

Ethnicity and political participation in the neighbourhood

Frank Hurdeman - 621751

Erasmus School of Social and Behavioural Sciences, Erasmus University Rotterdam

Dr. Gijs Custers

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**Erasmus
University
Rotterdam**

Erasmus

Abstract

Ethnicity and civic communities play an essential role in understanding political participation. However, the number of studies that focus on how ethnic neighbourhood context in the Netherlands affects these factors is limited. In this paper it is studied to what extent civic communities affect political participation and how ethnic neighbourhood composition moderates this effect among citizens in Rotterdam. The argument is made that political mobilization by civic communities, to make their members participate in politics, is stronger in neighbourhoods with high concentrations of ethnic minorities. To study this relationship between political participation, civic communities and ethnic neighbourhood composition the *Wijkprofieldata* 2009 and 2010 is used (N = 18615). Respondents with Dutch, Turkish, Moroccan, Antillean and Surinam- migration backgrounds answered questions on whether they are active in the church, cultural organisations, politics and societal organisations. Combining this data with third-party neighbourhood contextual data allows me to answer the research question. The results show that ethnicity and participation in civic communities play a crucial role when it comes to political participation, yet the results indicate no effect of ethnic neighbourhood composition for citizens with a non-western migration background in Rotterdam. Some indications were found that civic communities might be even more influential for citizens with a non-western migration background than for natives.

Keywords: Political participation; civic community; ethnicity; ethnic neighbourhood composition; ethnic concentration; ethnic diversity; mobilization; political efficacy

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Introduction

The general participation of ethnic minorities in Dutch society is a heavily debated subject. When looking at political participation levels there are big differences between those without a migration background and those with non-western migration backgrounds. The *Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek* (CBS) shows that participation in political activities, such as membership of political parties, attending municipal meetings, and voter turnout, is lower in the Netherlands among those with non-western migration backgrounds than those without migration backgrounds (CBS, 2017).¹ Next to that, Maxwell (2010) found that in France the general voter turnout is significantly lower among French citizens with non-western migration backgrounds. This leads to the believe that differences between those with- and without migration backgrounds in the broad domain of political participation exist.

However, there are signs that differences in contextual surroundings can have a positive influence on the political participation of migrants. Previous research has shown that the concentration of ethnic minorities in a neighbourhood can have a positive effect on political participation, voter turnout in most cases, of ethnic minorities. For example, Cutts et al. (2007) find in a study in the United Kingdom among Southern Asians, that the aggregate relationship between percentage of Southern Asians in neighbourhoods and voter turnout is negative. Yet, when these Southern Asian migrants reside together their individual chance of voting increases. Explanations for this relationship can be found in the community networks, effective mobilizations by political parties and increased levels of political efficacy (the feeling that politics can change due to the influence of individuals) (Cutts et al., 2007; Bilodeau, 2009; Cho et al., 2006). Other studies done in less segregated areas than the United Kingdom and Australia show the same trend. Dutch research shows that citizens with a migration background who live together in the same neighbourhood tend to respond more homogenous to politics (e.g., voting for the same party or politicians) and these citizens are more easily mobilized by political parties to participate in politics (Vermeulen et al., 2020). However, these are not the only factors that effect political participation. Indications that local organisations, place-based ethnic networks, and religious networks (i.e., civic communities) can play a role for certain citizens with migration backgrounds when it comes to political participation are also found (Vermeulen

¹ As of 2022 the CBS has changed their division of citizens with migration backgrounds. They have made the choice to change their main division from western/non-western to a division based on continents and frequent immigrationcountries. In this research the choice has been made to follow the old line of the CBS which includes citizens with western/non-western migration backgrounds (CBS, 2022).

et al., 2020; Fennema & Tillie, 1999). This combination of previous research which indicates that ethnic neighbourhood composition plays a part in political participation and certain indications that civic communities can sometimes add to these effects, makes it interesting to see whether these findings are related. This is why in this study I will examine the role of civic communities relating to political participation and how ethnic neighbourhood composition influences this role.

This article will add to the existing literature in three ways. Firstly this article will analyse the participation in political activities in twofold to see the effects on two types of political participation rather than one overall scale of political participation in Rotterdam. This contribution will be done by measuring the concept of political participation as the participation in political activities, such as participating in a debate, volunteering for political parties, but also volunteering for organisations with social goals.

Secondly, most recent articles have used data from countries and areas that know highly segregated neighbourhoods, mainly outside of Europe. Prior research shows that European cities generally have lower levels of social- and ethnic segregation, therefore it is argued that neighbourhoods in the Netherlands are more intertwined than those in e.g., Australia or the United States (Van Gent & Musterd, 2016). Thus, participation in organisations is not entirely restricted to the own neighbourhood. It is therefore interesting to see whether the effect of ethnic neighbourhood composition holds when looking at the participation in political activities in neighbourhoods of Rotterdam.

Lastly, the most prominent contribution to the literature is the examination of how ethnic neighbourhood composition affects political participation. Departing from research regarding political participation, I distinguish two strands. The first strand is the institutional theoretical strand. Researchers who devote their research more to this strand focus on various potential institutional-based effects on political participation. These potential influences include the quantity of political access points, compulsory voting, direct democracy, and decentralization on political participation (Bousetta, 2000; Hadjar & Beck, 2010; Van der Meer, Van Deth & Scheepers, 2009; Vrábliková, 2014). However, this type of theorizing lacks the social and cultural context that also influences political participation. The second strand regarding research on political participation focuses more on the social and cultural context. A central concept in this strand is civic community. Robert Putnam (1993) is one of the most prominent researchers that focus on civic societies, and often the term civic community is used to explain trust in institutions and political participation in general (Fennema & Tillie, 1999). These communities are seen as voluntary associations that citizens can participate in, which

pursue common goals and or common interests. Examples of *civic communities* are cultural and religious associations. Kranendonk & Vermeulen (2019) have argued that such associations influence the political participation of Dutch citizens with non-western migration backgrounds who partake in them. The findings of Kranendonk & Vermeulen (2019) suggests that individuals who are part of a cultural or religious association perceive themselves as individuals with common interests. Being part of the same organisation provides access to group resources which again facilitate forms of institutionalized or noninstitutionalized political participation. I will draw upon these findings by arguing that the effects of civic communities differ between neighbourhoods with different ethnic compositions.

This leads to the following research question: *To what extent do civic communities affect the participation in political activities of Dutch citizens with non-western migration backgrounds in Rotterdam, and to what extent does ethnic neighbourhood composition moderate this effect?*

It is important to better understand in what circumstances citizens are politically engaged for two reasons. First, it is relevant to understand this because political participation is closely intertwined with the stability of democracy (Zittel & Fuchs, 2007). A downward trend in political participation is usually seen as an indication that citizens are turning their backs on democracy, which consequently has strong adverse effects on the system of the government. It is thus essential to understand how citizens are motivated to participate politically, in order to maintain the legitimacy of the governmental system. Second, it is essential to understand how differences in participation in political activities among citizens with non-western migration backgrounds are established. As mentioned, there are substantial differences in political participation between citizens with- and without migration backgrounds. Participating in these political activities is a way to politically represent oneself as a group, something which is especially important for ethnic minorities. If such minority groups do not participate, policies and politics will be dominated by majority groups without much regard for these minorities, leading to a situation in which the political system will not necessarily accurately represent society. By grasping in what kind of context those with non-western migration backgrounds do participate, the political participatory gap can potentially be decreased.

