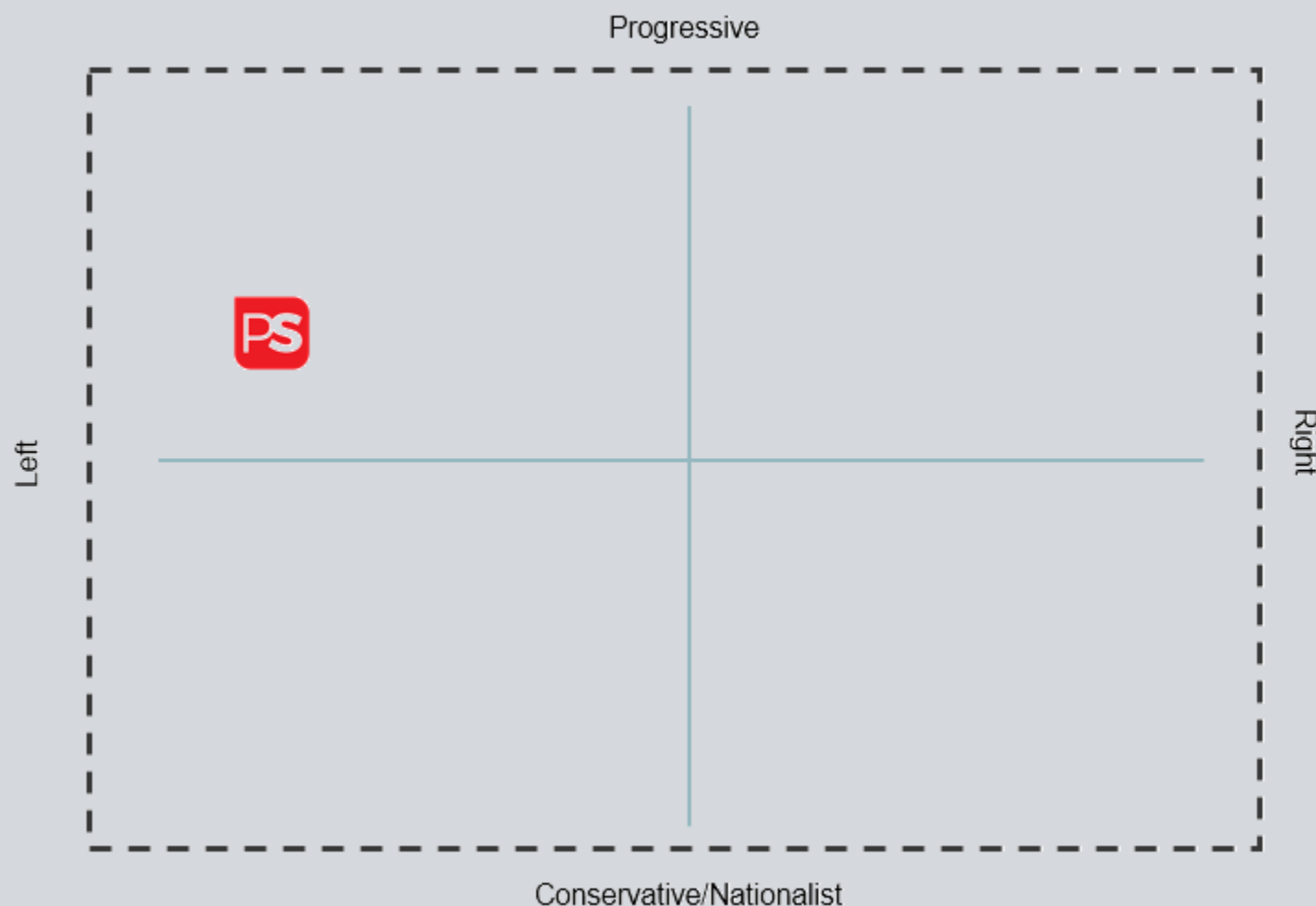
# VOORUIT



## Specificities of Vooruit

- Historically a blue collars' party, managed to convert into modern social democrats in the 90s (Blair, 'Teletubbies', ...), but today gradually reinventing itself
  - Competition on two fronts: Groen and PTB-PVDA
- Lost most of its local power bases
- Party is/was on gains in polls
- Strong links with health funds, less with unions
- Study department less well-developed compared to its Walloon counterpart, but open for meetings.
  - No transparency regarding the composition on the website





## Specificities of PS

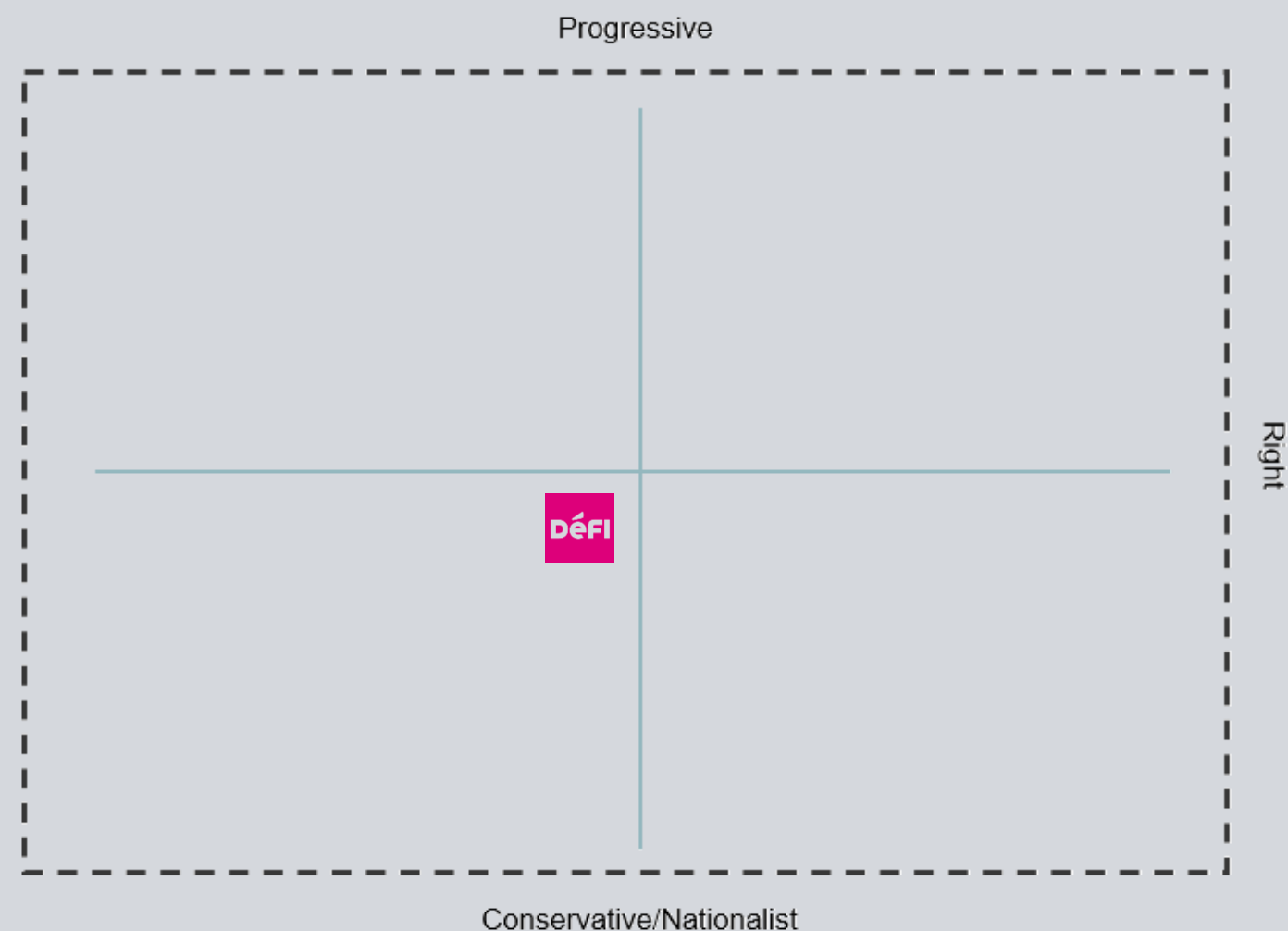
- Social democrat but more on the left side and ideological than before (pressure of PTB & Ecolo)
- Regionalist: federations weight ('PS liégeois'), Brussels & Walloon PS divided
- “A machine”: Strong and well-staffed study department (IEV) in charge of coordinating positions & actions, strong party discipline
- Stable at the top: long presidency and smooth transition from Elio Di Rupo to Paul Magnette
- PA approach: study centre, cabinets, “influencers”



