The big world experiment: the mobilization of social capital in migrant communities

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8. Mobilized Social Capital in Amsterdam

In his article about an ethnic movement in Flanders, and taking a policy point of view, Hooghe (2005) comments: “Ethnic organizations only have a real social or political impact if they can be said to constitute an ethnic movement, with at least some kind of common strategy and policy goals” (p. 976). This idea implies that ethnic organizations ideally form an entity that can be mobilized as one body. It also makes the assumption that the members of this entity are all able to mobilize everyone else in it. My goal is not to prove or test whether the Turkish communities in Amsterdam and Berlin qualify as ethnic movements, but I do want to show what happens if an ethnic community is triggered to mobilize its members.

We now know what the social capital of the Turkish organizations in the selected cities looks like, and the question is whether, and if so how, they use this potential. In this chapter I will discuss the mobilization network based on the results of the Big World Experiment in Amsterdam and I will also explain how the mobilized social capital relates to the social capital described in Chapter 5.

8.1 What does the mobilization network look like?

A full picture of the mobilization network in Amsterdam can be found in Figure 8.1. Clearly, it is considerably smaller than the contact network or the network of interlocking directorates: it contains 96 actors instead of 391 and 278 respectively. We can also see that the mobilization was not a fluent, all-inclusive affair, but was instead rather fragmented. The network is comprised of ten components, of which only two were of a substantial size, containing 30 and 18 actors, respectively.

The largest component is dominated by left-wing associations, with the laborers’ organization HTIB, at its heart. This group of left-wing organizations, which includes the political organizations the HTDB and the DVA-DIDF, is connected to a subgroup of Islamic associations through the agency of the government organization, the Adviesraad Diversiteit en Integratie, and the umbrella organization, the Federatie Milli Görüş Noord Nederland (FMGNN). The latter connects the group of Islamic organizations of different denominations, which surround the Stichting Objectief Nieuws, to the group of left-wing associations.

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81 See Appendix 4 for a definition of a component as applied in social network analysis.
Figure 8.1 Mobilization network in Amsterdam. General typology in boxes
The other major component, which contains 18 organizations (see Figure 8.1), is comprised of a very well interconnected subgroup of organizations that are all located in the city district of Amsterdam-Noord. The Stichting De Vrouwenlijn and Stichting Opbouwwerk Noord are the central organizations in this component. It also contains a group of Diyanet mosque associations.

Furthermore, another component, which is comprised of seven actors, unites a group of organizations in the city district of Bos en Lommer with a group of youth associations (see Figure 8.1). Two other components consist of a central actor (the soccer association, the AGB, and the educational association, STOC, respectively) which mobilized five other organizations. These organizations did not, however, mobilize any others. These components are also depicted in Figure 8.1.

The smallest components contained only a few organizations, each of between two and four actors. Each component can be said to have a characteristic that the actors within it share: a similar ideology, type or ethnicity, or they are located in the same city district. The remaining components are a Kurdish component (2), a Bos-en-Lommer component (2), a component of right-wing social organizations (3), an educational component (3), and a ‘Dutch’ component (4). (The number of actors in each is given in parentheses.)

8.2 Leading organizations in the mobilization process

The fact that the mobilization network consists of several separate components highlights that the activation of the Turkish community was fragmented. How a mobilization proceeds depends mainly on how many actors actively participate in it, and how many other organizations they reach during the process. In Amsterdam, 27 organizations actively participated in the Big World Experiment, and on average they each mobilized 3 alters. However, most participants activated only one or two actors,
and only a few mobilized considerably greater numbers of organizations. The actors that can be regarded as the leading organizations in the mobilization network are in the two largest components. The workers’ organization, the HTIB (in the largest component), and the women’s organization, De Vrouwenlijn (in the second-largest), were well above the other senders with respect to the number of organizations they mobilized. The latter addressed the most (ten), probably because it has a coordinating function within its city district. De Vrouwenlijn was founded in 1999, as a semi-governmental organization with which to encourage the participation of (non-Dutch) women in Dutch society. Over the course of time, it developed into an independent platform within which several women’s organizations and individuals collaborate\(^82\). Furthermore, De Vrouwenlijn maintains close connections with (semi-)governmental agencies both inside and outside its city district. This is also reflected in the mobilization network: De Vrouwenlijn invited, amongst others, two employees of the semi-governmental organization, the Stichting Opbouwwerk Noord, and a former city councilor. The Stichting Opbouwwerk Noord is an active player in the field of community work in the city district of Amsterdam-Noord. Its core business is activating, supervising, and advising residents and their organizations, as well as entrepreneurs, about how to improve the livability of their neighborhoods.

