“Bridging versus Bonding?”

Revisiting the Contact Hypothesis for Participants of Mixed Ethnicity and Turkish Non-Profit Organizations in Amsterdam

The contact hypothesis claims that interaction among ethnically homogeneous groups inhibits the development of generalised norms. Contact with the majority population, on the other hand, is seen as conducive towards generating trust and tolerance. Most voluntary sector research takes the contact hypothesis at its core and only assumes that concentration of ethnic minorities in non-profit organisations (bonding) is detrimental for learning civic norms. It argues on normative grounds that ethnic diversity within organisations (bridging) is better for developing generalised norms. Existing empirical studies on voluntary organisations do not juxtapose ethno-national with mixed ethnicity organisations in their analysis. There is also some research on ‘generalised trust’ at the neighbourhood and country level. However, it is questionable whether contact mechanism is best investigated at the country level. Moreover, some neighbourhood research either takes contact as a proxy for trust or trust as a proxy for contact.

I address these problems by revisiting the contact hypothesis through a case study of Turkish and mixed ethnicity organisations in Amsterdam. Emphasis on contact is a recent shift in policy debates in the Netherlands and in Amsterdam in particular. I will analyse differences in attitudes of ‘generalised trust’ between participants and distinguish between organisational and individual level variance. I will then examine activities of organisations. I rely on data that I collected by means of a questionnaire when visiting organisations and interviews with their board. The findings suggest that contact as a mechanism for explaining differences in ‘generalised trust’ is problematic, since the variance in ‘generalised trust’ is greater at the individual level in comparison to the organisational level. Rather than inducing ‘generalised trust’ in their members, the findings also suggest that the contribution of (some but not all) non-profit organisations to a civic culture might be found in political mobilisation, and its wider institutional impact.

Abstract for Panel: Schools of Democracy? Associations’ fragile contribution to a democratic political culture

Section: The Civic Culture Revisited: Challenges, Changes and Innovations in Studies of Participation and Trust

Keywords: Contact hypothesis, bridging and bonding associations, generalized trust

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WORK IN PROGRESS: PLEASE DO NOT CITE
Introduction

For almost a decade, the argument in favour of multiculturalism in Western Europe has become lifeless. Whether we look in policy documents, in journalistic accounts or academic debates, no one seems to argue in favour of the cultural retention of minorities. In the Netherlands, more specifically, the incorporation of ethnic minorities has become the site of an ideological battle around the notions of citizenship and nationhood (Scholten and Holzhacker, 2009). These battles resonate with the old Chicago School assimilationist language in which a simple chain of events were held to be responsible for the accommodation of minorities into the mainstream. As with the old assimilationist debate, integration in the Netherlands is now seen by some policymakers as the endpoint to the cycle of inter-ethnic contact. Moreover, what is meant by integration is not only participation in socio-economic life, but also adherence to a set of common norms and values (Joppke, 2004; Scholten and Holzhacker, 2009).

Amsterdam is no exception to the attack on multiculturalism, at least in discursive policy (Uitermark, Rossi and Van Houtum, 2005; Vertovec and Wessendorf, 2010). Ever since a Dutch man of Moroccan descent murdered Theo van Gogh, a filmmaker who fervently criticized Islam, ethnic concentration seems to have become taboo. Civil servants fear subsidizing cultural activities and especially religious practices in voluntary organizations. Instead the local government promotes diversity under the rubric of enhancing “contact” between majority and minority populations. What risks to be forgotten is that ethno-national organizations might still be contributing to the (political) integration of new and old immigrants – albeit ‘by a detour’ (Berger et al., 2004). The Chicago School was criticized precisely because it ignored differential routes that minorities take into, for example, the labour market, housing market, the educational system, etc. (Portes and Zhou, 1993; Alba and Nee, 2005). Not necessarily because immigrants and their children do not want to mingle with the majority population, but sometimes because they face discrimination or because they otherwise lack the resources (e.g. language skills) to participate in social life. In line with the American literature, this differential route is labelled as segmented assimilation by European researchers and acculturation is not seen as the only viable integration route (Vermeulen, H. 2010). To be sure, ethno-national organizations were initially promoted by the local government to facilitate integration
In what follows below, I compare a segmented\(^1\) form of participation in voluntary organizations with a diverse setting that is now favoured by some policy makers and sections of the Dutch public. I question the assumption that ethnic concentration in voluntary or non-profit organizations should a priori be regarded as problematic and take the view that we should put the “contact hypothesis” in voluntary organizations empirically to the test. This paper investigates the effect of ethnic composition of voluntary organizations on generalized trust and on their activities. Generalized trust is defined as thin or abstract trust in the benevolence of others (Newton, 1999b; 2001), which is theoretically best conceptualized as an evaluation of the unknown other (Sturgis and Smith, 2010).

Implications of low levels of generalized trust in a given society are more far-reaching than one could expect at face value. Generalized trust is argued to be a prerequisite of a qualitatively better functioning political and economic system (Putnam, 1993; Knack and Keefer, 1997; Fukuyama, 2001). Based on experimental economics, Sønderskov (2011) argues that people who say they trust others are co-operators in large-N collective action dilemmas, since they expect others to act similarly. He supports this argument with survey data in which he finds that people with higher levels of generalized trust are more likely to undertake activities that support the environment, such as recycling or donating money to environmental organizations. Therefore, if we are to take generalized trust as an important ingredient of a democratic and egalitarian polity, we also need to know which settings help or impede its development. Equally, any policy in support of mixing or against ethnic retention in voluntary associations needs to be based on empirical evidence. In this vein, I aim to investigate whether ethnic composition of voluntary organizations has the presumed negative effect on the development of generalized trust or whether individual characteristics and resources of the participants better explain this variation. In addition, I compare practices across Turkish and Mixed organizations.