As mentioned in the research question, this study will focus on Rotterdam. Rotterdam knows multiple neighbourhoods with truly diverse ethnic neighbourhood compositions (WijkprofielRotterdam, 2022). Next to that, the four biggest ethnic minorities in the

Netherlands, which are Turkish-, Moroccan-, Antillean- and Surinam citizens, are strongly represented in Rotterdam (CBS, 2016; CBS, 2021).

Theoretical framework

Political participation

Before taking a closer look at the effects of ethnic neighbourhood composition on political participation through civic communities, it is useful to define the concept of political participation. The participation of citizens in the political sphere has been a phenomenon that governments and leaders have had to consider for centuries. Elected officials tend to pay attention to those who for example, donate money to political groups, take part in protest marches, write letters to elected officials, and who attend municipal consultation evenings. Thus, those who participate partly determine what policies are made. If this participation is unrepresentative, the policies are dictated by only a few (Campbell, 2013).

Yet, to some extent it remains unclear what the precise definition of political participation itself is. Most common research measures political participation as voter turnout, petition signing or active party membership, which is thus focused on formal political participation (Weiss, 2020). Verba & Nie (1972) stated that there is more to political participation than just this formal participation. They argued that citizens also can participate in politics through numerous other activities, such as campaigning, contacting public officials, and communal activities. Consequently, this makes that activities such as striking, protesting, attending neighbourhood debates, and participating in neighbourhood councils could also be seen as political participation. Overall, at the core of political participation, according to Lakatos & Musgrave (1970), is the fact that actions need to be undertaken by citizens, they need to be voluntary, and the actions need to be targeted at governments, institutions, organizations, or NGOs.

A more recent development and subject of study is online political participation, and with that mobile-focused online political participation. With the progression of time more forms of communication and contacts are maintained through the internet. Increasingly more online- and mobile media is used to access and find political information, participate in elections, and participate in politics (Martin, 2014; Yamamoto et al., 2015). When talking about this online political participation research often refers to activities like; writing to politicians, making campaign contributions, subscribing to political listservs, e-mailing political messages, posting comments on political blogs, watching political videos, posting political information

on their Facebook profile pages, and also searching for political information on a Facebook political profile page (Valenzuela et al., 2012; Vesnic-Alujevic, 2012).

We thus see that the concept of political participation is far from static. This also makes it rather difficult to come up with a clear and definite definition of political participation. In this study, the choice is made to focus on two types of political participation. Firstly, the focus lies on a broad self-assessed form of political participation to keep the conceptualization broad. This form considers whether citizens contributed to politics, policies, or governing bodies in the past twelve months. Secondly, a less self-assessed conceptualization that narrows the concept is considered. This conceptualization focuses on whether citizens have been a volunteer for political parties or if they have been a volunteer for organisations with social goals in the past twelve months.

Ethnic minorities and participation

In this article, the focus is on the context in which ethnic minorities do participate in political activities. However, to understand this it is also important to sketch the circumstances in which ethnic minorities do not participate in politics. Undoubtedly, there is a political participatory gap between those with- and without a migration background to some extent. However, it is argued, by some, that this gap only exists when looking at participation in national elections, which is not the focus of this research (Sandovici & Listhaug, 2010).

Interestingly, there is no real consensus on where this inequality comes from. Some researchers argue that the political participatory gap follows the line of other social inequalities such as education, income and social class in general (Gallego, 2007). The logic behind the explanations of the effect of these individual characteristics is resource- and cost-based: one's socioeconomic position affects the acquisition of certain resources that lowers the costs of taking part in politics. Thus, it is argued that social capital and socioeconomic status partly affect political participation. Next to that, previous literature has found that small groups, ethnic minorities, in general are exposed to political marginalization. This is mostly due to low levels of interest in politics, less identification with the institutions and language differences (Diehl & Blohm, 2001; Jacobs & Tillie, 2004).

However, this might not be the whole picture. Feelings of exclusion almost always play a role when it comes to arguments about the participation of ethnic minorities (Ersanilli & Koopmans, 2011; Fleischmann et al., 2011). Perceived exclusion can make individuals think that the general society does not care about the group interests of the groups these individuals

belong to (e.g., Muslims). Kuo et al., (2017) conducted research among Asian Americans and how their partisanship changed when citizens felt socially excluded based on racial- or ethnic identity. They found that citizens who feel that certain political parties socially exclude them on a racial/ethnic basis, are also less likely to perceive these political parties as serving their political interests, and tend to not vote for this party. Consequently, these citizens are also less likely to participate in politics in general. This is why I expect that citizens with non-western migration backgrounds participate less in political activities than those with non-migration backgrounds (*H1*).

Civic communities and participation

Civic communities are often mentioned when it comes to explaining political participation. When speaking about civic communities, voluntary participation in associations that pursue common goals or interests is meant (Fennema & Tillie, 1999). It is thus to be expected that voluntary participation in religious- or culturally specific organisations makes one a member of a civic community. Kranendonk & Vermeulen (2019) make distinctions between the underlying mechanisms of participating in culturally specific organisations and religious-based organisations.

When looking at the participation in religious-based civic communities, previous literature shows that this participation can positively impact the political participation of those with migration backgrounds (Fleischmann et al., 2016). A subsequent spill-over effect is the tendency of participation in non-political organisations potentially influencing the political behaviour of those participating in these organisations. The idea behind this spill-over effect is that a degree of involvement within a church or mosque leads to individuals that feel more competent (Peterson, 1992). This can again lead to higher levels of political efficacy, i.e. having the feeling that individual political action does indeed have a meaningful impact on politics (Campbell et al., 1954). Thus, these feelings of political efficacy can result in more participation in political activities. Besides that, several studies argue that formalized religious civic communities also provide recruitment networks, group resources, and strong incentives for members to participate in civic matters (Campbell, 2013; Putnam & Campbell, 2010). Here it is argued that religiosity can be a bridge to integration. Religious organizations provide access to integration-facilitating resources and also expose individuals to political discussions (Connor & Koenig, 2013; Verba et al., 1993). Which in their turn increases participation in political activities.

For culturally specific organisations we do not necessarily expect different outcomes, the mechanism is somewhat different however. The concepts of social identification and depersonalization play a central role here (Turner et al., 1987; Brewer, 1991). Citizens who are active in these cultural-specific organisations regard themselves as part of this cultural group. The idea is that when one emphasizes this broader group, it can lead to the depersonalization of how citizens regard themselves. This self-concept is altered in a way that is connected with the group and can therefore motivate citizens to pursue the group interest merely out of self-interest: they regard themselves as part of the group. Thus, the social identification of citizens, while emphasizing the group, increases awareness of belonging to this group with certain shared political interests. This awareness can, in turn, trigger political interest or incentives to participate in the political sphere (Kranendonk & Vermeulen, 2019; Brady et al., 1995). This is why I expect that citizens who participate in religious organisations and/or in cultural-specific organisations participate in political activities more than citizens who do not participate in religious and/or cultural-specific organisations (*H2a*).

Ethnicity and civic communities

So far I have given arguments on why citizens with a non-western migration background participate less in political activities than natives, and how participation in civic communities, in general, can increase the political participation. However, it is still unclear why citizens with non-western migration backgrounds would even participate in these so-called civic communities.

Weng & Lee (2016) qualitatively studied how newcomers, immigrants and refugees, gave back to their communities and how civic engagement plays a role here. They argue that first-generation immigrants affirm their ethnicity in the integration process and thus reinvent their own culture in the new host country. One's culture can be a resource for activities related to the ethnicity of the citizens. Part of this ethnic identity includes engaging with other citizens who have the same ethnicity. It is not far-fetched to argue that civic communities which are focused on specific cultural aspects or identities, e.g., mosques and immigrant organisations, are increasingly used by citizens who have these identities or cultural aspects. Because citizens with migration backgrounds reaffirm their ethnic identity in their host country and engage more often with citizens of the same identity I expect that citizens with a non-western migration background participate more often in civic communities than citizens without a migration background (*H2b*).