The HTIB mobilized the consultative body, the Landelijk Overleg Minderheden (LOM), which unites a relatively large group of eight umbrella organizations\(^83\) (national representatives) of different ethnic groups. The HTIB was, in fact, mobilized more than any other organization.

Two other organizations, the government agency, the Adviesraad Diversiteit en Integratie and the semi-governmental association, the Stichting Opbouwwerk Noord, were also mobilized more than was average. As was the case for De Vrouwenlijn, the Adviesraad and the Stichting Opbouwwerk Noord have the task of uniting and

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**Adviesraad Diversiteit en Integratie**

The Adviesraad Diversiteit en Integratie (Advisory Council Diversity and Integration) is a municipal department charged with the duty of providing the city council with ‘asked and unasked-for’ advice about municipal diversity policies\(^84\). It has nine members, appointed in a private capacity, who are professionally and socially involved with Amsterdam society. The contacted representative is the town clerk at the Advisory Council. The Advisory Council is in constant dialogue with members and organizations from the ethnic communities in order to fulfill their tasks. Therefore, the employees are well informed about the dominant actors in these communities. This explains why the Adviesraad has mobilized not only two left-wing organizations, but also an Islamic umbrella organization, the Stichting Federatie Milli Görüş Noord-Nederland (FMGNN).

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\(^{82}\) See their website for a list: [http://devrouwenlijn.web-log.nl/](http://devrouwenlijn.web-log.nl/) (last entry: December 2008)

\(^{83}\) The participating organizations in the LOM at the time were: Samenwerkingsverband Marokkanen en Tunisiërs, Vluchtelingenorganisatie Nederland, Inspraak Orgaan Chinezen, Surinaams Inspraak Orgaan, Overlegorgaan Caribische Nederlanders, LIZE (Southern-European), Landelijk Overleg Welzijn Molukkers, and the Inspraak Orgaan Turken.

\(^{84}\) As stated on their website: [http://www.adviesraaddiversiteit.amsterdam.nl/](http://www.adviesraaddiversiteit.amsterdam.nl/)
emancipating different groups in society. As the Big World experiment appealed to a related task, i.e. the dissemination of information, it was only natural that these organizations were the main players in the mobilization.

8.3 The persistence of the mobilization: chain length

The length of the chains in the BWE reflects the persistence of the mobilization. Initially, one might assume that longer chains are indicative of more mobilization, while short ones suggest that the mobilization ceased rapidly. After all, the longer that chains are, the more organizations are reached and, thus, the greater the proportion of the population that is actually mobilized. The mean chain length in the Big World Experiment in Amsterdam was 1.7 steps, with the longest reaching length 4. Based on the assumption that longer chains reflect persistent mobilization, the latter is an encouraging figure, whereas the former may be perceived as low. However, there are two reasons why this conclusion may be somewhat premature.

Firstly, the chains that reached length 4 moved in a somewhat circular fashion. For example, those in the second-largest component started with the Diyanet mosque, the STISCCAN, and ended with the contacts of the Stichting Opbouwwerk Noord, amongst which was the STISCCAN again. Furthermore, both the STISCCAN and the Stichting Opbouwwerk Noord mobilized the women’s organization, El Kübra. Accordingly, long chains can give the impression of a successful mobilization, while the actual result is, in fact, less promising; it remained within a small section of the Turkish community.

The second reason why a short chain length in a mobilization network stemming from the Big World Experiment is not necessarily a regrettable outcome is that the chains may have reached a closer. Recall that closers are the organizations that are either non-Turkish, or are (active) outside Amsterdam. The chains that reached a closer were deliberately halted. After all, the experiment was meant to map the mobilization of the Turkish community in Amsterdam, and any activation outside this population was not part of the research objective. However, this measure did affect the chain length. If the (ethnic) transition happened early, this automatically meant that the chain did not extend any further and the mobilization stopped. Short chains may be indicators of a mediocre mobilization of the Turkish community, but, on the other hand, they are indicative of a community that is integrated into society at large. Twenty-five percent of the chains in the BWE in Amsterdam ended with non-Turkish closers, the majority of which were second in the chain. This means that these closers were positioned very much at the beginning of the chains, and the relatively limited mean chain length is, generally, thus caused by a high proportion of ‘closed’ sequences. This highlights that

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85 Chain length refers to the number of steps the invitation progressed through the community. A chain of length four can, for example, involve five actors: A-B-C-D-E.
several organizations in the community know how to connect to other ethnicities, whether Dutch or different nationalities, even though this may be at the expense of the mobilization of their own community. Before I start an interpretive discussion of the mobilization network, I will first focus on the ethnic bonding and bridging social capital that was addressed.