I take mixed and Turkish organizations (as an example of ethno-national organizations with less diversity) in Amsterdam as a case-study. The article poses the

\(^1\) In current migration literature, segmented assimilation is applied to different social mobility routes that children of immigrants take (for review see Vermeulen, H.). I use the term “segmented” more loosely to mean segregated.
following questions: To what extent does the level of generalized trust differ across Turkish and mixed organizations, and to what extent does it differ across their participants? I approach this question by separating organizational and individual level variance using a novel design that casts doubt on the alleged contact mechanism in mixed and ethno-national voluntary organizations. Contact mechanism is the socialisation effect occurring from interethnic contact (Pettigrew, 1998). Contact with diverse others is often assumed to be conducive to the development of generalized trust (see Putnam, 2007). While inter-ethnic contact is taken to be an important driver of generalized trust, this is rarely examined in the context of voluntary organizations. Finally, I pose the question whether civic engagement of Turkish and Mixed organizations spills over into the political sphere.

The findings suggest that participants of Turkish organizations have overall less generalized trust than participants of mixed organizations. However, I demonstrate that participants of mixed organizations in Amsterdam might self-select into high-trusting organizations, controlling for their length of participation. Moreover, generalized trust is consistently better explained by higher educational levels of the participant. Generalized trust is also higher among middle-aged participants as opposed to younger cohorts and, to some extent, people who have experienced divorce or been widowed are less inclined to say they trust others. As regards to organizational practices, the data seems to suggest that Turkish organizations are more politically active than their mixed counterparts. Hence, their contributions to a democratic political culture, if at all, are to be found in the realm of contesting power hierarchies rather than inducing trust in their participants.

Before discussing the results, I will elaborate the voluntary organizations and generalized trust nexus. Next, I will discuss the shortcomings of previous research and demonstrate how the contact hypothesis has gained ground across the Atlantic and Western Europe. A review of the literature shows that much of the confusion around research on generalized trust arises from conflating different levels of analysis and where the mechanisms behind the statistical findings are not explicitly mentioned. Secondly, at all levels of analysis contact seems now to explain differences in generalized trust –surprisingly even at the country level (Lancee and Dronkers, 2008). By distinguishing different levels of analysis and different mechanisms, we will be better able to draw valid generalizations and exclude alternative explanations. The research strategy of this study overcomes shortcomings of previous research by
oversampling individuals in organizations. Moreover, voluntary organizations are a small enough setting to investigate the effects of face-to-face contact between ethnically diverse groups on generalized trust. Using multilevel modelling and ordinary least squares regression, I test then if generalized trust is affected by participation in Turkish and mixed voluntary organizations in Amsterdam. Finally, I discuss the results and conclude the paper.

Why study generalized trust at non-profit or voluntary organizations?
A growing body of research emphasises the role of voluntary organizations as vehicles for the production of generalized trust (Stolle and Howard, 2008; cf. Nannestad, 2008). Voluntary organizations are arguably “schools of democracy” where people learn to become active citizens and adhere to norms of trust (Warren, 1999, 2001). However, it has been argued that different types of organizations have varying effects on adherence to generalized trust of their members (Stolle and Rochon, 2001; Coffé and Geys, 2007; Maloney, Van Deth and Rossteutscher, 2008). A corollary to this literature is the assumption that participation in ethno-national organizations induces particularized trust and attitudes, as opposed to generalized trust (Newton, 1999b; Putnam, 2000; Mutz, 2002; Uslaner, 2002; Uslaner and Conley, 2003; Marschall and Stolle, 2004; Theiss-Morse and Hibbing, 2005; Paxton, 2007).

It is argued that ethno-national organizations bring people together from the same background, and hence would impede the development of norms that transcend the in-group. Participating in organizations that bring people from dissimilar backgrounds is seen to be conducive towards adhering to generalized trust. These two different setups have been labelled as “bonding” and “bridging”. Putnam defines bonding organizations as those that are ‘inward looking and tend to reinforce exclusive identities and homogenous groups’ (Putnam, 2000, p. 22). Bridging organizations are, however, ‘outward looking and encompass people across diverse social cleavages’ (Putnam, 2000, p. 22). These assumptions put forward by Putnam, seem to be inherited from the civic republican theories of democracy. Since these theories emphasise an egalitarian public sphere, they sit uneasily with a segmented form of civil society on the basis of identity (see Warren, 2001).

Contrary to the above, Putnam (2007) recently asserts that residents of homogenous neighbourhoods have a greater propensity to trust the generalized others.
Heterogeneity of environment, on the other hand, would inhibit the development of out-group and even in-group ties, consequently leading to isolation. Putnam reaches this conclusion based on neighbourhood rather than association research, and is therefore not directly contradicting his previous conclusions on the virtuous effect of diversity (bridging) within associations. However, one could extend his argument from neighbourhoods to associations and question whether in-group ties are necessarily detrimental for adherence to generalized trust. The association between generalized and particularized trust that is sketched by the researchers above does not need to be a zero-sum game.² There are two other scenarios possible that research so far has ignored. Not only could participation in ethno-national associations go hand in hand with the development of generalized trust (‘compatibility model’), but a more optimistic model also suggests that participation in these associations would increase one’s level of generalized trust (‘win-win’ model) (Rijkschroeff and Duyvendak, 2004, p. 21). With notable variations among countries, participation in ethno-national organizations is in fact related to participation in the host society politics (Berger et al., 2004, Fennema and Tillie, 1999, Fennema and Tillie, 2001, Jacobs et al., 2004, Koopmans, 2004, Tillie, 2004, Tillie and Slijper, 2007, Togeby, 2004).