DéFI

## Specificities of DéFi

- Brussels regionalist
- Progressist (laical)
- New president: new stances break with the past, less focus on French-speaking interests in & around Brussels
- Fight between Maingain and De Smet could break the party in two
- Walloon section since 2012, without real success
- PA approach: party leaders, individuals





## Specificities of Vlaams Belang

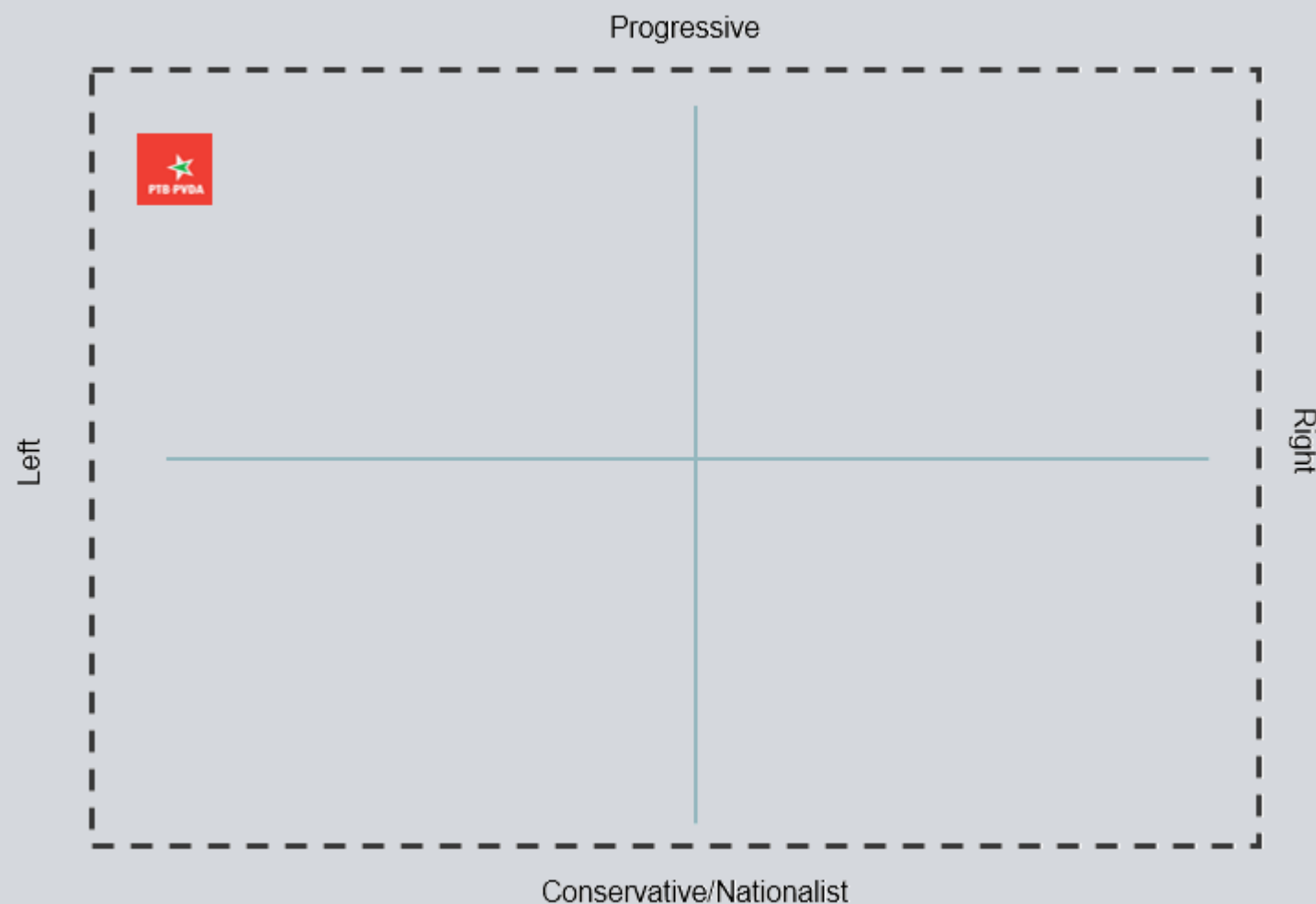
- Extreme right wing with a left oriented social economical program, appealing to lower social classes
- Abandoned from power through the 'cordon sanitaire': unwritten deal not to work with VB
- Highs and lows since the early 1980s, largest party in 2024?
- Highly top-down organised: practically all power is concentrated at the party president.
- No dedicated study department: party primarily invests in communication staff.
- very difficult to assess how the party responds to advocacy by companies or organizations.





## Specificities PTB-PVDA

- Only 'unitarian' party
- Communist...
- Urban anchorage (especially former industrial areas)
- 'In the field':
  - Medical houses (Geneeskunde voor Het Volk)
  - Heavily infiltrated in the socialist trade union (FGTB), thereby exerting significant pressure on policy positions.
  - Engages in legal battles to political decisions via the Progress Lawyers Network.
- The study department is very weakly developed
  - Populist policy proposals with little to no substantiation.





Health care: unique  
approach for each  
party

## Approaching political parties on health care

Political Party	Approach
N-VA	Algemeen secretaris
cd&v	Kabinet/CM
Les Engagés	Deputé
Open Vld	Individuals
MR	Kabinet
PS	IEV & Solidaris
Vooruit	Kabinet
DéFi	Deputé
Groen	Partij, studiedienst
Ecolo	
Vlaams Belang	
PVDA-PTB	Geneeskunde voor het Volk

Extra!

A survey of 33 Belgian employer and sector associations.

How do they evaluate and what do they expect from the governments?

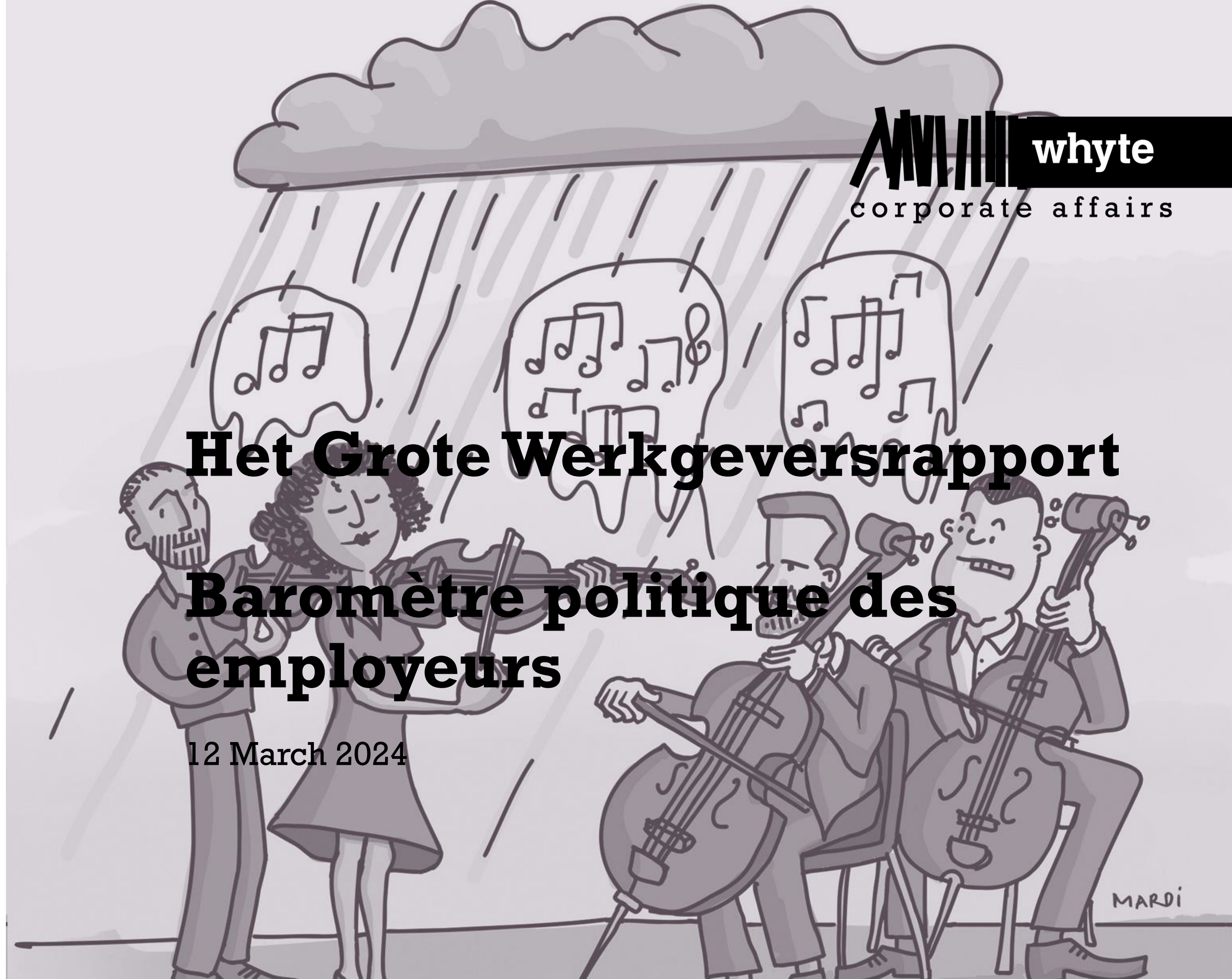
How are they preparing for the 2024 elections?