When combining the previous two chapters and their hypotheses that migrants participate more often in civic communities, and that civic communities positively affect political participation, I also propose a mediating hypothesis. I expect that the negative relation between ethnicity and political participation is partly mediated through the participation in civic communities (*H2c*).

Ethnic neighbourhood composition and participation

The context in which these cultural or religious organizations matter is still missing. Previous literature has already shown that in neighbourhoods with more immigrants, the general trend is that there are lower levels of political participation, in the form of voter turnout (Cutts et al. 2007). On the individual level, however, it is found that immigrants living in these neighbourhoods, compared to those living in neighbourhoods with few immigrants, participate more often. The possible explanations can be found in three mechanisms which have previously been mentioned and tested by Bilodeau (2009).

Political parties can more easily mobilize citizens with migration backgrounds to participate in political activities when these citizens reside together. Parties that focus on citizens with migration backgrounds, presumably have lower costs for campaigning and higher gains when campaigning in neighbourhoods with a high concentration of citizens with migration backgrounds (Ramakrishnan, 2005). As result, citizens living in neighbourhoods with high concentrations of non-western migrants are targeted more often by political parties, which increases their political participation (Vermeulen et al., 2019).

A second explanation for this relationship is found in the perceived strength of numbers. It is argued that the perception of influencing politics, in neighbourhoods with high concentrations of non-western migrants, increases when citizens have the idea that they have the group size to make a real impact (Leighley, 2001). Citizens who live in neighbourhoods with high concentrations of non-western migrants, interact more often with citizens of the same migration background, and therefore will sooner have the idea that they as a group can have an impact on politics. In essence, this means that individuals experience an increase in external efficacy since the government has to respond to a relatively big group of citizens (Balch, 1974). In turn, this increase makes citizens more willing to participate in political activities. Considering the arguments that it is easier for political parties to mobilize citizens in neighbourhoods with high concentrations of non-western migrants, and that the external political efficacy increases with higher concentrations of non-western migrants I expect that

citizens who live in neighbourhoods with a high concentration of citizens with the same migration background, participate more often in political activities than citizens who live in neighbourhoods with low concentrations of citizens with the same migration background (*H3a*).

Although the two lines of argumentation above are relevant, the focus in this study lies on the third argumentation by Bilodeau (2009). This argumentation is based on mobilization possibilities by civic communities. When citizens are well-integrated into their social networks, their participation levels are higher (Verba et al., 1995). In neighbourhoods with more citizens who share the same cultural identification, it can be argued that the social networks are more integrated. Religious- and culturally-specific organizations play crucial roles in mobilizing these groups of citizens who share their cultural identification (Fennema & Tillie, 1999). Thus, citizens with migration backgrounds, living in neighbourhoods with high concentrations of citizens with migration backgrounds, participate more in political activities because religious- and culturally-specific organizations are more active in getting them to do so (Bilodeau, 2009). This is why I expect that the effect of participation in civic communities on participation in political activities is stronger in neighbourhoods with higher percentages of non-western migrants (*H4a*).

However, some scholars argue that these so-called ethnic enclaves might not affect political participation in the way that was mentioned in the past paragraphs. Putnam's (2007) findings tend to indicate that immigration and cultural diversity reduce social solidarity and civic-mindedness, even among citizens from the same ethnic group. When cultural diversity increases, citizens tend to withdraw from collective life (Portes & Vickstrom, 2015). This, in essence has to do with the so-called 'constrict theory' (Putnam, 2007; Lancee & Dronkers, 2008). This theory states that ethnic diversity reduces in-group and out-group trust due to more people in a neighbourhood who are unlike you. Fewer people who are like you means, there are fewer people one can identify with which results in less social contacts and less trust. This is why I propose two alternative hypotheses for *H3a* and *H4a*. Firstly, I expect that citizens who live in neighbourhoods with high levels of cultural diversity, participate less often in political activities than citizens who live in neighbourhoods with low concentrations of citizens with the same migration background (*H3b*). Next, I expect that the effect of participation in civic communities on participation in political activities is less strong in neighbourhoods with higher levels of cultural diversity (*H4b*).

Data description

Data

For the analyses, the in Rotterdam conducted *Wijkprofiel* survey will be used. This survey is conducted every one or two years by the municipality of Rotterdam to monitor the social and physical state of being of Rotterdam (Custers, 2021). This *Wijkprofiel* data combines administrative data with the outcomes of the survey. Per survey around 15.000 Rotterdam citizens older than 15 years are asked to participate, the response rate was 22.1% in 2009 and 23.2% in 2010. In this research, *Wijkprofiel* data from 2009 and 2010 are used for the analysis. These surveys concern clustered random sampling methods in order to attain representational data from all neighbourhoods. Intending to make the final sample representational (ensuring citizens with migration backgrounds were adequate represented) participants could complete the survey face-to-face, on paper, by telephone, or online and in different languages. In most neighbourhoods between 125 and 165 citizens filled out the survey. The neighbourhoods are divided based on the divisions used by the *CBS* (CBS, 2011).

This resulted in 13084 respondents from Rotterdam in 2009 and 10781 respondents from Rotterdam in 2010 who filled out the surveys. A total of 23685 respondents are part of this combined dataset. Since the focus in the first two analyses lies on citizens with Dutch, Turkish, Moroccan, Surinam, and Antillean migration backgrounds, respondents who have a different migration background will be left out of the analysed population. This resulted in the exclusion of 4343 respondents with a Cape Verdean (N=626) or other migration background (N=3717). A second point of interest are politics and political participation, which become increasingly relevant when one reaches the lawful voting age. This voting age was included as a minimum requirement for the validity of the participants. As a result, 458 respondents younger than 18, the Dutch legal voting age, were excluded from the target population. This results in a target population of 80.49% from the total amount of respondents (N=19064).

Lastly, respondents were checked on missing variables on the dependent, independent, and control variables. In total 449 respondents (2.36%) were excluded on the premises of missing relevant answers. Interestingly, 392 of the excluded respondents did not answer their educational level. Resulting in 18615 valid respondents.

For the last analyses, the focus only lies on citizens with so-called non-western migration backgrounds. Therefore respondents with Dutch backgrounds and respondents from neighbourhoods that missed contextual data will be excluded from the target population,

resulting in a target population of 5123 respondents with Turkish, Moroccan, Surinam, or Antillean migration backgrounds (27.52%).

Dependent variable

Participation in political activities. The measurement of participation in political activities consists of three different variables. First, the respondents were asked ‘Have you been active for your neighbourhood, in the past 12 months? If yes, in what way have you been active?’ The respondents could choose between five answers of which the third answer option was: ‘Yes, have been actively contributing to politics, policies and governing (e.g., debating, political parties or participation)’. Respondents who chose this category are regarded as actively contributing to politics, policies or governing. In this variable ‘0’ represents ‘Not contributing’ and ‘1’ represents ‘Contributing’.

Second and third, the respondents were asked ‘At what organisation(s) have you been active as a volunteer?’ Respondents could choose between 13 organisations, as well as an option to fill in different organisations that were not pre-conceptualized. The fourth answering option was ‘Political organisation’, and the ninth answer option was ‘An organisation with social goals (e.g., human rights, nature- or animal protection)’. In the analysis, these two forms of volunteering in political and/or social organisations are treated together as a dichotomous variable, in which ‘0’ represents ‘Not volunteering in a social and/or political organisations’ and ‘1’ represents ‘Volunteering in a social and/or political organisations’.