To date, a systematic comparison of generalized trust for members of ethno-national associations and mixed associations is lacking in the literature.³ More importantly, if the contact mechanism is at work, we should be able to find substantive differences in levels of generalized trust between participants in ethno-national and mixed associations controlling for their length of participation, their resources and other salient socio-demographic characteristics. American literature and European approaches share, generally, the same assumptions about the promise of associations. But with some notable exceptions, they differ in what they expect from ethno-national organizations. Based on a political opportunity structure framework, Ramakrishnan and Bloemraad (2008) designed a model that enables one to examine the occurrence of civic and political engagement among immigrant or ethno-national organizations and how this, in turn, would result in societal and institutional impact. Some of their findings are particularly interesting, as these suggest that ethno-national organizations might be operating differently, and hence

² Putnam (2007) recently acknowledges this, but confusingly his constrict theory only predicts negative outcomes.
³ But cf. Van der Meulen, 2007
influence political processes to a different degree than mainstream organizations. However, based on the American literature that problematizes ethno-national organizations, we should expect organizational practices of Turkish organizations to be towards the promotion of ethnic culture.

**Generalized trust research: state of the art**

Apart from voluntary organizations, there are three other levels of analysis on which empirical studies of generalized trust are based: country; neighbourhood; and the individual level. I will discuss these below. Although country level and neighbourhood effects are not central to the research design below, studies offered on these levels are worth discussing, since conflating the levels of analysis runs the risk of ecological fallacy and consequently has lead to the current confusion about what generates or inhibits generalized trust.

**Individual level effects**

At the individual level, Stolle’s (1998) research puts forward the assumption that voluntary association membership would increase one’s level of generalized trust, and found that length of membership did not affect generalized trust for members. She concluded that high trusting people might self-select into membership. She also found that organizations with higher proportions of foreigners had a larger proportion of trusting members. This perspective suggests that engagement in ethnically homogenous associations could impede the development of generalized trust, although there is no empirical evidence offered for such a relationship.

While the self-selection argument seems a straightforward conclusion, earlier evidence points in a different direction. When members and non-members were investigated some researchers found significant, albeit small differences, in generalized trust (Brehm and Rahn, 1997). These researchers suggested that the direction of the relationship runs from joining to trust rather than the other way around (Paxton, 2007).

In summary, it is still not entirely clear whether members of voluntary organizations –ethno-national or otherwise– are self-selecting into low and high trusting groups or whether associations have socializing effects on their members (Nannestad, 2008; Stolle and Howard, 2008). There is some evidence that youth socialization into voluntary organizations is related to adult participation and in the
long run (from youth to adulthood), associational activity might contribute towards the generation of social trust (Stolle and Hooghe, 2004).

At the very least, there is some consensus that at the individual level, socio-demographic characteristics and individual resources, such as educational levels, correlate positively with generalized trust. Sex and age are indirectly related to trust since women may find themselves among vulnerable groups in society, and the middle-aged have control over their financial position. In other words, generalized trust is expressed by “winners in society” (Newton, 1999a, p. 185; see also Whiteley, 1999; Putnam, 2000; cf. Uslaner, 2002, pp. 112-113) and could thus be explained by individual level processes.

Neighbourhood and country effects

Recently there has also been a focus on the proportion of ethnically homogeneous and heterogeneous population in neighbourhoods in order to explain differences in generalized trust (Putnam, 2007). This type of research assumes that contact with diverse others would explain differences in (generalized) trust, although it was not investigated as such. Here it is assumed that in ethnically homogenous neighbourhoods people may gather together often; whereas in ethnically heterogeneous neighbours contact is “constricted”, which consequently leads to lower levels of (generalized) trust at that level (Putnam, 2007, p. 144). Although this hypothesis has recently received a great deal of media and academic attention, there were similar studies preceding it in the United States, Canada and Australia (Alesina and La Ferrara, 2000, 2002; Costa and Kahn, 2003; Leigh, 2004; Marschall and Stolle, 2004). Overall, the findings are not straightforward. More importantly, some of the studies discussed above do not explicate the mechanism that should affect generalized trust at the appropriate level or only predict negative outcomes. Nevertheless, European research is on the rise.

Hooghe et al. (2009), for example, questioned whether the almost exclusive focus on American data can render the generalizations plausible. They argued that American society has experienced rising income inequality in recent decades, which strongly negatively correlates with generalized trust (see also Uslaner and Brown, 2005). The American experience of diversity might also be exceptional as race

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relations were not always easy. This historical difference with Europe makes the generalizations based on American data questionable. Furthermore, Hooghe et al. (2009) proposed to study the effect of ethnic heterogeneity for European countries with a multilevel model. The latter model is more appropriate for their analyses as it can simultaneously provide information on how much of the variation is explained by individual characteristics and how much of it can be attributed to country differences. Instead of the proportion of migrants in a country, they include dynamic data in their analyses, such as the inflow of immigrants. Theoretically, they argue that it is this inflow that could make the different groups feel threatened by each other and lead to lower generalized trust reports. Their analysis, however, does not find any significant and substantive evidence for the negative heterogeneity claims in Western Europe, although there is a relatively high level of variance in generalized trust between countries.