# Het Grote Werkgeversrapport

## Baromètre politique des employeurs

12 March 2024



## How did we proceed?

**33 participating associations**

Interviews with **senior representatives:**  
CEOs, PA managers,  
presidents

**Timeframe:** November 2023 – February 2024

2 parts: preparing the elections and political evaluation

Results were processed **anonymously**

Following up on a similar survey in 2018



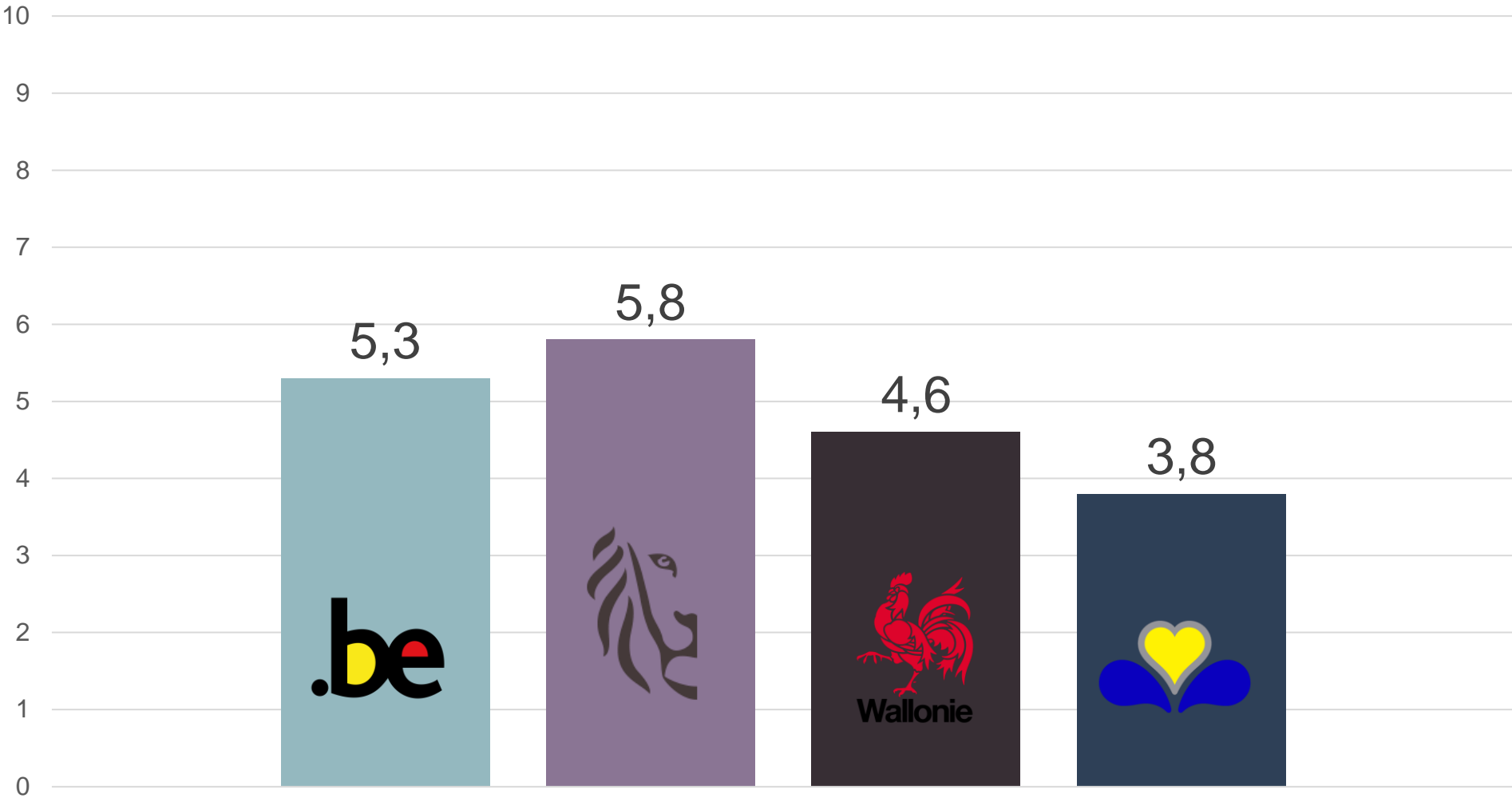
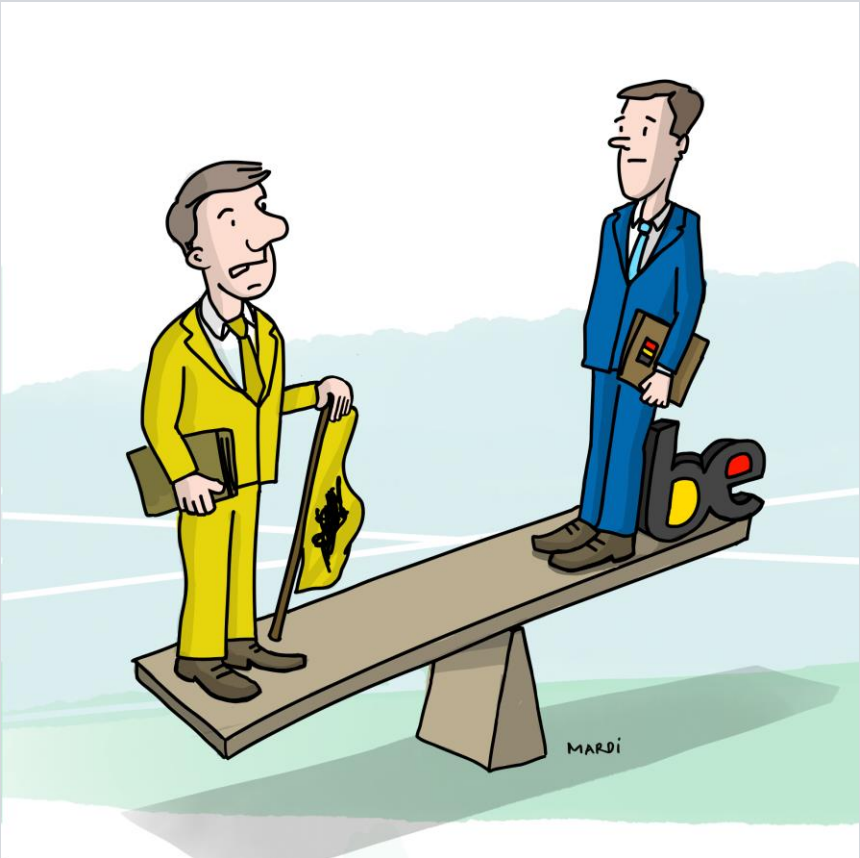
# 33 participating associations!





# A highly critical quoting

How satisfied are you with our governments' policies (score 0 – 10)?