Independent variables

Ethnicity. Respondents were asked ‘In what country were you born?’ and ‘In what country were your parents born?’ Respondents could choose between 9 answer categories, which were ‘Netherlands’, ‘Turkey’, ‘Morocco’, ‘Dutch Antilles and Aruba’, ‘Surinam’, ‘Cape Verdean’, ‘Other country, namely ...’, ‘I do not want to tell’ and lastly ‘Unknown’. In this research, the choice is made to focus on citizens with non-western migration backgrounds. Hence, five dummy variables are made. These dummy variables represent being someone with a Dutch-, Turkish-, Moroccan-, Dutch Antilles- and Aruban- or Surinam migration background or respondents with parents that have a Dutch-, Turkish-, Moroccan-, Dutch Antillean and Aruban- or Surinam migration background. In this conceptualization, the CBS definition of citizens with migration backgrounds is followed (CBS, 2022). This results in five dichotomous variables, in which ‘0’ represents ‘Not having this migration background’ and ‘1’ represents

‘Do having this migration background’. Respondents who answered ‘Other country, namely ...’, ‘I do not want to tell’, ‘Unknow’ or ‘Cape Verdean’ are treated as missing. The reason for this exclusion is that these citizens are not part of the target population in this research.

Participation in Civic communities. Respondents were asked ‘At what organisation(s) have you been active as a volunteer?’ Respondents could choose between 13 types of organisations, and an option of filling in different organisations that were not pre-conceptualized. The thirteenth answer option was ‘Specific immigrant association or organisation, like ...’. If respondents chose, this answer category they are treated as a participator in a civic community. The sixth answer option was ‘Religious or ideological organisation (e.g., church, mosque, temple, etc.)’. If respondents chose this answer category they are treated as participator in a civic community. This results in a dichotomous variable in which ‘0’ represents ‘Not participating in a civic community’ and ‘1’ represents ‘Participating in a civic community’.

Ethnic neighbourhood composition. Based on third-party data from the CBS, the 71 neighbourhoods received scores based on the percentage of people with certain migration backgrounds living in that neighbourhood. The percentages of Turkish citizens, Moroccan citizens, Dutch Antillean and Aruban citizens, and Surinam citizens in the specific neighbourhoods are given. These percentages were then paired with the neighbourhood and migration background of the respondents. Thus, a higher score on this variable means more citizens in the same neighbourhood as the respondent with the same migration background. For example, a score of 9.0 means that 9.0% of the neighbourhood the respondent resides in, consists of citizens with the same migration background as the respondent.

Next to that, there will be controlled for age, sex, mean neighbourhood income, and education with three dummy categories. The descriptive statistics of the dependent, independent, and control variables are shown in table 1.

Table 1.*Descriptive statistics of the dependent, independent, and control variables.*

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	St. Dev
Political Participation					
Contributing to politics	18615	0	1	.032	
Volunteer social or political organisation	18615	0	1	.048	
Ethnicity					
Dutch	18615	0	1	.725	
Turkish	18615	0	1	.083	
Moroccan	18615	0	1	.052	
Dutch Antilles	18615	0	1	.037	
Surinam	18615	0	1	.103	
Participation in civic community	18615	0	1	.047	
Ethnic neighbourhood composition	5123	0	32	11.300	6.893
<i>Control variables</i>					
Age	18615	18	90	48.690	17.813
Sex (ref = male)	18615	0	1	.587	
Mean neighbourhood income¹	18615	12	44	22.200	6.340
Education					
Lower educated	18615	0	1	.257	
Middle educated	18615	0	1	.321	
Higher educated	18615	0	1	.422	

¹ Income *1000. Source: *Wijkprofiel data 2009 & 2010*.

Method

To test our hypotheses correctly, several binary logistic regression analyses will be performed. Two dichotomous dependent variables are used which both measure participation in political activities. Multiple independent variables, either dichotomous or continuous, are used and therefore a logistic regression analysis is best suitable to analyse the data. When this type of analysis is used, assumptions are made about the data which will have to be examined before analysing (Allen et al., 2014). First, the assumption is that the sampling was sufficient, the data beholds a relatively large amount of respondents from different neighbourhoods and backgrounds, and we see no inflated standard errors. Next, the minimum expected cell

frequencies cannot exceed 20 percent of the variables with values less than 5, this assumption was not violated during the exploratory analyses. Third, the data is checked on outliers. Fourth, the data is checked on multicollinearity with the exploration of correlations between all independent variables. And lastly, the continuous independent variables are checked for the Logit Linearity.

The testing of the hypotheses starts with the relationship between ethnicity and participation in political activities, this is done with a logistic regression analysis (Graph 1, orange). Since this research is interested in two different forms of political participation the analyses are done twice, once for each form of political participation (see Model 1 and Model 3). Second, the mediation of participation in civic communities is added (Graph 1, blue). Model 2 and Model 4 show the results. To test if a mediation takes place a logistical regression on the relation between ethnicity and the participation in civic communities is also conducted (Model 5). This way the relationship between migration background and participation in political activities can be seen as mediating through the participation in civic communities.

Thirdly, the effect of ethnic neighbourhood composition is added to the logistic regression. (Graph 1, green.). This analysis will only be done with participants who have a non-western migration background, therefore Models 1 through 4 are also conducted with the new sample, see Models 6, 7, 10, and 11. Next, the effect of ethnic neighbourhood composition on political participation is analysed, see Models 8 and 12. Lastly, the effect of ethnic neighbourhood composition on the mediation between migration background and political participation through participation in civic communities is examined through an interaction analysis see Model 9 and 13. An overview of the conceptual model and the corresponding colour-coded models is shown in Graph 1.

Graph 1. Conceptual model



Results

In this chapter, I will elaborate on the different outcomes of the logistic regression models. However, there are a few interesting remarks about the descriptive data from Table 1 in the previous chapter. First, it is noticeable that the general political participation looks low (Mean = 0.032 and 0.048). Table 2 shows the distribution of participation in political activities across different ethnical groups. In general, Dutch citizens participate relatively often in political activities. Almost 4% of Dutch citizens contribute to politics, policy, or governing and more than 5.5% participate in political and/or societal organisations. For citizens with non-western migration backgrounds, this is less than 2% for contributing to politics, policy or governing and between the 2- and 2.7% for participation in political and/or societal organisations. This trend of less participation among citizens with non-western migration backgrounds seems to be in line with my expectation about ethnicity and political participation.

Table 1 also shows that in general citizens with a non-western migration background live together with 11.30% of citizens in the same neighbourhood with the same migration background. However, it needs to be said that this number is somewhat skewed since there are certain neighbourhoods with over 20% or even over 30% of citizens with the same migration background.

Table 2.

Cross table of citizens' ethnicity and their contribution to politics and participation in societal or political organisations.

	Contribution to politics, policy, or governing % (N)	Participation in political and/or societal organisation % (N)
	Yes	Yes
Dutch	3.9 (520)	5.7 (769)
Turkish	1.5 (23)	2.0 (31)
Moroccan	1.3 (13)	2.0 (19)
Antillean	1.9 (13)	2.0 (14)
Surinamese	1.4 (27)	2.7 (52)
Total	3.2 (596)	4.8 (885)

Source: *Wijkprofiel data 2009 & 2010.*

For every logistic regression that is conducted in the following chapter, the omnibus model and Hosmer & Lemeshow tests are shown in Table 3. All models were statistically

significant and the Hosmer & Lemeshow tests show that in all cases the models were a good fit for the data. Therefore I will not elaborate on Table 3.

Table 3.

Summary of the omnibus models and the Hosmer & Lemeshow tests.