A second type of research focuses on contact between ethnic minorities and differences between neighbourhoods with higher as opposed to lower proportions of ethnic minority groups. Lancee and Dronkers (2008) argue that neighbourhood and country level effects should not be confused as there are different underlying processes behind these two levels that might generate differences. They argue that country level differences might be due to ‘history, political environment and/or the media exposure of immigration related issues in a country’ (Lancee and Dronkers, 2008, p. 1). Neighbourhood level differences might be due to contact. Although this argument is convincing, the analysis of Lancee and Dronkers (2008) has some shortcomings for investigating the relationship between generalized trust and contact. They intended to replicate Putnam’s (2007) contact hypothesis, but their data lacked direct measures of trust. Instead they relied on contact between the respondent and their ethnic neighbours as a proxy for trust. In addition, they constructed a second proxy based on social distance, or how much one approves of their children’s friend and partner being from a different ethnic background. These measures are problematic in the sense that it is the relationship between contact and a positive emotion towards the unknown other that we are interested in, and it is precisely this evidence that is missing here.

In a report by the Dutch government, the relationship between ethnic heterogeneity and generalized trust was then investigated (Gijsberts, Van der Meer and Dagevos, 2008). The results suggests that there is less contact in these types of
neighbourhoods, but when looking at generalized trust the results suggest that
diversity does not affect it so much. It seems instead to be the effect of the
composition of these neighbourhoods in terms of socio-demographic characteristics of
their inhabitants. This is more so, because housing for ethnic minorities is constrained
by socio-economic factors in the Netherlands (Van der Laan Bouma-Doff and Van
der Laan Bouma, 2005; Gijsberts, Van der Meer and Dagevos, 2008).

As the discussion above has shown, there are different mechanisms at work
behind the generation of generalized trust, and only by separating different levels of
analysis will we be able to specify them. In what follows, I will focus on the contact
mechanism, not at the neighbourhood level, but in voluntary organizations. Not only
is neighbourhood investigation more complex, but people may not use their living
environment to interact with others. On the basis of the literature reviewed above that
assumes the contact mechanism to be at work in voluntary organizations, we should
expect that:
1) There are substantive differences in generalized trust among organizations rather
than among individuals.
2) Controlling for their socio-demographic characteristics and resources;
a) participants of mixed organizations have higher levels of generalized trust; and b)
the longer participants are active in a mixed organization, the higher their level of
generalized trust.

Research design and measures
For the analysis of organizational practices I rely on interview data with the board of
the non-profit organizations in addition to observational data when I visited events in
2009 and 2010 in Amsterdam. To demonstrate whether generalized trust is affected
by the ethnic composition of voluntary organizations, I will draw on questionnaire
data collected by visiting organizations and circulating questionnaires via their
board. The originality of this approach lies in the multilevel structure of the data. We
can thus distinguish between individual and organizational level variances in
generalized trust in order to single out the contextual effect of ethnic composition in

5 Participants usually filled out a questionnaire in Turkish, Dutch or English depending on their fluency
in one of these languages. If they requested to be contacted later, I would send them a link to a web-
based questionnaire.
6 Occasionally, when the board found that my visit would disrupt the event, I circulated questionnaires
via them. I instructed the board member to give the questionnaire to a diverse set of participants or to
send an email invitation to all participants.
associations. Using multilevel modelling has many advantages over the fixed effects regression models (Steele et al., 2008). Most importantly, it enables contextual analysis and allows for the results to be generalized to other organizations. In studies where a random sample of the population is asked to name their membership of different types of organizations, contextual effects are in fact being ignored, since there is no data available on other participants of the same organization (see e.g. Coffé and Geys, 2007; Paxton, 2007; Howard and Gilbert, 2008).

The design of this study is a comparative case study with an embedded large N that allows for cross-sectional analysis. It is a case-study, since I can only infer the results to a specific population: participants in Turkish organizations and mixed organizations in Amsterdam. This population is, however, representative of a key situation. If we consider the Turkish and mixed organizations as critical or crucial cases (Yin, 1994, pp. 40, 54; Gerring, 2007, pp. 115-22), they meet the necessary condition for testing the contact hypothesis. Hence, we would be able to generalise whether the contact mechanism or rival explanations are better accounts. If we do not find evidence for the contact mechanism comparing these two settings, it would be unlikely to find theoretical support for this mechanism in other ethno-national organizations or mixed organizations.

Selection of organization and participants
In autumn 2009 and spring 2010, I surveyed the organizations. I created a stratified random sample from a database where information about 15,000 (non-profit) organizations is stored (Vermeulen, F., Brünger and Van de Walle, 2009). This information, in turn, is derived from the Registry of the Chamber of Commerce in Amsterdam. Many organizations record information about their address, their activities and their board in order to be eligible for funding schemes by government agencies and other charities. Registration is often associated with greater transparency about the mission of the organization and who is involved in its activities. The selection of participants was fairly at random, since I visited events when they happened and the participants were not informed of my visit.

The researchers who compiled the database above also recorded the ethnicity (country of birth) of the board members. This enabled me to make two groups of

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7 I speak of participants rather than members, since by visiting events I have excluded fee paying members that do not take part in activities.
organizations: an ethnically mixed group and a Turkish group. When the board of an organization is born in more than two countries other than the Netherlands, the organization is characterized as mixed. Within each group I narrowed down the selection towards different activities of the organizations, such as sports and culture, in order to include enough participants with different socio-demographic characteristics. Thus I have chosen different types of associations. The logic is to have enough variation in age, sex, income and educational levels.