■ De Croo I ■ Jambon I ■ Di Rupo III ■ Vervoort III



De Croo I : 29/33  
Jambon I : 24/33  
Di Rupo III : 23/33  
Vervoort III : 19/33

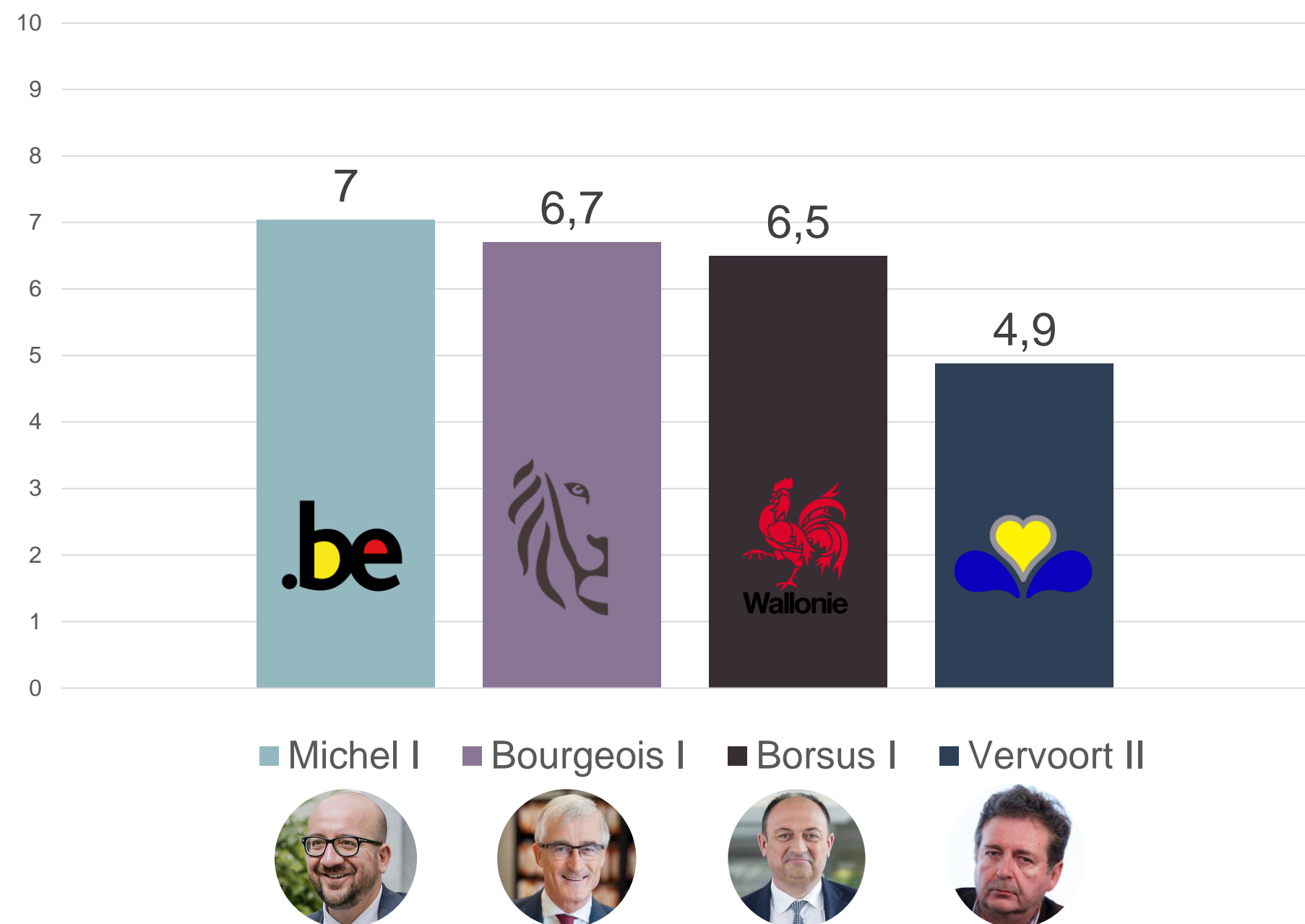


# Cum laude for Michel I (2018)

How satisfied are you with our governments' policies?



“The Michel government got things done.”





“Corona was well managed,  
but overall federal  
government took little  
action to support  
companies, focus was on  
the citizen”

“Flanders can do better.  
First time we see a large  
sentiment that ‘what we do  
ourselves, we do better’ is  
not necessarily true”

“Simplification of economic policies must reduce the burden on companies; in Wallonia the opposite happened: economic policies became more complex during this legislation”

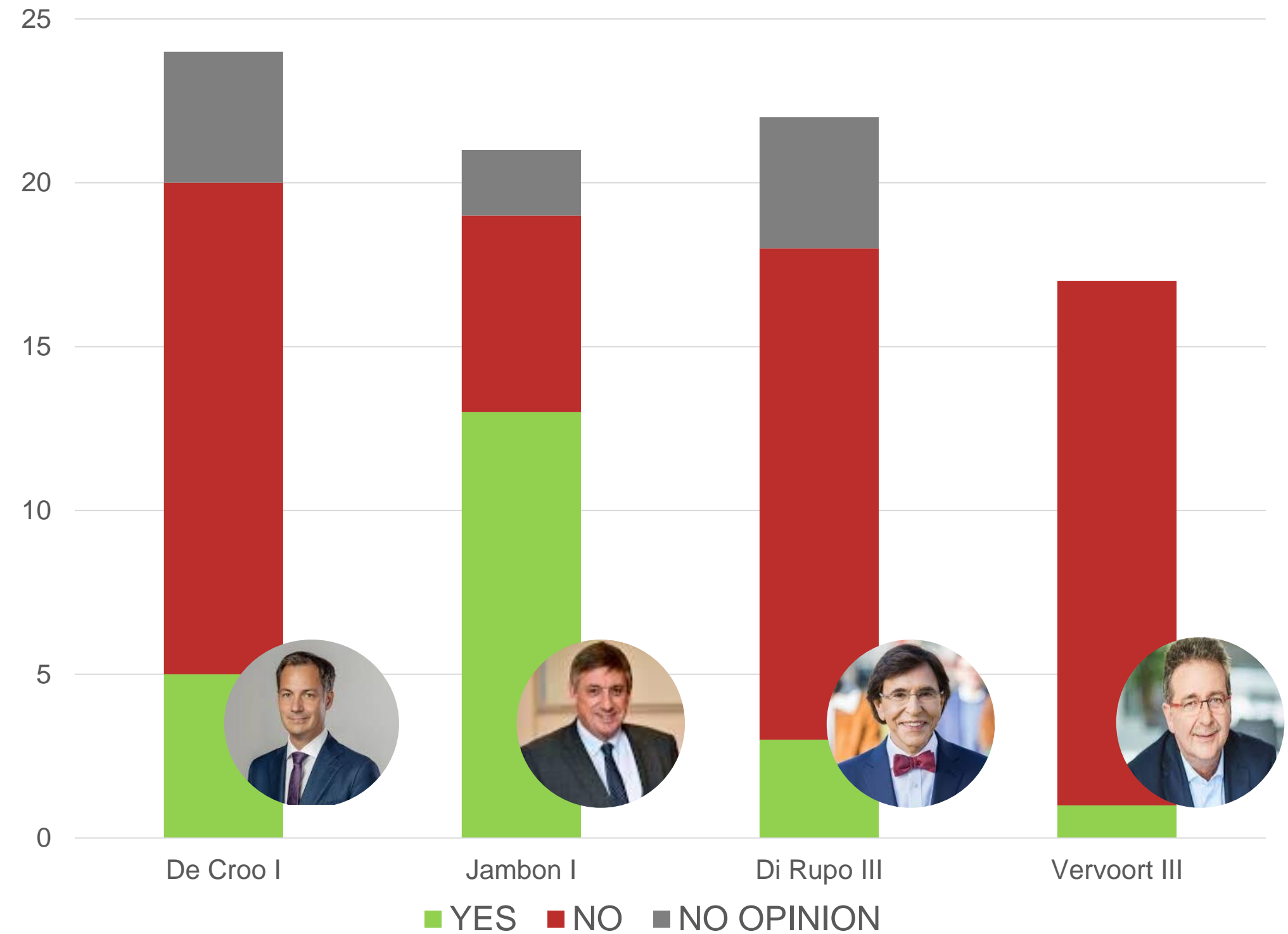
“Brussels seems to be totally stuck in 'navelstaarderij' - no common vision, very little action”





# A cry for change

Would you like a continuation of the current majorities?



\*De Croo I: 24/33  
 \*Jambon I: 21/33  
 \*Di Rupo III: 22/33  
 \*Vervoort III: 17/33



## So many sectors, so many preferred measures



Which measure did you value the most?