	Omnibus model	Hosmer & Lemeshow
Model		
1	X2 (df = 8, N=18615) = 262,685***	X2 (df = 8, N=18615) = 6.14, $p = .632$
2	X2 (df = 9, N=18615) = 280,124***	X2 (df = 8, N=18615) = 4.37, $p = .822$
3	X2 (df = 8, N=18615) = 376,034***	X2 (df = 8, N=18615) = 6.63, $p = .578$
4	X2 (df = 9, N=18615) = 408,362***	X2 (df = 8, N=18615) = 8,17, $p = .417$
5	X2 (df = 7, N=5123) = 27,235***	X2 (df = 8, N=5123) = 4,19, $p = .840$
6	X2 (df = 8, N=5123) = 29,612***	X2 (df = 8, N=5123) = 4,97, $p = .761$
7	X2 (df = 9, N=5123) = 30,060***	X2 (df = 8, N=5123) = 1,89, $p = .984$
8	X2 (df = 10, N=5123) = 30,087**	X2 (df = 8, N=5123) = 3,11, $p = .927$
9	X2 (df = 7, N=5123) = 51,485***	X2 (df = 8, N=5123) = 4,56, $p = .804$
10	X2 (df = 8, N=5123) = 68,331***	X2 (df = 8, N=5123) = 5,09, $p = .748$
11	X2 (df = 9, N=5123) = 70,985***	X2 (df = 8, N=5123) = 8,56, $p = .381$
12	X2 (df = 10, N=5123) = 70,985***	X2 (df = 8, N=5123) = 8,56, $p = .381$

(***) $\alpha < .001$, (**) $\alpha < .01$, (*) $\alpha < .05$.

Results from the regressions

First, I examine whether political participation varies across different ethnicities. Models 1 and 3 show the effects of ethnicity and a selection of control variables on political participation, see Table 4. Almost all effects are in the same direction and have a similar size, I therefore believe that contributing to politics, policy or governing and participation in political or societal organisations are somewhat similar forms of political participation.

Being a citizen with a Turkish migration background has a negative effect on contributing to politics, policy, or governing (OR = 0.476) and participation in political or societal organisations (OR = 0.465). In other words, the odds for the Turkish citizen to contribute to politics, controlled for certain other characteristics, are 0.5 times lower than the odds for a Dutch citizen. The odds for a Turkish citizen to participate in political or societal organisations are also 0.5 times lower than the odds for a Dutch citizen to participate. This same effect can be found for citizens with a Moroccan- (OR = 0.447 and OR = 0.460), citizens with a Antillean- (OR = 0.543 and OR = 0.396), and citizens with a Surinam migration

background (OR = 0.407 and OR = 0.529). Considering the size of the odds ratios and the confidence intervals, that all are well below 1.0, the effect is substantial.

Table 4.

The effects of ethnicity, participation in civic communities, education, sex, and neighbourhood income on political participation (odds ratios and 95% CI).

Variables	Contribution to politics, policy, or governing		Participation in political or societal organisations	
	Model 1 ¹	Model 2 ¹	Model 3 ²	Model 4 ²
Constant	0.025***	0.024***	0.023***	0.022***
Ethnicity				
Dutch (<i>ref</i>)	-	-	-	-
Turkish	0.476** [0.31, 0.73]	0.474** [0.31, 0.73]	0.465*** [0.32, 0.67]	0.462*** [0.31, 0.67]
Moroccan	0.447** [0.26, 0.78]	0.456** [0.26, 0.80]	0.460** [0.29, 0.73]	0.471** [0.30, 0.75]
Antillean	0.543* [0.31, 0.95]	0.542* [0.31, 0.95]	0.396** [0.23, 0.68]	0.393** [0.23, 0.67]
Surinam	0.407*** [0.28, 0.60]	0.407*** [0.27, 0.60]	0.529*** [0.40, 0.71]	0.528*** [0.40, 0.71]
Civic communities		1.936*** [1.45, 2.58]		2.089*** [1.65, 2.64]
Education				
Low (<i>ref</i>)	-	-	-	-
Middle	1.707** [1.26, 2.32]	1.687** [1.24, 2.29]	1.669*** [1.29, 2.17]	1.647*** [1.27, 2.14]
High	3.633*** [2.76, 4.79]	3.545*** [2.69, 4.68]	4.183*** [3.31, 5.29]	4.067*** [3.22, 5.14]
Sex	0.582*** [0.49, 0.69]	0.579*** [0.31, 0.95]	0.896 [0.78, 1.03]	0.892 [0.78, 1.02]
Neighbourhood income	0.995 [0.98, 1.01]	0.995 [0.98, 1.00]	1.002 [0.99, 1.01]	1.002 [0.99, 1.01]
R2 Cox & Snell	0.014	0.015	0.020	0.022
R2 Nagelkerke	0.057	0.061	0.063	0.068
N	18615	18615	18615	18615

Note. CI = confidence interval. ¹Dependent variable: contribution to politics, policy or governing. ²Dependent variable: participation in political or societal organisations. (***) $\alpha < .001$, (**) $\alpha < .01$, (*) $\alpha < .05$.

In the theoretical framework, I proposed that citizens with a non-western migration background participate less in political activities than citizens without non-western migration backgrounds (*H1*). The results from Model 1 and Model 3 confirm that having a non-western

migration background is negatively related to contributing to politics and participating in political or societal organisations.

The decrease in contribution to politics or participation in political or societal organisations among citizens with non-western migration backgrounds is undoubtedly present. In the theoretical section, however, I argued that when citizens participate in civic communities (e.g., church or cultural organisations) this negative effect of non-western ethnicity becomes positive, or becomes less negative. In Model 2 and Model 4, see Table 4, the participation in civic communities is added to the models. Citizens who participate in at least one type of civic community have a significant higher chance of contributing to politics (OR = 1.936) and participation in political or societal organisations (OR = 2.089). The odds for those who participate in civic communities to contribute to politics or to participate in political or societal organisations are thus roughly two times higher, than the odds for citizens who do not participate in civic communities. This finding is in line with the expectation that citizens who participate in civic communities, participate more in political activities (*H2a*). Previous literature and the outcomes of Model 2 and Model 4 show that civic communities matter significantly when it comes to political participation.

Secondly, Model 5, see Table 5, shows the relationship between ethnicity and participation in civic communities. The odds for citizens who have a Moroccan migration background to participate in civic communities are 0.5 times lower than the odds for Dutch citizens are (OR = 0.519). For other ethnicities no significant relation is found. This finding is therefore not in line with the expectation that citizens with a non-western migration background would participate more often in civic communities than Dutch citizens (*H2b*). For Moroccan citizens even the opposite was found.

Table 5.

The effects of ethnicity on participation in civic communities (odds ratios and 95% CI).

Variables	Participation in Civic communities
	Model 5
Constant	.041***
Dutch (ref)	-
Turkish	1.169 [0.91, 1.50]
Moroccan	0.519** [0.34, 0.80]
Antillean	1.03 [0.72, 1.48]
Surinam	0.91 [0.72, 1.15]

Notes. The model included the individual variables education (3 dummy categories), sex, and the variable of aggregate neighbourhood income. *CI* = confidence interval. (***) $\alpha < .001$, (**) $\alpha < .01$, (*) $\alpha < .05$.

In the theoretical section I proposed a hypothesis that combined *H2a* and *H2b*. I expected that the negative relationship between ethnicity and political participation would be mediated through the participation in civic communities (*H2c*), i.e. citizens with a non-western migration background participate more often in civic communities and these civic communities make them participate more often in politics. When comparing Model 1 with Model 2 we see that the negative effects of having non-western ethnicity barely change when civic communities are added to the Model even though civic communities did have a significant effect on contributing to politics. Comparing Model 3 and Model 4 shows the same. This finding was thus not in line with the expectations of civic communities having a mediating effect for the relationship between migration background and political participation.