However, later I had to introduce a snow-ball method to complement the stratified random sample. This was because some organizations were disbanded or due to non-response the sample would not contain a certain type of organization. Moreover, the sampling frame did not include theoretically interesting organizations such as Parent Teacher Associations, second-generation Turkish associations or recently established ones. The snow ball method is based on information from the internet and from informants in the council and other organizations.

In total, I aimed for a sample of 40 organizations (20 Turkish and 20 mixed) and collecting an average of 10 responses within each in order to separate organizational and individual level effects. The required level 2 units are approximately 30, if one is interested in variance at that level (Maas and Hox, 2004, 2005). Recommendations for organizational research also suggest at least 30 or more level 2 units for finding strong effect sizes (Scherbaum and Ferreter, 2009).

**Variables**

The dependent variable is measured using the standard question: ‘Generally speaking would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be careful in dealing with people?’ (World Values Survey, 1990, p. 7). Responses to this question are usually recorded dichotomously. However, I adopted the European Social Survey’s (2002, p. 6) 11-point answer format in which 0 represents ‘cannot be too careful’ and 10 ‘most people can be trusted’. Based on life-satisfaction research in which lengthier scales are tested for, it can be argued that discrimination between more points adds to the validity of the results (Cummins and Gullone, 2000).

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8 Recently, there is debate about the validity of the generalized trust question. Sturgis and Smith (2010) demonstrate that some people refer to known others when answering the question. To overcome this bias, in the questionnaire, I first posed questions on trust about specific groups (such as different ethnic groups, one’s family, etc.) before asking the generalized trust question. By doing so, the respondents become aware of the fact that “most people” in the generalized trust question refers to an unknown person.
overall mean of generalized trust is 5.5 with a standard deviation of 1.94. Moreover, its frequency distribution resembles a bell-shaped normal distribution.

Ethnic composition, the key independent variable is a binary measure that takes two values: mixed versus Turkish. In the latter case diversity is low and more than 80 percent of the participants are from a single-ethnicity group (here Turkish). There are 199 participants from 20 Turkish organizations in the sample. In mixed organizations the level of diversity is more than 25 percent and reaches 75 percent. In this group, 213 participants from 20 organizations are included in the sample. In total there are 40 organizations with an average response of 11 participants per organization (SD = 4.5, range 4-20 responses). Length of participation (Mean = 6.4, SD = 7.03) is measured in number of years and months one has been active. I also have created an interaction term between the ethnic composition of an organization and the length of participation (length of participation in a mixed organization, Mean = 2.4, SD = 5.5).

Finally, based on the available literature on generalized trust the following list of individual-level control variables is included in the analysis: sex, age, divorced/widowed, employment status, household income and educational attainment. The ratio of men is slightly higher to women in the sample below with 61 percent compared to 39 percent. However, the age bands 24 and younger, 25 to 34 year olds, 35 to 44 year olds, 45 to 54 year olds, and participants older than 55 are relatively equal with 18 to 23 percent of the sample in each band. Similarly, 20 percent of the participants are unemployed due to long term illness or are searching for a job. In contrast, only 12 percent of the sample comprises of participants who have lost their partner through divorce or have been widowed. Household income is measured as net monthly income in euros. The categories are minimum wage (1,000 euros or less), modal income (1,700 euros), twice modal (3,200) and more than twice modal (3,200+). The majority of the respondents (33 percent) have a modal household income around 1,700 euros per month. This is followed by people with less than 1,000 euros per month (29 percent). Then 28 percent of the respondents have an income twice the model income (3,200 euros) and only 10 percent has a household income above 3,200 euros. Educational attainment takes 3 categories: no education or

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[9] Ethnic composition (see Putnam, 2007 and Agirdag et al. 2011) here refers to the ratio of different ethnic groups to a given group that comprises the majority. The majority group could thus be of any ethnic background.
finished primary school; low vocational degree or a secondary school degree; and, finally, high vocational or university degree. The last two categories are relatively equal with respectively 37 percent and 42 percent, while the first category comprises of 21 percent of the sample.

The findings
Below I begin by partitioning the variance at organizational and participant level.\textsuperscript{10} Next, I add the variable ethnic composition, the length of participation and the length of participation in a mixed organization to the multilevel model. The latter variable (length of participation in a mixed organization) is a cross level interaction term that would shed light on the contact mechanism. If this variable would have a strong effect size, not only would participants in mixed organizations have higher levels of trust, but that would also depend on how long they have been participating in those organizations. Finally, I will discuss the relative importance of each variable and this interaction term, controlling for the most salient socio-demographic characteristics of participants and their resources. Again, if the contact mechanism is at work, we should find relatively higher effect sizes for the variables ethnic composition and its interaction with length of participation as compared to participant’s socio-demographic characteristics and resources.

Partitioning variance in generalized trust
As argued in the previous section, by fitting a single level model and ignoring the structure of the data we would not measure the importance of context. As we can see in the table below, in a model with no other explanatory variables, organizations vary 4 percent in their participant’s generalized trust scores. This model is significant at a 10 percent level. Secondly, the variance estimate at the organizational level is significant at a 17 percent level, which indicates that with such a small organizational level variance we need many more organizations to pick up a statistically significant effect size. Social science data with high contextual effects will typically attribute less than 40 percent of the variation in their data to higher levels (Snijders and Bosker, 1999, pp. 151-2). The first hypothesis that organizational differences are relatively higher than individual level differences can therefore be rejected. This is so, because

\textsuperscript{10} I used the software MLWin for the analysis (see Steel et al. 2008).
organizational variance is relatively small (4 percent) compared to individual level variance (96 percent).