# Government 'forgot' to govern after the crisis

Recovery plan without consultation with too many measures

increase of taxes on financial sector

Legal uncertainty

maintaining the automatic indexation

**Budget deficit**

Federal learning account

making temporary work impossible

## Lack of fundamental reforms

Weakening of the industrial competitiveness position

double taxation

Decreasing quality of education levels

Saving measure in pharma sector

Mobility

**Too many complex rules**

Lack of common position in EU files

reform of the legal pensions

No action on housing crisis

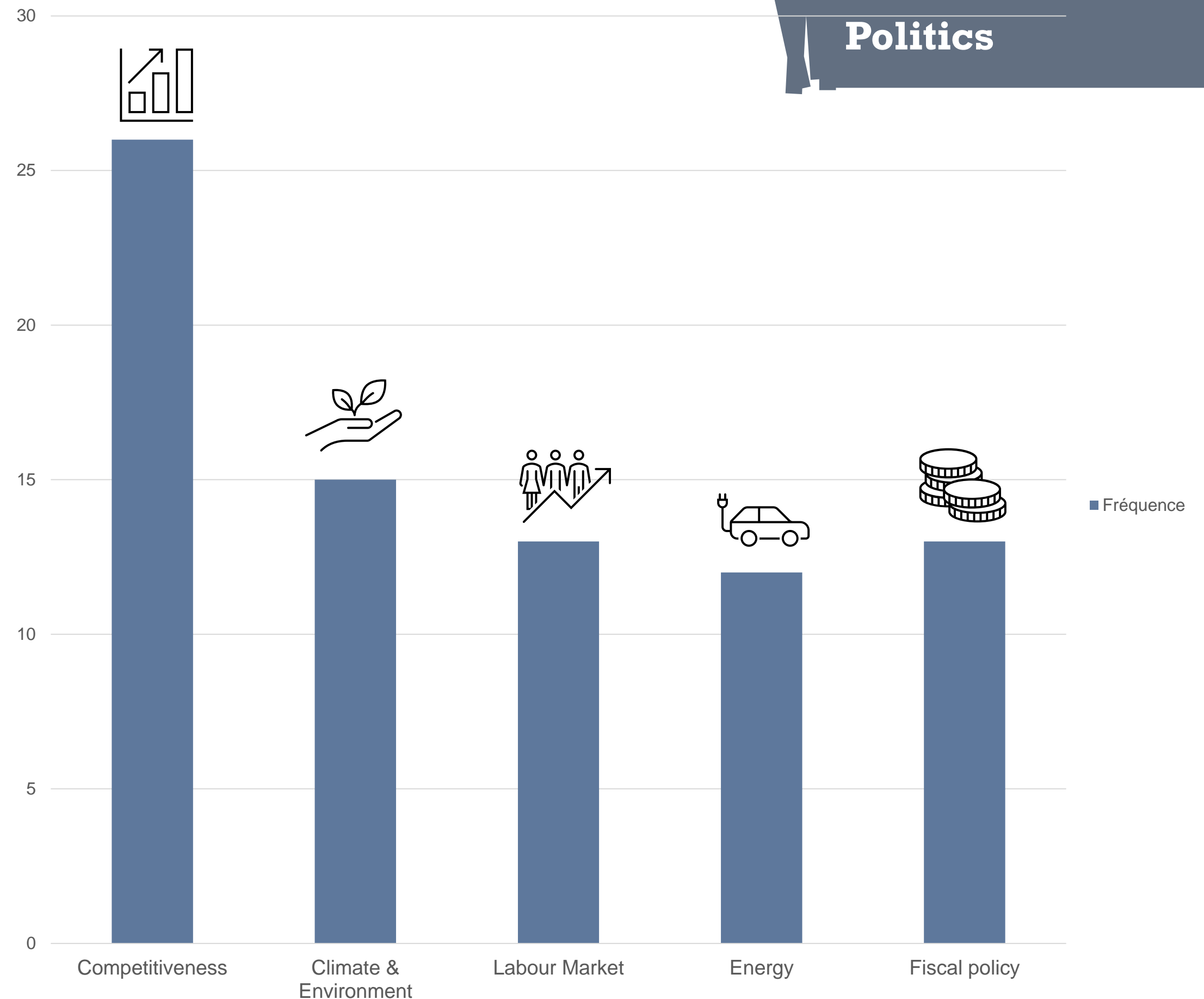
Which measure do you disapprove of the most?



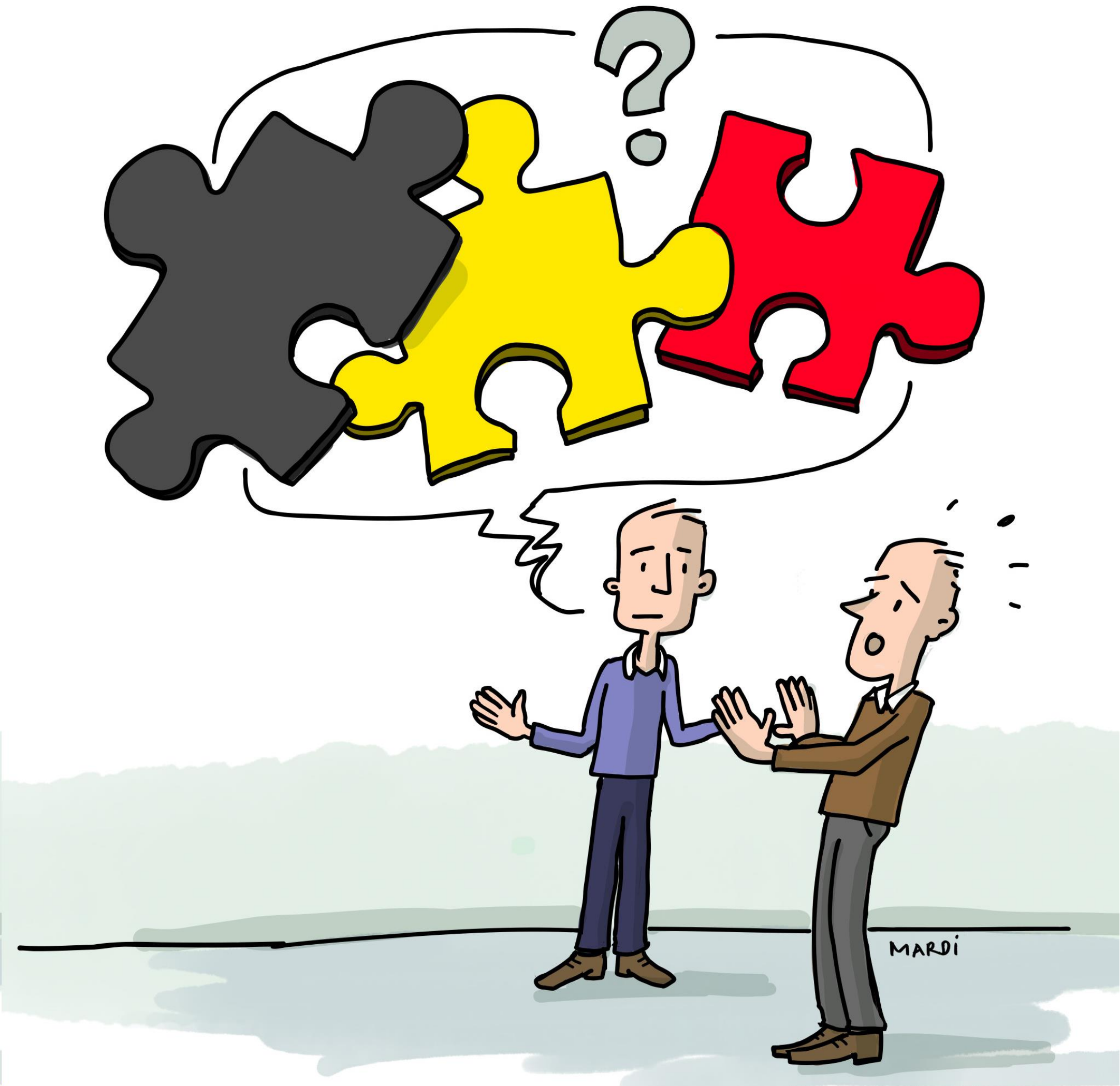
# Policy priorities after 2024

Which three priorities should the next governments have ?

Besides usual expectations, the priorities are **competitiveness, climate & environment, labour market and fiscal policy.**