When looking at the effect of our control variables we see that education has a significant effect on political participation, see Table 4. The odds for citizens with a middle educational degree to contribute to politics, controlled for certain other characteristics and civic communities, are 1.7 times higher than the odds for citizens with low educational level (OR = 1.687). This effect becomes even bigger when assessing citizens with high educational degrees, that is to say, the odds are 3.5 times higher than citizens with low education (OR = 3.545). The same effects are found when regarding participation in political or societal organisations. When assessing the effect of sex, the odds for female citizens to contribute to politics are 0.6 times lower than the odds for male citizens (OR = 0.579). However, this effect is not found when regarding the odds for participation in political or societal organisations, here sex does not significantly increase the model's predictive capabilities ($p > .05$). Aggregate neighbourhood income does not have a significant effect on any of the models ($p > .05$).

Now we turn to the main focus of this study, namely the effect of ethnic neighbourhood composition. Table 6 shows the outcomes of the logistic regression for contribution to politics, policy or governing. This follows the same model-building logic as in Table 4, but here only citizens with non-western migration backgrounds are taken into the analysis. Model 6 shows that, when comparing citizens with a Moroccan-, Antillean- and Surinam migration background to citizens with a Turkish migration background, there are no significant differences in the contribution to politics, policy and governing ($p > .05$).

When examining Model 8, where ethnic neighbourhood composition is added to the model, we see that ethnic neighbourhood composition does not have a significant influence on the odds of contributing to politics of citizens with migration backgrounds ($p > .05$). In the theoretical framework, I argued that ethnic neighbourhood composition would have a positive effect on the odds of contributing to politics (*H3a*) or that ethnic diversity would have a

negative effect (*H3b*). These findings are not in line with the expectations and we therefore reject the hypotheses.

Table 6.

The effects of ethnicity, participation in civic communities, and ethnic neighbourhood composition on the contribution to politics, policy, or governing among citizens with a non-western migration background (odds ratios and 95% CI).

Contribution to politics, policy, or governing

Variables	Model 6¹	Model 7¹	Model 8¹	Model 9¹
Constant	0.009***	.008***	0.012***	0.012***
Ethnicity				
Turkish (<i>ref</i>)	-	-	-	-
Moroccan	0.931 [0.47, 1.86]	0.954 [0.48, 1.90]	0.918 [0.46, 1.84]	0.917 [0.46, 1.84]
Antillean	1.090 [0.54, 2.21]	1.088 [0.54, 2.20]	0.982 [0.46, 2.10]	0.981 [0.46, 2.10]
Surinam	0.825 [0.46, 1.47]	0.825 [0.46, 1.47]	0.794 [0.44, 1.43]	0.793 [0.44, 1.42]
Civic communities		1.981 [0.89, 4.41]	1.986 [0.89, 4.42]	2.208 [0.50, 9.70]
Ethnic neighbourhood composition			0.985 [0.94, 1.03]	0.986 [0.94, 1.03]
Ethnic comp. * Civic communities				0.990 [0.88, 1.12]
Education				
Low (<i>ref</i>)	-	-	-	-
Middle	1.671 [0.83, 3.38]	1.668 [0.82, 3.38]	1.654 [0.82, 3.35]	1.656 [0.82, 3.36]
High	3.793*** [1.94, 7.42]	3.673*** [1.87, 7.20]	3.631*** [1.85, 7.11]	3.636*** [1.86, 7.12]
Sex	0.622* [0.39, 0.98]	0.615* [0.39, 0.97]	0.617* [0.39, 0.98]	0.615* [0.39, 0.97]
Neighbourhood income	1.007 [0.96, 1.05]	1.009 [0.97, 1.05]	1.000 [0.95, 1.05]	1.000 [0.95, 1.05]
R2 Cox & Snell	0.005	0.006	0.006	0.006
R2 Nagelkerke	0.037	0.040	0.041	0.041
N	5123	5123	5123	5123

Note. CI = confidence interval. *Note.* Model 6 & 7 are the same as Model 1 & 2 but with different reference group.

¹Dependent variable: contribution to politics, policy or governing. (***) $\alpha < .001$, (**) $\alpha < .01$, (*) $\alpha < .05$.

The effect of civic communities on political participation was expected to be stronger in neighbourhoods with higher percentages of citizens with the same migration background (*H4a*) or the effect of civic communities on political participation was expected to be less strong in neighbourhoods with higher ethnic diversity (*H4b*). Model 9 shows no significant interaction between ethnic neighbourhood composition and civic communities ($p > .05$), thus the effect of participation in civic communities on contributing to politics does not differ between neighbourhoods with different ethnic compositions. Therefore, this finding is also not in line with the expectations.

When looking at the control variables in Model 9 we still see the same effect sizes and directions of these variables as we saw in Model 2. Among citizens with a non-western migration background, the odds for higher educated citizens to contribute to politics are 3.6 times higher than the odds for low educated (OR = 3.636). The odds for female citizens to contribute to politics are 0.6 times lower than the odds for male citizens (OR = 0.615).

Table 7 shows the outcomes of the logistic regression for participation in societal and/or political organisations under citizens with non-western migration backgrounds. Model 10 reveals that, when comparing citizens with a Moroccan-, Antillean- and Surinam- background to citizens with a Turkish migration background, there are no significant differences in the odds for participation in societal or political organisations. This indicates that among citizens with non-western migration backgrounds, there are no differences in participation in these organisations. Interestingly, participation in civic communities does have a significant positive effect on the participation in societal or political organisations, see Model 11. However, for the contribution to politics, see Model 7, this was not the case. The odds for citizens with non-western migration backgrounds who participate in civic communities to participate in societal or political organisations, controlled for certain characteristics, are 3.5 times higher than the odds for citizens who do not participate in civic communities (OR = 3.529). The effect size of this odds ratio is bigger than the odds ratio in Model 4 (OR = 2.089), indicating that participation in civic communities has a bigger effect among citizens with a non-western migration background regarding the participation in societal or political organisations than among Dutch citizens.

Table 7.

The effects of ethnicity, participation in civic communities, and neighbourhood composition on the participation in social or political organisations among citizens with a non-western migration background (odds ratios and 95% CI).

Participation in societal or political organisations

Variables	Model 10 ¹	Model 11 ¹	Model 12 ¹	Model 13 ¹
Constant	0.009***	0.008***	0.019***	0.019***
Ethnicity				
Turkish (<i>ref</i>)	-	-	-	-
Moroccan	0.974 [0.55, 1.74]	1.043 [0.58, 1.87]	0.958 [0.53, 1.73]	0.958 [0.53, 1.73]
Antillean	0.836 [0.44, 1.60]	0.827 [0.43, 1.59]	0.659 [0.33, 1.33]	0.659 [0.33, 1.33]
Surinam	1.087 [0.68, 1.73]	1.100 [0.69, 1.76]	1.015 [0.63, 1.63]	1.015 [0.63, 1.63]
Civic communities		3.529*** [2.07, 6.02]	3.540*** [2.08, 6.04]	3.529* [1.27, 9.79]
Ethnic neighbourhood composition				
Ethnic comp. * Civic communities			0.968 [0.93, 1.01]	0.968 [0.93, 1.01]
Education				
Low (<i>ref</i>)	-	-	-	-
Middle	2.020* [1.01, 3.79]	2.001* [1.06, 3.77]	1.973* [1.05, 3.71]	1.973* [1.05, 3.71]
High	5.701*** [3.13, 10.35]	5.283*** [2.90, 9.62]	5.174*** [2.89, 9.41]	5.174*** [2.85, 9.41]
Sex	1.137 [0.77, 1.68]	1.114 [0.76, 1.65]	1.120 [0.76, 1.65]	1.120 [0.76, 1.66]
Neighbourhood income	0.990 [0.96, 1.03]	0.993 [0.96, 1.03]	0.973 [0.93, 1.02]	0.973 [0.93, 1.02]
R2 Cox & Snell	0.010	0.013	0.014	0.014
R2 Nagelkerke	0.051	0.068	0.071	0.071
N	5123	5123	5123	5123

Note. CI = confidence interval. *Note.* Models 10 & 11 are the same as Models 3 & 4 but with a different reference group. ¹Dependent variable: participation in societal or political organisations. (***) $\alpha < .001$, (**) $\alpha < .01$, (*) $\alpha < .05$.