**Table. 1 Variance components model of generalized trust for participants of Turkish and mixed organizations in Amsterdam, 2009-2010**

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Standard error (S.E.)</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Fixed effect</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>5.495</td>
<td>0.095</td>
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<td><strong>Random effect variances</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Organizational level</td>
<td>0.164</td>
<td>0.120 (p = 0.17)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participant level</td>
<td>3.592***</td>
<td>0.264</td>
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<td><strong>Variance partition (%)</strong></td>
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<td>Organizational level</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participant level</td>
<td>96</td>
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-2 Log-likelihood deviance: $1714 - 1711 = 3$ (df=1) \( p = 0.0833 \)

Number of participants: 412
Number of organizations: 40

***p<0.001

However, we have to further explore the effect of other variables on generalized trust in a multilevel model, because it is possible that between-group differences may be revealed after adding explanatory variables. In other words, it is still possible that there are differences between groups for individuals with certain characteristics and that these differences are masked when we allow only for overall between-group differences. I will next explore the effect of ethnic composition of organizations on generalized trust. Substantively, however, this small level of variation between organizations questions the extent to which we can explain their differences by the environment that they are in or contact between the participants.

**Ethnic composition: mixed versus Turkish organizations**

Below I have added the first variable to an empty random intercept model in order to differentiate between a mixed and a homogenous environment in voluntary organizations. Thus we can assess the mean difference in generalized trust by including the ethnic composition of an organisation into the model. By adding this level two variable to the model, the variance at the organizational level drops to 1 percent. The model change is significant, although the estimate of organizational level variance is highly insignificant this time. This again means that with such a small
variation between organizations, we need a much larger sample of organizations to pick a significant effect size.

Then the length of participation is added in model 2. This variable also does not change the model much. Organizational variance drops another 0.5 percent and the model change is significant. Unsurprisingly, the estimate of the organizational variance is insignificant again.

Finally, in model 3, I differentiate between the length of participation in mixed organizations compared to the length of participation at Turkish organizations. This variable (or cross-level interaction term) does not improve the model and is highly insignificant. As expected, the organizational variance does not change, nor does its significance level improve.

Table. 2 Fixed and random effects models of generalized trust for participants of Turkish and mixed associations in Amsterdam, 2009-2010

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<td>S.E.</td>
<td>Estimate</td>
<td>S.E.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fixed effect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>5.171</td>
<td>0.136</td>
<td>4.999</td>
<td>0.177</td>
<td>4.978</td>
<td>0.217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnic composition:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>0.627***</td>
<td>0.189</td>
<td>0.662***</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>0.693**</td>
<td>0.273</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Reference = Turkish)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length participation</td>
<td>0.022</td>
<td>0.014</td>
<td>0.025</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length participation x ethnic composition</td>
<td>-0.005</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Reference = Length participation x Turkish organization)</td>
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</table>

Random effect variances

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th></th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th></th>
<th>Model 3</th>
<th></th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational level</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.089</td>
<td>0.017</td>
<td>0.087</td>
<td>0.019</td>
<td>0.088</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant level</td>
<td>3.620***</td>
<td>0.265</td>
<td>3.665***</td>
<td>0.273</td>
<td>3.664***</td>
<td>0.273</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Variance partition (%)

<p>| | | | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational level</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>99.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participant level</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

-2 Log-likelihood deviance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1711 – 1703 = 8 (df=1)*</th>
<th>1703 – 1652 = 51 (df=1)**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of participants</td>
<td>412</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of organizations</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p≤0.01; ***p≤0.001

The results of these models seem to suggest that an organization’s ethnic composition has very little bearing on generalized trust. Generalized trust seems not
to be enhanced when there is more than one ethnic group present in non-profit organizations. On the contrary, the results suggest that people with higher trust levels might self-select into ethnically mixed organizations. The multilevel structure of the data barely explains differences in generalized trust. Consequently, we can safely differentiate the effect of ethnic composition in voluntary organizations from other factors in a single level regression model and assess the relative importance of each variable in order to assess the second hypothesis.11

Controlling for socio-demographic factors and resources

The table below summarises the relative importance of the variables; participation in mixed versus Turkish organizations; length of participation in addition to the interaction term between these when controlling for other variables.

Overall, all models are significant at the 5 percent level.12 As we might have expected from the multilevel model, participants of mixed organizations differ in their mean generalized trust scores from the Turkish participants. This is substantively the second largest significant effect size (β) after having no education or just completed primary school. The age category 45 to 55 years old has a higher effect size than the ethnic composition of the organization, but it is only significant at a 10 percent level. In model 3, I add an interaction term between length of participation and the ethnic composition of an organization (mixed compared to Turkish). Theoretically, the contact mechanism is corroborated when this variable is significant and has a higher effect size than the variable mixed ethnic composition. On the contrary and as already discussed in the multilevel model, this interaction term is highly insignificant. This suggests that length of participation in mixed organizations does not have any substantive weight in explaining differences in generalized trust. It might be that higher trusting individuals self-select into mixed organizations.

---

11 I have also explored a multilevel model for all the control variables separately, in a simple random intercept model. This is necessary because organizational variance might have been affected by these variables. However, in all these models organizational variance only varied between 2 to 7 percent, when a variable was added to the empty model.