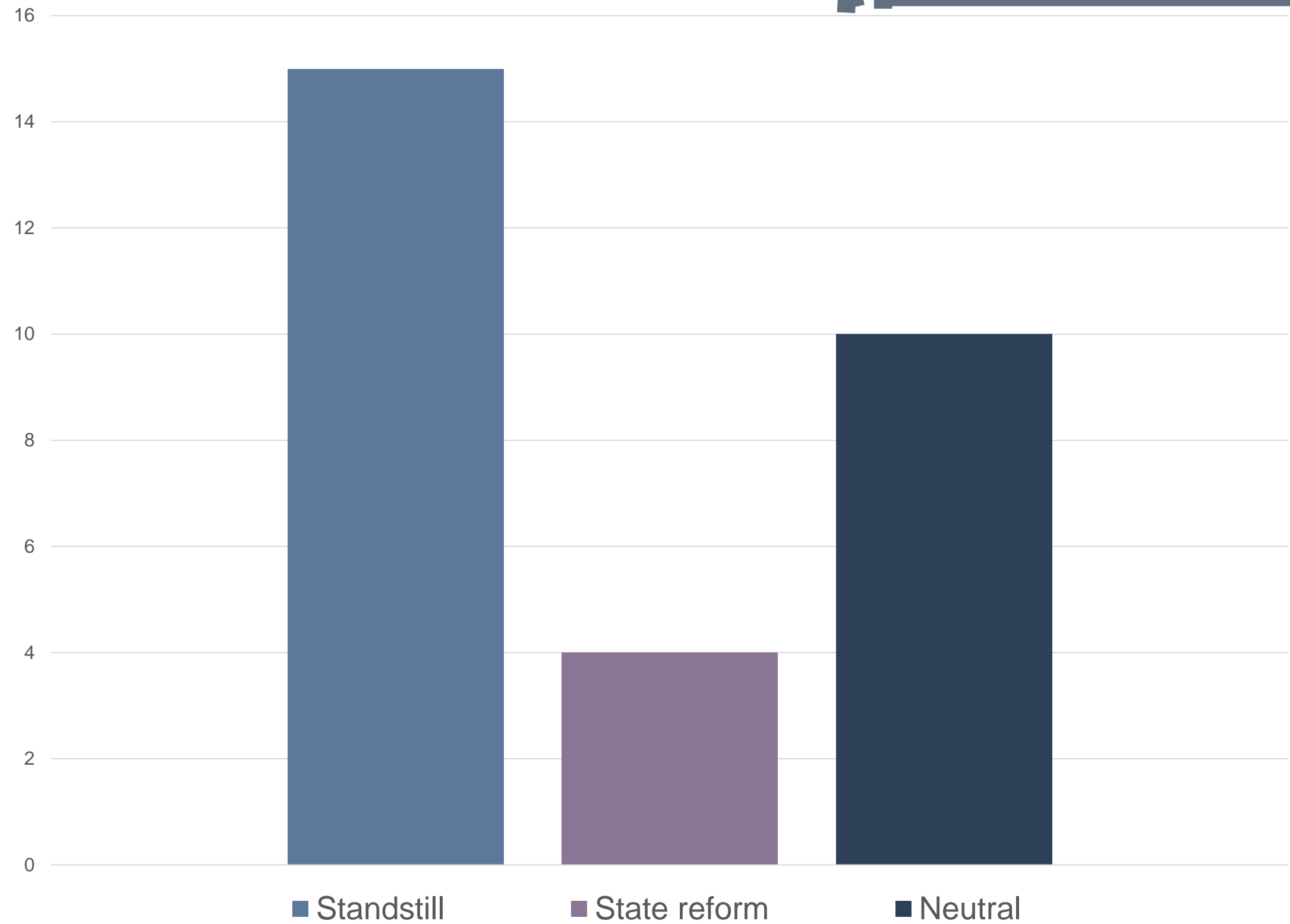


\*31/33 answers



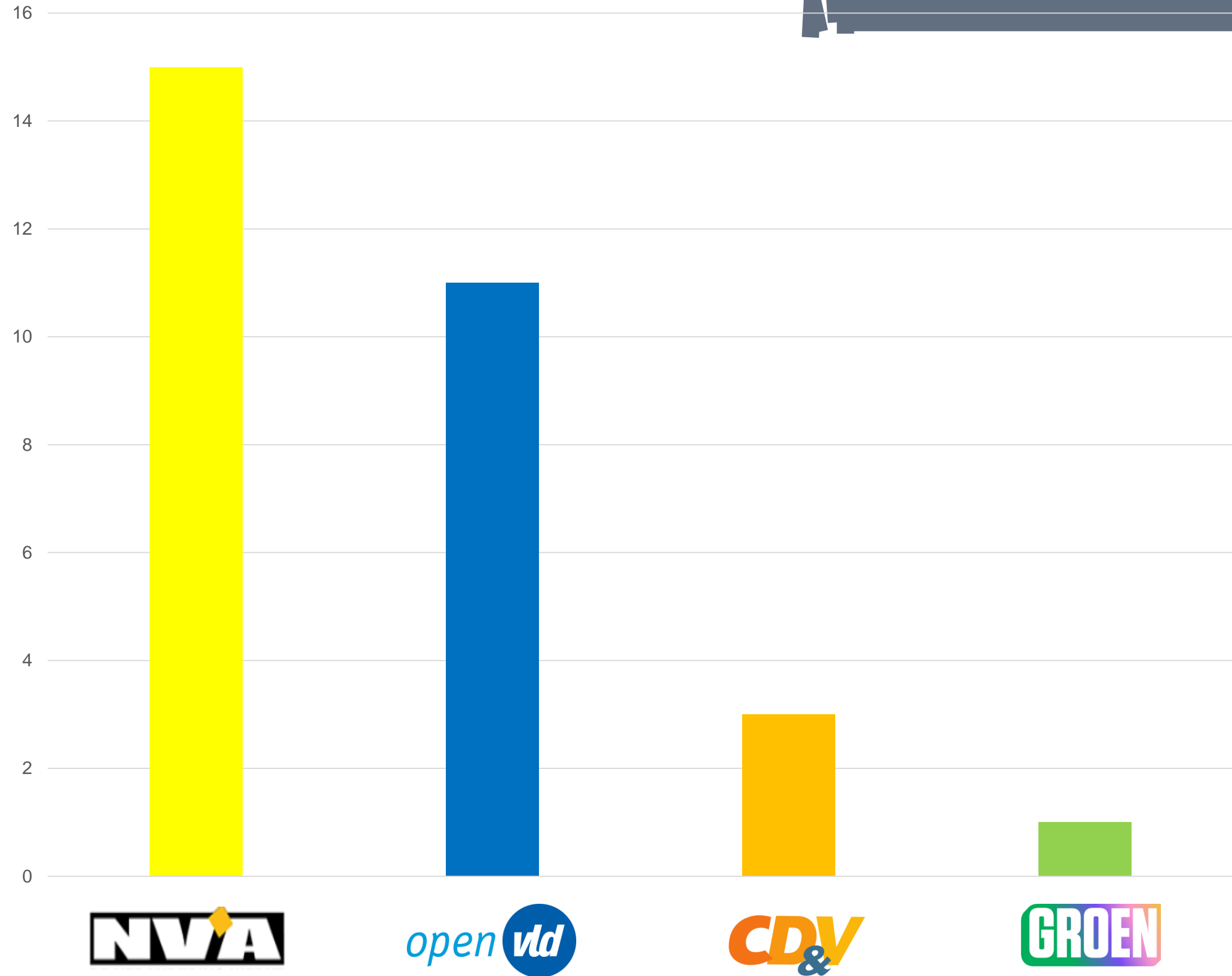
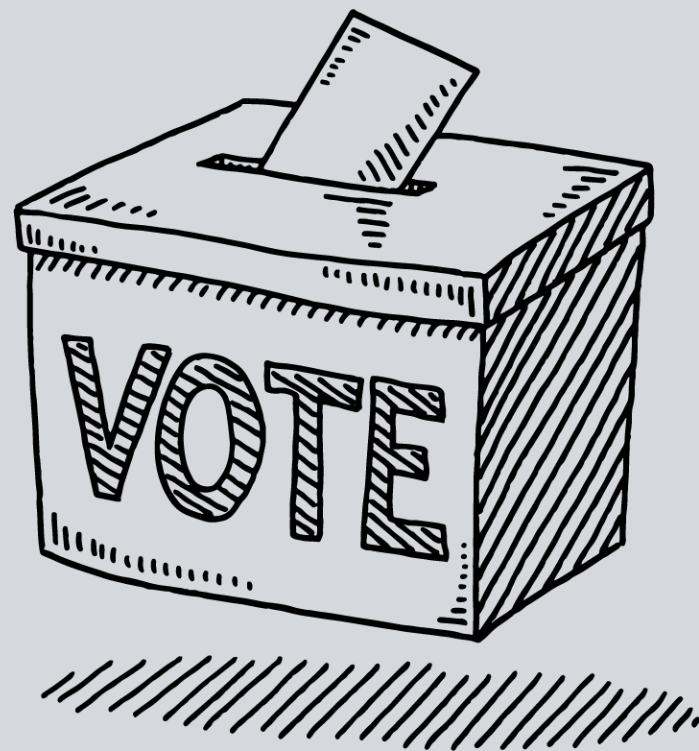
# State reform – not a priority!

Do you prefer a standstill or advocate a new state reform?



# To the ballot box (2024)

Imagine your organisation had to vote. Which Flemish party would you definitely want to see in the next governments ?

