

State of affairs in the Netherlands



Agenda

- Economic Developments in the Netherlands
 - 3% deficit problematic
- Political developments
 - Cabinet crisis, new elections, new political deal
- Developments in social dialogue
 - Unions in search of themselves
 - Effects of new political deal?

Economic developments

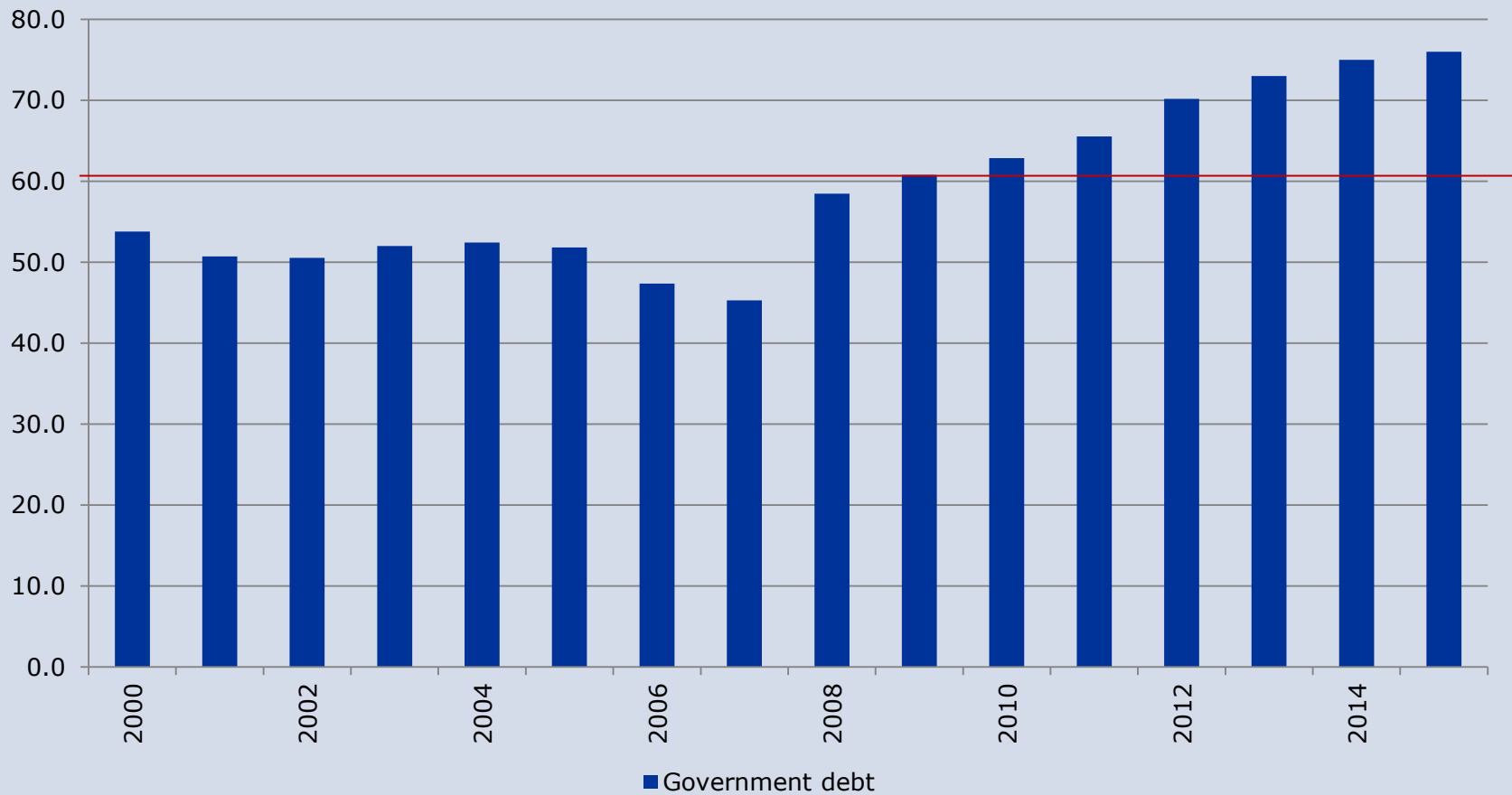
Worsening economic situation



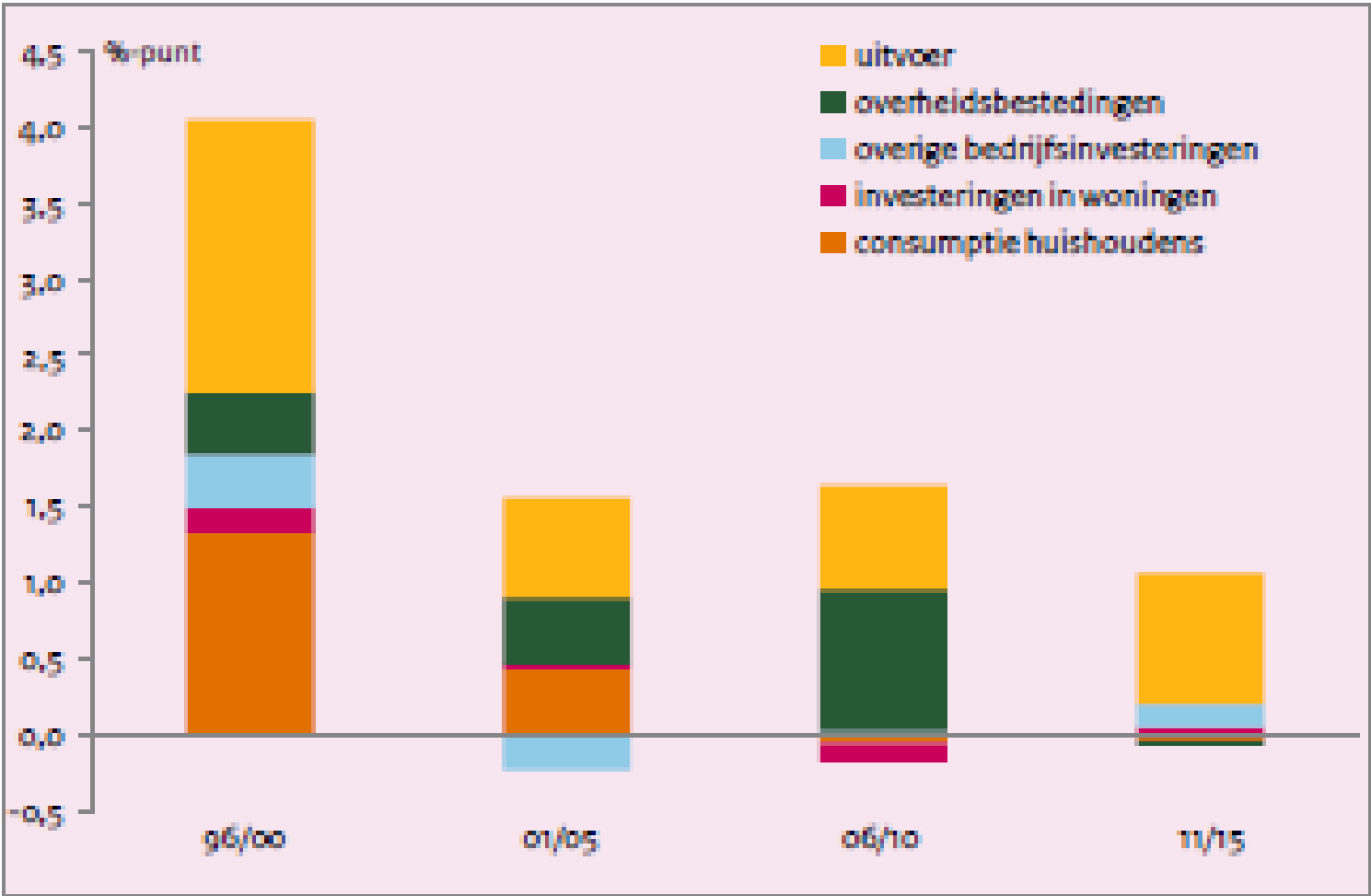
Government deficit further off balance



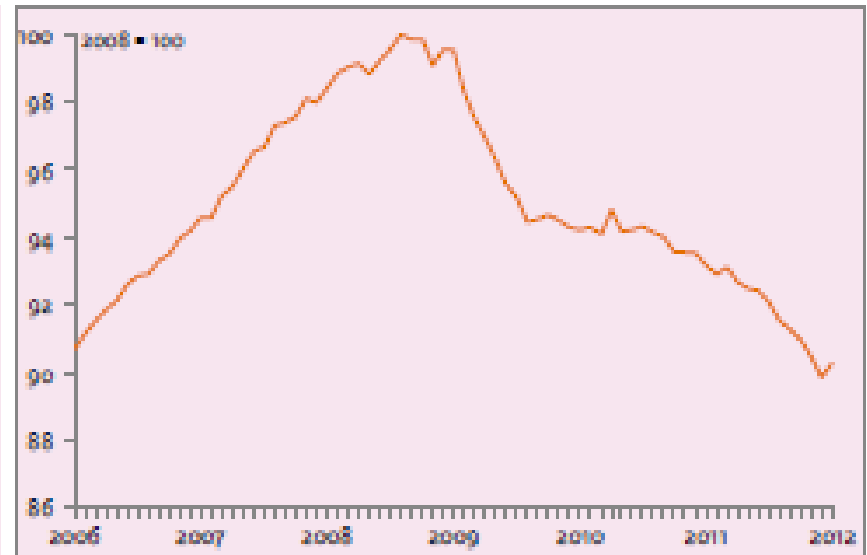
Government debt



Expenditures, investments and export



Housing market



Political developments

The Netherlands in upheaval

- October 2010: Start new coalition, minority Cabinet
- Detailed agreement/pact as foundation for this Cabinet;
- Political climate much harsher than before
- March/april 2012: discussion on additional austerity measures leads to fall of Cabinet (23 april)
- 5 party coalition come up (in 2 days!) with new agreement on austerity measures, leading to -3% deficit in 2013

Developments in social dialogue

Meanwhile at the social partners

Unions in upheaval

- Internal clash in the biggest union (FNV)
 - Fight for direction: activist vs moderate/consensus seeking
 - Mandate within confederation more and more contested
 - Process of complete reform FNV, perhaps splitting up
- Employers had easy access to cabinet
 - less need to cut deals with unions
 - Very reserved in taking up new issues/themes; employers wonder if their counterparts can deliver
 - But explicit choice to continue social dialogue (labor rest!)
- New political agreement sets aside pension deal

Consequences for SER

- Difficult to deliver meaningful advisory reports, on important issues of national interest
- Not all stands still: the 'machinery' continues, social partners continue their involvement in projects
- More then before: fundamental discussion around SER, to be or not to be?
- New chairman per 1 september