8.4 Mobilization of ethnic bonding and bridging social capital

The distribution of non-Turkish connections is not evenly spread between the actors in the network. In other words, 44% of the organizations addressed at least some ethnically bridging social capital (12 out of 27), whereas the additional 56% mobilized only ethnically bonding social capital. Six organizations mobilized only non-Turkish actors. The only association to truly address bridging social capital was the students’ organization, the Studenten Unie Nederland, which mobilized two Moroccan youth associations. The other five organizations only mobilized bridging social capital on the face of it. Closer scrutiny revealed that the contacts at the respective organizations often had a different ethnic background to the organizations they were representing.

One of these six organizations that addressed only bridging social capital is the Turkish cultural organization, the Stichting Aslan. This is at the centre of the small component that is labeled ‘Dutch’. This is because the Stichting Aslan mobilized three Dutch organizations that are active in the field of migrant work, but are not necessarily aimed at the Turkish community in particular. This remarkable fact can be explained by the ethnicity of the representative of Stichting Aslan: this board member is a native of the Netherlands.

Other organizations mobilized those that were labeled ‘Dutch’ or ‘mixed’ based on the ethnicity of the majority of their board members, but on closer inspection it transpired that the representatives of the organizations that were named by the senders were, in fact, Turkish. The women’s organization, the El Kübra, mobilized De vrouwenlijn. This is a mixed organization, but the representative who was contacted was the only Turkish board member. The same applies to the Stichting Opbouwwerk-Noord, which is a Dutch semi-governmental organization, but the contact was Turkish (mobilized by De vrouwenlijn). His Moroccan colleague was also mobilized, but she was regarded as a ‘closer’ given her ethnicity. Moreover, the contact at the mixed organization, the Stichting Witte Tulp, which is in the ‘educational’ component, was a Turk, as was the employee of the governmental agency, the Adviesraad Diversiteit en Integratie. For each of these associations, the senders could have also (only) picked a non-Turkish

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86 The fact that the contact from the Adviesraad Diversiteit en Integratie was a Turkish employee is the reason why this organization was asked to participate in the experiment and to forward the invitation. Its nature (a governmental organization) and its categorization as Dutch would normally have made it a ‘closer’.
contact. That they did not do so highlights that the ethnicity of the individuals within organizations does play a role in the mobilization process. The fact that the Dutch board member of the *Stichting Aslan* mobilized only Dutch organizations confirms this. Overall, the use of ethnically bridging social capital during the experiment was only limited in the Turkish organizations, and bridging social capital sometimes turned out to be semi-bridging after all.

### 8.5 Addressing bonding and bridging social capital with respect to organizational type

The subgroups and components that were found in the mobilization network are better characterized by ideological or geographical features than by reference to the types of organization. In other words, I distinguish between the ideology of an organization and the main objectives thereof. The former refers to the general point of view or body of ideas that an organization adheres to e.g. ‘left-wing’ or ‘religious’. The classification of ‘type of organization’ is based on their main objectives: ‘sports’, ‘women’ or ‘youth’, but ‘religion’ is also relevant in relation to the type of organization because such organizations have an ideology according to which they act. In Chapter 2, I argued that organizations have bridging social capital with respect to organizational type when the type of organization of their alters differ from the type of organization of ego, and even more so when those alters’ types are mutually divergent.

The mobilization network revealed that the large majority of senders have indeed addressed (only) bridging social capital with respect to organizational type. The exceptions to the rule were the Diyanet mosque *Fatih*, which only mobilized other Diyanet mosques, the women’s organization *El Kübra*, that addressed the women’s organization *de Vrouwenlijn*, and the *Stichting Kurdische Bibliotheek*, which mobilized the Kurdish umbrella organization, the *FEDKOM*.