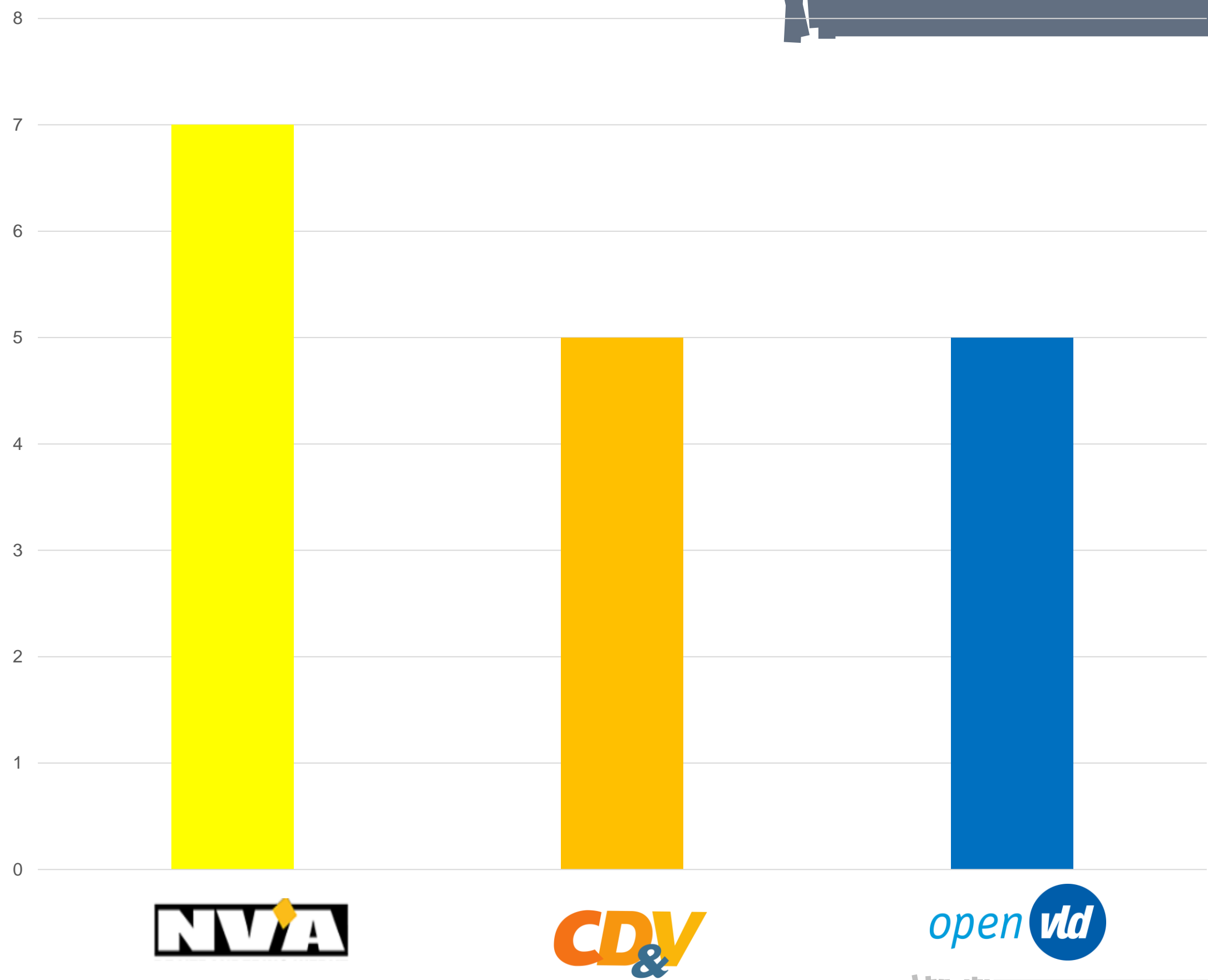
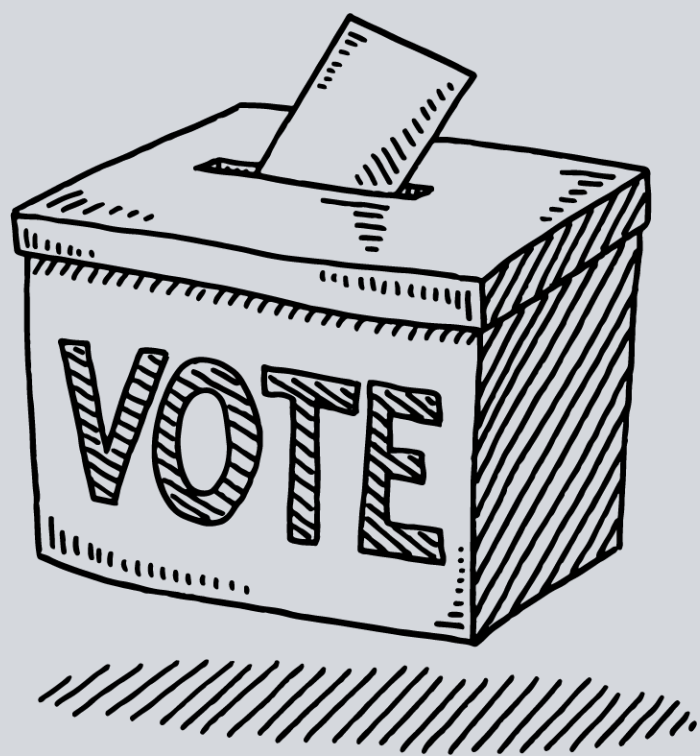


\*29/33 answers



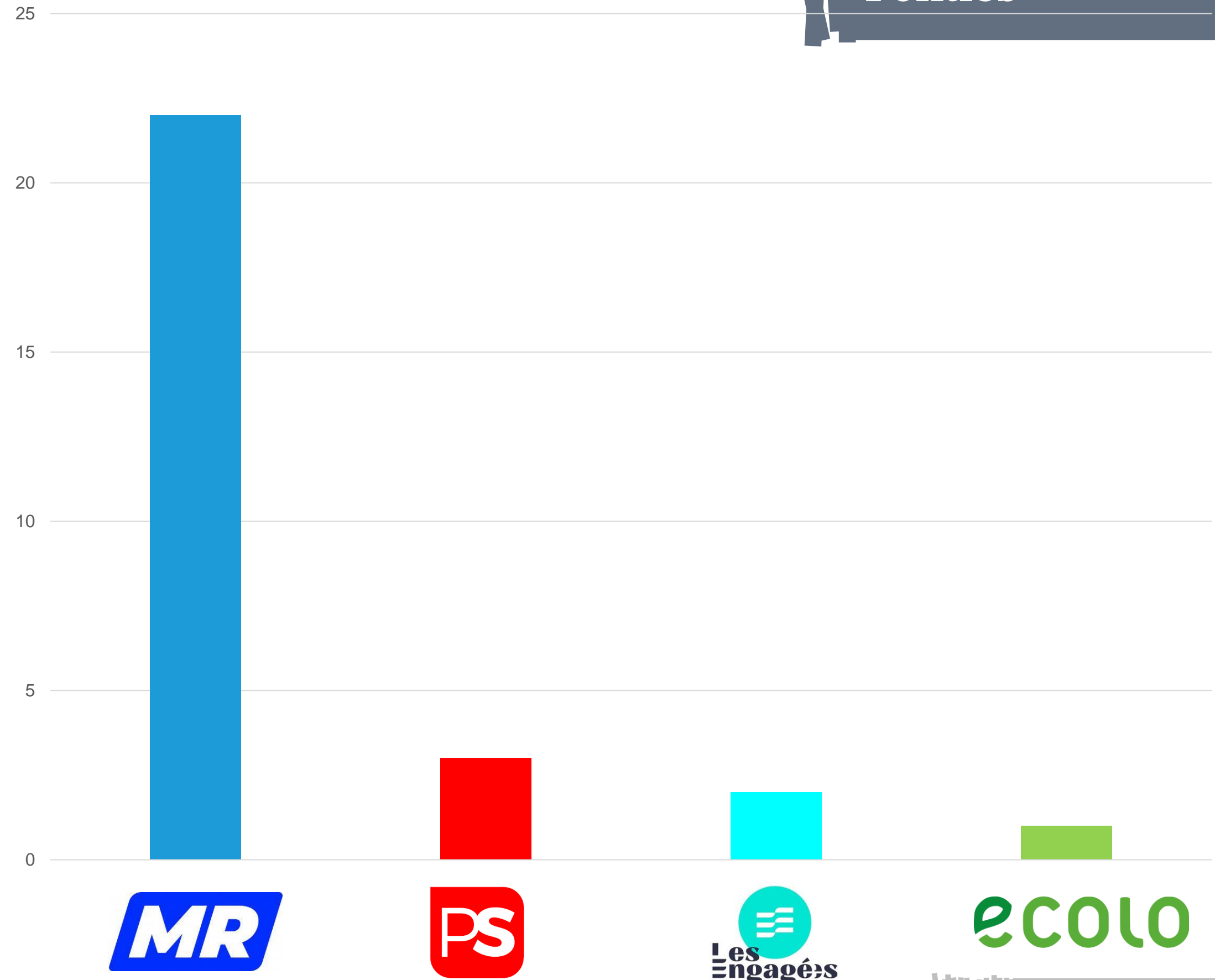
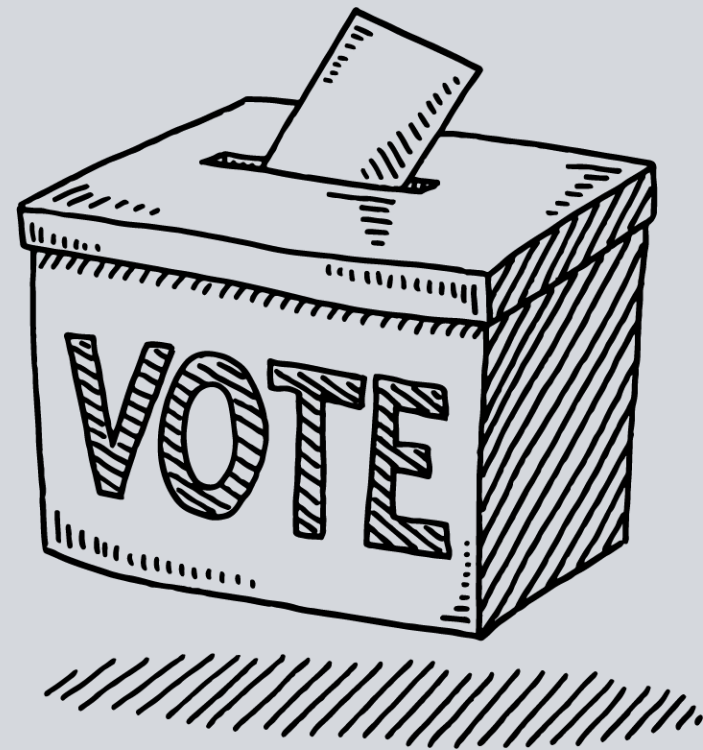
# To the ballot box (2018)