12 Multicollinearity does not pose a problem in model 1 and 2 (VIF < 2.5; Tolerance > 0.4; see Allison, 1999).
Table 3 Fixed effects models of generalized trust for participants of Turkish and mixed associations in Amsterdam, 2009-2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th>Model 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B (S.E.)</td>
<td>β</td>
<td>B (S.E.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex (Reference = Men)</strong></td>
<td>0.201 (0.209)</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>0.072 (0.218)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age (Reference = 24 and younger)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>0.346 (0.296)</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>0.203 (0.303)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-44</td>
<td>0.236 (0.324)</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>0.173 (0.324)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-54</td>
<td>0.711 (0.331)</td>
<td>0.148*</td>
<td>0.620 (0.333)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-70+</td>
<td>0.748 (0.342)</td>
<td>0.151*</td>
<td>0.531 (0.351)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Divorced or widowed</strong> (Reference = Married or cohabiting; never been married)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed or sick (Reference = In paid job; retired; doing unpaid or voluntary work)</td>
<td>-0.634 (0.314)</td>
<td>-0.113*</td>
<td>-0.633 (0.312)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Household Income (€)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1001-1700</td>
<td>0.216 (0.260)</td>
<td>0.055</td>
<td>0.316 (0.263)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1701-3200</td>
<td>0.047 (0.274)</td>
<td>0.011</td>
<td>0.134 (0.276)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than 3200</td>
<td>0.329 (0.373)</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.357 (0.372)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Educational attainment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No education or primary school</td>
<td>-0.866 (0.298)</td>
<td>-0.183**</td>
<td>-0.732 (0.304)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary vocational training and pre-university</td>
<td>-0.452 (0.230)</td>
<td>-0.120*</td>
<td>-0.396 (0.230)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnic composition</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed (Reference = Turkish)</td>
<td>0.458 (0.227)</td>
<td>0.123*</td>
<td>0.471 (0.298)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length participation</td>
<td>0.018 (0.025)</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Length participation x ethnic composition</td>
<td>0.004 (0.030)</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intercept</strong></td>
<td>5.456</td>
<td>5.246</td>
<td>5.204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.059 *</td>
<td>0.070 *</td>
<td>0.075 *</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

~p≤0.10; *p≤0.05; **p≤0.01, n = 353
In sum, this study finds better support for the level of education of a respondent (having no educational qualification or only primary school, as compared to having a higher vocational or university degree) than any other factor, since its effect size is the highest in all models. Therefore, the second hypothesis based on the contact mechanism is also refuted. Then the mean difference in generalized trust scores is better explained by a mixed ethnic composition of an organization. This might, however, be indicative of a self-selection mechanism. Thirdly, the age category 45 to 55 years as opposed to 24 years or younger has a positive effect on generalized trust. Having lost one’s partner through divorce or having become a widow (or widower) has a negative effect size too. Finally, having finished secondary school as opposed to having a higher vocational or university degree negatively influences generalized trust, although its effect is less pronounced than having no education or having finished primary school. This is because the secondary school variable is only significant at the 10 percent level. Surprisingly, however, household income is not statistically significant in this model, although there is enough variation among the participants.

Organizational practices
Although most ethno-national organizations are based on identity, this would not do justice to their varied missions and activities (Fennema, 2004). In contrast, mixed organizations’ primary missions are not to bridge ethnic gaps, and only a very few actively do this. This is so, because the ethnic composition of the organizations is often de facto mixed. For example, most sports organizations are not set up to promote diversity, but they attract a mixed membership due to the ethnic composition of a neighbourhood. Similarly, a women’s professional network might attract mixed members, because the nature of its activities attracts expatriates. Interestingly, most organizations that explicitly mentioned to be promoting diversity and bridging ethnicities were initially founded as ethnic organizations or are founded by second-generation immigrants.

Table 4 below describes the mission of the organizations as reflected in the Dutch Chamber of Commerce database. A third of the organizations were either founded later than the database was composed or are not formally registered. But I nevertheless categorised their activities as though they would have been registered or
labelled them according to an appropriate category. The majority of organizations, however, report to organize a variety of activities, which is not depicted below.

**Table 4.** Types of organisations based on chamber of commerce data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Turkish</th>
<th>Mixed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elderly</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighbourhood group</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social work</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Teacher Association</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most strikingly, Turkish organizations are very versatile in what they offer as activities. Common activities are religious festive events. Some organizations that direct their activities towards women and youth, for example, are partly funded or dependent on volunteers from religious organizations. So they also take part in religious festivities. They currently receive, or in the past, got funding from transnational charitable Turkish organizations or from the Turkish government.

But recently some receive also funding from the local government mainly for providing services. These services range from language training for women, to homework assistance, and sports activity for the youth. Among Turkish organizations, it seems to be very widespread to offer themed events too. They provide information on health care issues (e.g. diabetes prevention and psychological care), pension restructuring, and sometimes even debates on domestic violence and gay emancipation. The council and social workers are very receptive in providing funding for these kinds of issues and collaborating with Turkish organizations. Equally, some organizations emphasised that by having a function room that opens on regular hours, they help combat youth vandalism and provide activities that the whole community will profit from. Local councils often provide empty buildings as function rooms to Turkish organizations. Sometimes, they do demand that these organizations share those spaces with other ethno-national organizations.
Politically themed events and calls for demonstrations are rare among both types of organizations, which might again be indicative of funding opportunities. However, some mixed organizations reported they are apolitical and do not wish to participate in political events. The council sometimes promotes providing political information to marginalized groups. Hence, some organizations offer information on voting to (illiterate) women and men, but this seems to be more likely among Turkish organizations rather than mixed organizations. Large nation-wide charities seem to assist mixed organizations when the theme is of particular interest to them. Two projects organized are worth mentioning here. One aimed at preventing Islamic radicalism by creating peer groups among Moroccan youth. Another organization distributed magnets with different statements from the Dutch constitution in a neighbourhood in order to educate people about freedom of speech and human rights. Residents of those neighbourhoods could win prizes by collecting all the magnets. This supposedly created “contact” among neighbours as they had to exchange the magnets among themselves in order to collect a full set.