If we look at the effects of neighbourhood composition on the participation in societal or political organisations, we see no significant effect (Model 12, $p > .05$). The expectation was

that ethnic neighbourhood composition would have a positive effect on participation in societal and/or political organisations (*H3a*). Thus, we reject this hypothesis. The alternative expectation was that ethnic neighbourhood composition would have a negative effect on participation in societal and/or political organisations (*H3b*). This hypothesis is also rejected. There was also no significant interaction between ethnic neighbourhood composition and participation in civic communities (Model 13, $p > .05$). This indicates that the effect of participation in civic communities on participation in societal or political organisations does not differ between neighbourhoods with different ethnic compositions, while it was hypothesized that there would be a difference, either positive or negative, between neighbourhoods based on ethnic neighbourhood composition (*H4a & H4b*). Therefore these hypotheses are rejected.

When looking at the control variables in Model 13 we still see the same sizes and directions of these variables as we saw in Model 4. Among citizens with a non-western migration background, the odds for higher educated citizens to contribute to politics are 5.2 times higher than the odds for low educated (OR = 5.174). This indicates that education is a very strong predictor of participation in societal or political organisations.

Conclusion and Discussion

In this research I have proposed a theoretical framework that tries to explain previous empirical findings of ethnicity, civic communities, and ethnic neighbourhood composition and how these relate to each other. The *Wijkprofieldata* 2009 and 2010 are used to answer the following questions: to what extent do civic communities affect the participation in political activities of Dutch citizens with non-western migration backgrounds in Rotterdam, and to what extent does ethnic neighbourhood composition moderate this effect? Political participation, especially among citizens with a migration background, is highly complex. This research adds to existing studies within this field, but it is also another starting point for future studies on how neighbourhood context and civic communities play their parts in the political participation of Dutch citizens.

Concerning *H1*, we see that citizens with a Turkish-, Moroccan-, Antillean-, and Surinam migration background contribute less frequently to politics, and participate less frequently in societal or political organisations than citizens with a Dutch background. We found that education is a strong predictor of political participation, it could be the case that in general citizens with a migration background are less educated and therefore are less politically

active (Gallo, 2007). However, when controlled for education, we still found this negative relationship. This indicates that at least a small amount of the variance cannot be explained by just education. Feelings of exclusion, discrimination, language barriers, and institutional identification thus potentially explain this relationship partly as well (Fleischmann et al., 2011).

Regarding *H2a* we see, as expected, that citizens who participate in civic communities more often participate in political activities such as contributing to politics and participating in societal or political organisations. Consequently, the conclusion is made that citizens who participate in religious- or cultural organisations also participate in political activities more often. Based on the academic literature, I proposed that civic communities make citizens feel higher levels of political efficacy and mobilize them more easily (Kranendonk & Vermeulen, 2019). However, the direction of this relation remains unclear. The results in this study do not show whether citizens who participate in civic communities also participate more in politics because of that, which would be in line with my theoretical argumentation, or that there is some sort of selection-effect where citizens who are more active in politics are also more prone to participate in civic communities. Previous research shows that this self-selection effect, the pool of democracy thesis, should not be underestimated (Ingen & Van der Meer, 2016).

When we look at *H2b* I do not find that citizens with a migration background, participate more often in civic communities (e.g., church, or cultural organisations) than Dutch citizens, where we expected that this would be the case. Interestingly enough the results show that for Moroccan citizens, the participation in civic communities is even lower than those of Dutch citizens. The proposed theoretical argumentation revolved around the idea that during the process of integration, migrants reaffirm their ethnic identity and therefore they participate more often in civic communities (Weng & Lee, 2016). However, be the case for the Netherlands that for both citizens with a migration background and native citizens the participation in civic communities is high. The Netherlands knows a strong tradition of participation in labour unions, churches and organisations. Therefore it could be the case that the differences in the Netherlands are less present, because the general participation in civic communities is high. Another explanation can be found in the complexity of the concept of civic communities (Fennema & Tillie, 2001; Putnam, 1993). The idea is that from a Dutch perspective civic communities have a wholly different connotation than citizens with non-western migration backgrounds, they might simply participate in civic communities that in this study were not regarded as civic communities.

Next, I expected to find that the negative relation between ethnicity and political participation would be mediated by the participation in civic communities (*H2c*). However, I

did not find this mediating effect. Possibly because there was no relation between ethnicity and participation in civic communities.

When we assess *H3a* and *H3b*, I found no relationship between the ethnic neighbourhood composition of citizens and their political participation. We can conclude that, as proposed, political party mobilisation and an increase in political efficacy do not or barely play a role in Rotterdam (Bilodeau, 2009). Besides that, we also do not find that due to increased ethnic diversity citizens participate less in political activities (Putnam, 2007). Previous research on this topic mostly has been conducted in highly segregated neighbourhoods in the United Kingdom, United States of America, and Australia. As mentioned, neighbourhoods in Europe, and especially in the Netherlands, are much more intertwined (Gent & Musterd, 2016). It could be the case that citizens with a migration background have more social connections across neighbourhood borders and spend less time inside their neighbourhood than their counterparts in other countries. Therefore the expected effects of active mobilization and the feelings of strength in numbers on the political participation are simply less present because citizens spend less time in the same single neighbourhood.

The same sort of findings makes us reject *H4a* and *H4b*. It was expected that ethnic neighbourhood composition would affect the effect of participation in civic communities on political participation. However, we did not find any differences in the effect of participation in civic communities between neighbourhoods with different ethnic composition. On the one hand I proposed that in those civic communities in neighbourhoods with higher percentages of the same people, the social networks would be also more integrated, and therefore the mobilization of civic communities would be more effective in these type of neighbourhoods (Verba et al., 2014). However, in the Netherlands it could be the case that social networks are barely, or not at all, bound to neighbourhoods. Among citizens with migration backgrounds, read ethnic minorities, it can even be the case that the type of civic communities they participate in (e.g., Mosques and non-western cultural organisations) are even more focussed on connecting citizens across neighbourhoods, which in essence decreases contextual neighbourhood effects. This idea is in line with previous findings that neighbourhood context has little influence on the success rates of immigrant organizations but that the organizational characteristics themselves legitimize themselves among citizens with a migration background (Vermeulen, et al., 2016). We found that civic communities affect political participation, and even more among citizens with migration backgrounds, which could be an indication for this alternative explanation.

I conclude that ethnic neighbourhood composition effects are absent within neighbourhoods in the Netherlands, when assessing political participation. This shows that contextual effects on the neighbourhood level are either not as influential in the Netherlands as they are in other countries, or that the effects are more complex than sheer mobilization effects. For the Netherlands, it can also be the case that the housing market plays a crucial role. For citizens, especially those who more often reside in social housing, their living conditions (e.g., neighbourhood) might not be their choice (Hochstenbach, 2022). The options are not widespread and therefore this can alter these neighbourhood effects.