Imagine your organisation had to vote. Which Flemish party would you definitely want to see in the next governments?



## To the ballot box

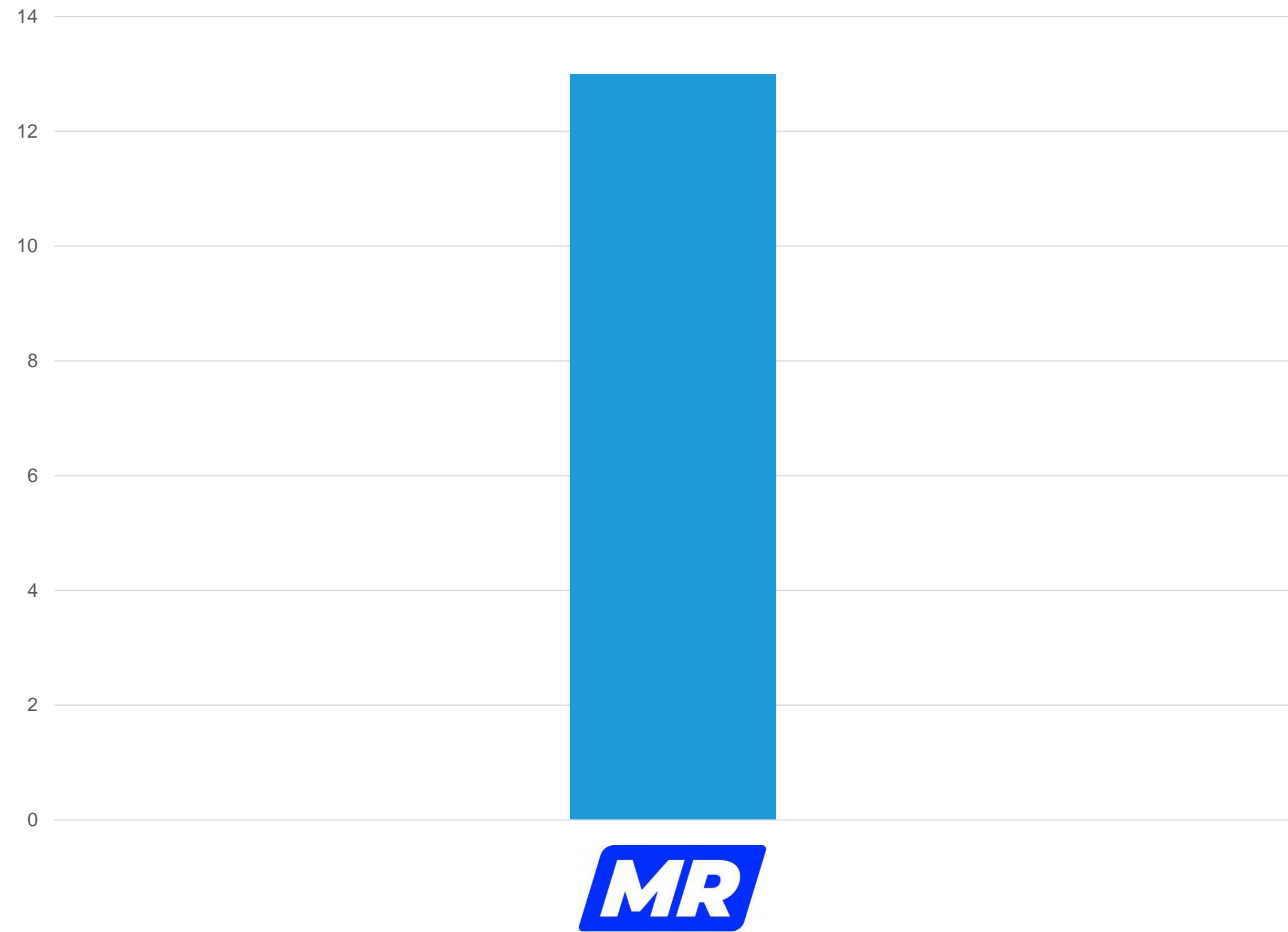
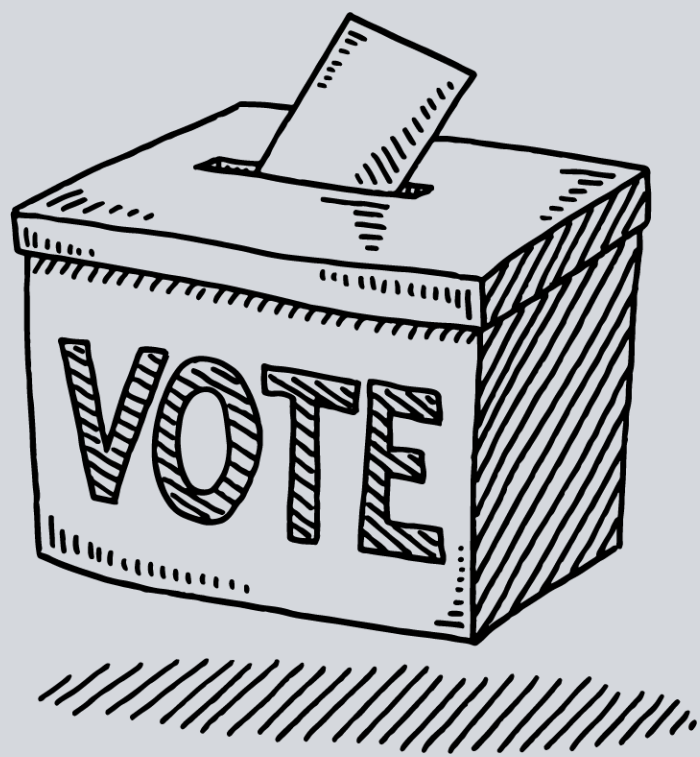
Suppose your organisation had to vote. Which French speaking party would you definitely like to see in the next governments ?



\*28/33 answers

# To the ballot box (2018)

Suppose your organisation had to vote. Which French speaking party would you definitely like to see in the next governments?



## Before you talk to political parties...

- Check the party's current political situation: latest election results, internal election coming up, specific crisis
  - Identify the stakeholders that are most relevant regarding each party's structure, theme of interest and geographical origin
  - Make sure to check the "regional relevance" of the topic you are addressing
- You will need different PA strategies for every party (and sometimes every person)





## **Testimonial: Egbert Lachaert**

- Former Party President Open Vld
- Former group leader Open Vld in Federal Parliament
- Member of Federal parliament
- Elderman Merelbeke



## Contact us for any questions!

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