Some mixed and Turkish organizations also reported that although they organize religious festive activities, they also organize barbeques and neighbourhood parties around Dutch festive themes. Only two Turkish organizations openly stated that their mission is solely to promote Turkish culture.

The discussion above might question the extent to which these organizations are promoting political participation and civic skills. Only five organizations mentioned offering civic education courses, three of which are Turkish. However, ten Turkish organizations report to have or had a board member working as a politician now as compared to one mixed organization. Most of them have been a member since their teens. Contact with the council is equally distributed among both types of organizations. But when it comes to contacting political parties during or outwith election times, Turkish organizations outnumber mixed organizations. This should not come as a surprise to us as the migration literature across Europe has often mapped their activities and mobilization efforts around politically themed events.

In sum, Turkish ethno-national, more so than, mixed organizations are ‘properly conceptualized as multipurpose hybrid organizations rather than as service providers’ (De Graauw, 2008, p. 328). Yet, by providing services they function as a partner in governance structures and help overcome inequalities. They give voice to groups of people who would otherwise be marginalized. Mixed organizations are, on
the other hand, generally less politicized and hence are less inclined to mobilize their participants and their claims. This has to do with the fact that leisure organizations are becoming mixed due to the ethnic composition of the neighbourhoods they are located in rather than purposefully being organized around an ideological goal.

**Discussion and conclusions**

As an informant of this study said in an interview: ‘If we organise an event, we have to make sure, we have invited our [Dutch] neighbours. Otherwise, they complain…But they never take part in our activities… the local council also urges us to do this before they commit themselves to financing a project’ (Turkish board member). This paper argues that while interethnic contact is important in many facets, we need to take a more critical view of the contact hypothesis. As the results above has shown, ethno-national organizations could be regarded important actors in facilitating the integration of old and new immigrants despite concerns about ethnic concentration. Both Turkish and some mixed organizations are valuable partners in governance structures and in promoting political activities. Their main contribution to a democratic political system could, hence, be seen in terms of opposing power inequalities (Fung, 2003) inherent in contemporary democracies (Crouch, 2004) rather than inducing attitudes of generalized trust.

Across generalized trust studies, there is a general pattern: individual level variable age and education are significant predictors. This study, which has built on previous works, also found stronger evidence for individual level factors rather than organizational variation. The final model in the analysis above employs a single level regression, since separating organizational and participant level variance in generalized trust did not explain much of the variation between participants. Educational attainment seems to best explain differences between participants. Next, middle-aged participants are more likely to say they trust others, whereas participants who have lost their partner through divorce or who have become a widower are less likely to trust others. These findings support the “winner in society” theory that people with a relatively better socio-economical position have higher trust levels.

The data also suggests that mixed organizations bring together high trusting individuals rather than socialize them. Controlling for length of participation, participants of mixed organizations do not show to be more trustful. This implies that the context in which interaction takes place, namely the presence of diverse ethnic
groups or conversely ethnic homogeneity in voluntary organizations is unlikely to affect generalized trust. Thus a contact mechanism, through bridging and bonding ethnic ties, in voluntary organizations seems not to explain differences in generalized trust. This is not so surprising, since the voluntary sector literature (and neighbourhood research on diversity) suffers from the same shortcomings as the earlier versions of contact theory in social psychology. That is to say, most of these studies only predict that ‘positive contact effects will occur, not how and why’ (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 80).

A limitation of the present study might be the design, which only included Turkish organizations. However, it might be unlikely to find evidence for the contact mechanism by including other ethno-national organizations, if we regard Turkish organizations as a critical case. Insignificant variances at the organizational level might also seem to weaken the findings. Nevertheless, we might also question whether gathering more data in order to report significant findings has any added value, if the findings suggest bearing little weight. Finally, the results seem to suggest that high trusting individuals are self-selecting into mixed organizations. Stolle’s (1998) study reached a similar conclusion when examining generalized trust for participants of different types of voluntary organizations in the United States, Germany and Sweden (see also Uslaner and Brown, 2005). However, this is a tentative conclusion as we need longitudinal panel data, which should show whether careful individuals are not opting out of mixed organizations.

We could, nevertheless, question the conceptualisation of generalized trust as a positive orientation towards ethnically diverse others, which is arguably induced by contact. Recent studies seem to invoke the contact mechanism, since they view generalized trust as a lack of prejudice (see Putnam, 2007; Stolle, Soroka and Johnston, 2008; Hewstone, 2009). The relationship between contact among diverse groups and diminishing prejudice is well-established (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006). However, generalized trust might be less indicative of a lack of prejudice towards other ethnic groups or ethnocentrism.

Generalized trust might be the result of alternative cognitive processes. It may well be that negative life experiences translate into a careful orientation (Alesina and La Ferrara, 2002; De Hart and Dekker, 2003; Smith, 2010). Other value constructs may equally offer insights into why some people say they trust others while others say they are careful. In this framework, people might adhere to generalized trust, because
they ‘see their trust as a sort of principle of their life’ (De Hart and Dekker, 2003, p. 164; see also Uslaner, 2002). Although it may seem irrational that one would in general say they trust others, some people may believe it is socially rational to say so.

Finally, there are alternative research questions that one can pose in relation to voluntary organizations and specifically ethno-national organizations. We could examine how members are recruited and shed light on their motivation for participating. This, in turn, will help disentangle the causal links between joining and trusting.

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