One of the main limitations in study is the general low political participation of citizens with a migration background. This low N of citizens with migration backgrounds, who also participated in politics had practical implications in the analysis itself. Therefore the conclusions in this study have to be taken with a pinch of salt.

Next, political participation is a complex concept. In this study political participation has been operationalized in a straightforward format, it only focuses on the broad concept of self-assessed contribution to politics and active voluntary participation in societal or political organisations. Previous research has already shown that political participation is much broader than that (Weiss, 2020). Therefore it is not an unlikely scenario that certain respondents have perceived themselves as not politically participating, whilst they do politically participate and vice versa.

In this study the relationship between ethnicity and political participation was assessed, with the use of the effects of civic communities and ethnic neighbourhood composition. However, previous studies show that more factors influence this relationship. For example, institutional trust. Some authors argue that political trust is a requirement for political participation, while others argue that a lack of trust makes citizens even more active in political participation (Hooghe & Marien, 2013; Warren, 1999; Zafirović et al., 2021). Citizens with a migration background have different cultural backgrounds-, and identify less with the institutions in their host country because of that (Diehl & Blohm, 2001). This could influence their political trust, and political trust and political participation are highly intertwined. Potentially, other factors that have not been addressed in this study do affect the relationships investigated.

This research shows that ethnicity and civic communities play a significant role when it comes to variations in political participation. Citizens with non-western migration backgrounds participate less often in political activities, while participation in civic communities makes citizens participate more often. There are even indications that for citizens

with non-western migration backgrounds these civic communities are relatively more influential. With the elaborate Wijkprofiel dataset, and a theory that focuses mainly on mobilization effects I have assessed to that civic communities are significantly influential when it comes to political participation, ethnic neighbourhood composition on the other hand does not play a role at all in Rotterdam. By more elaborately focussing on the relationship between ethnicity and civic communities and including more possible factors that can influence this relationship, future research can more clearly assess the causal relationship and effect of civic communities on political participation.

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Appendix



CHECKLIST ETHICAL AND PRIVACY ASPECTS OF RESEARCH

INSTRUCTION

This checklist should be completed for every research study that is conducted at the Department of Public Administration and Sociology (DPAS). This checklist should be completed *before* commencing with data collection or approaching participants. Students can complete this checklist with help of their supervisor.

This checklist is a mandatory part of the empirical master's thesis and has to be uploaded along with the research proposal.

The guideline for ethical aspects of research of the Dutch Sociological Association (NSV) can be found on their website (http://www.nsv-sociologie.nl/?page_id=17). If you have doubts about ethical or privacy aspects of your research study, discuss and resolve the matter with your EUR supervisor. If needed and if advised to do so by your supervisor, you can also consult Dr. Jennifer A. Holland, coordinator of the Sociology Master's Thesis program.

PART I: GENERAL INFORMATION

Project title: Master Thesis – Ethnicity and political participation in the neighbourhood

Name, email of student: Frank Huurdeman, 621751@eur.nl

Name, email of supervisor: Gijs Custers, custers@essb.eur.nl

Start date and duration: 20-3-2022

Is the research study conducted within DPAS
NO

YES -

If 'NO': at or for what institute or organization will the study be conducted?
(e.g. internship organization)

PART II: HUMAN SUBJECTS

1. Does your research involve human participants. **YES -**
 NO

If 'NO': skip to part V.

- If 'YES': does the study involve medical or physical research? YES -
NO

Research that falls under the Medical Research Involving Human Subjects Act ([WMO](#)) must first be submitted to [an accredited medical research ethics committee](#) or the Central Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects ([CCMO](#)).

2. Does your research involve field observations without manipulations
 that will not involve identification of participants. **YES -NO**

If 'YES': skip to part IV.

3. Research involving completely anonymous data files (secondary
 data that has been anonymized by someone else). YES - NO

If 'YES': skip to part IV.

PART III: PARTICIPANTS

1. Will information about the nature of the study and about what participants can expect during the study be withheld from them? YES -
NO
2. Will any of the participants not be asked for verbal or written 'informed consent,' whereby they agree to participate in the study? YES -
NO
3. Will information about the possibility to discontinue the participation at any time be withheld from participants? YES -
NO
4. Will the study involve actively deceiving the participants? YES -
NO
Note: almost all research studies involve some kind of deception of participants. Try to think about what types of deception are ethical or non-ethical (e.g. purpose of the study is not told, coercion is exerted on participants, giving participants the feeling that they harm other people by making certain decisions, etc.).
5. Does the study involve the risk of causing psychological stress or negative emotions beyond those normally encountered by participants? YES -
NO
6. Will information be collected about special categories of data, as defined by the GDPR (e.g. racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a person, data concerning mental or physical health, data concerning a person's sex life or sexual orientation)? YES - NO
7. Will the study involve the participation of minors (<18 years old) or other groups that cannot give consent? YES - NO
8. Is the health and/or safety of participants at risk during the study? YES -
NO
9. Can participants be identified by the study results or can the confidentiality of the participants' identity not be ensured? YES -
NO

10. Are there any other possible ethical issues with regard to this study? YES -
NO

If you have answered 'YES' to any of the previous questions, please indicate below why this issue is unavoidable in this study.

What safeguards are taken to relieve possible adverse consequences of these issues (e.g., informing participants about the study afterwards, extra safety regulations, etc.).

Are there any unintended circumstances in the study that can cause harm or have negative (emotional) consequences to the participants? Indicate what possible circumstances this could be.

Please attach your informed consent form in Appendix I, if applicable.

Continue to part IV.

PART IV: SAMPLE

Where will you collect or obtain your data?

The thesis supervisor provides the data for the research. The data is Wijkprofiel 2009 & 2010.

—

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the (anticipated) size of your sample?

23.685 respondents will be part of my sample.

—

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

What is the size of the population from which you will sample?

The population that the data focuses on are Rotterdam citizens. Thus the size is the same as the amount of people living in Rotterdam, around the 650.000.

Note: indicate for separate data sources.

Continue to part V.

Part V: Data storage and backup

Where and when will you store your data in the short term, after acquisition?

The data will be stored at my personal laptop.

Note: indicate for separate data sources, for instance for paper-and pencil test data, and for digital data files.

Who is responsible for the immediate day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data arising from your research?

I, myself, am responsible for the day-to-day management, storage and backup of the data.

How (frequently) will you back-up your research data for short-term data security?

The research data will be backed-up everyday.

In case of collecting personal data how will you anonymize the data?

The data will be already anonymized when I receive the data.

Note: It is advisable to keep directly identifying personal details separated from the rest of the data. Personal details are then replaced by a key/ code. Only the code is part of the database with data and the list of respondents/research subjects is kept separate.

PART VI: SIGNATURE

Please note that it is your responsibility to follow the ethical guidelines in the conduct of your study. This includes providing information to participants about the study and ensuring confidentiality in storage and use of personal data. Treat participants respectfully, be on time at appointments, call participants when they have signed up for your study and fulfil promises made to participants.

Furthermore, it is your responsibility that data are authentic, of high quality and properly stored. The principle is always that the supervisor (or strictly speaking the Erasmus University Rotterdam) remains owner of the data, and that the student should therefore hand over all data to the supervisor.

Hereby I declare that the study will be conducted in accordance with the ethical guidelines of the Department of Public Administration and Sociology at Erasmus University Rotterdam. I have answered the questions truthfully.

Name student: Frank Huurdeman

Name (EUR) supervisor:
Gijs Custers

Date: 20-3-2022

Handwritten signature of Frank Huurdeman in black ink.Handwritten signature of Gijs Custers in black ink.