### 8.6 Bonding in the neighborhood: the use of local connections

Most organizations mobilized acquainted counterparts which were located in different city districts to themselves. However, those in Amsterdam-Noord and Bos en Lommer did clearly prefer to mobilize their neighbors as opposed to organizations elsewhere in the city. Two of the components (see above) contained a subgroup of organizations that had nothing in common but their residence in Bos en Lommer. Moreover, the second-
largest component not only contained many organizations from Amsterdam-Noord, but these also had a relatively high number of intra-connections. Given these links, it can be assumed that any mobilization of organizations in this city district will include all or most of the others located there. After all, even if a particular organization does not participate in the mobilization, and would, therefore, not forward the piece of information on, it is very likely that the other associations will, nevertheless, circulate it. This interconnectedness is what Coleman and Burt termed ‘closure’ (see Chapter 2).

A possible explanation for these strong intra-district relationships is the local policies that have been pursued in recent years, which focus more on the local integration of migrant groups. Organizations, therefore, often only receive (project) funding if they are collaborating with other associations. As collaboration is more practical if it takes place in one’s neighborhood, this may have stimulated the organizations to form alliances. Furthermore, the semi-governmental association the Stichting Opbouwwerk Noord, which is active in this city district in particular (which also became clear during the experiment), stimulates the collaboration between organizations.

### 8.7 Moving up: on mobilizing strategies

As I explained in Chapter 7, a comparison of an association’s mobilized social capital compared to its social capital sheds light on the activation strategy that this actor has used. In several cases, the sending organizations clearly demonstrate an ‘upwardly’ mobilizing strategy. I define this as the mobilization of one or more organizations that are hierarchically (based on organizational type) more highly placed. For example, the small-scale media association, the Stichting Objectief Nieuws, mobilized the umbrella organization Federatie Milli Görüş Noord-Nederland (FMGNN), which in turn mobilized the hierarchically more highly placed municipal agency, the Adviesraad Diversiteit en Integratie. Similarly, the cultural organization, the Stichting Papyrus, mobilized the HTIB, which, in turn, mobilized the LOM, the collaborative body of national representatives of migrant groups. A third example is the women’s organization, El Kübra, which mobilized the Vrouwenlijn, which mobilized the umbrella organization of the Milli Görüş women’s association, the Stichting Milli Görüş Vrouwen Federatie. All of these are instances whereby, with each step in the chain, an organization was reached that was, in fact, more capable of a ‘higher reach’ than the sending actor.

For several organizations, their mobilization of the HTIB was the ‘step higher up’, and it was the most popular actor involved in the mobilization process. In other words, no organization received as many invitations as the HTIB. Save for the facts that most of the organizations connecting to the HTIB can be viewed as being more left-wing, and that it remains to be seen how ‘right-wing’ organizations and the HTIB relate to each
other, one could say that the HTIB was one of the most accessible contacts in the Turkish community during the mobilization. Given its central position, the HTIB perhaps plays the role of an umbrella organization: smaller organizations inform it about relevant matters and it relates to those on a higher structural level. Furthermore, even though several of the interviewed respondents stated - slightly condescendingly - that the role that the HTIB had in the 1980s, as the figurehead of the Turkish community in Amsterdam, is over, this mobilization network shows that many organizations still consider the HTIB to be an active player.

Following this, it is interesting to see how the true umbrella organizations have acted in the mobilization process. As I explained in Chapter 5, it is mainly the religious umbrella organizations that are significant in Turkish associational life in Amsterdam. Both the Diyanet and the Milli Görüş movements are led by an umbrella organization that functions more as their mouthpiece than its member organizations do. In the case of the Milli Görüş this concerns the Stichting Federatie Milli Görüş Noord-Nederland (FMGNN)\(^8\), which is located and is very active in Amsterdam. The FMGNN took an active part in the Big World Experiment (see the biggest component). The Diyanet’s umbrella organization, the Islamitische Stichting Nederland (ISN), is based in The Hague, and leads all of the Diyanet mosques in the Netherlands. The ISN is also part of the mobilization network (activated by Stichting Objectief Nieuws) but, due to its location in The Hague, it was considered to be a closer. Hence, it did not mobilize any other actors. The members of these two umbrella organizations were strikingly inactive during the mobilization. Indeed, although they have been shown to have substantial social capital, most of them stated: “I wouldn’t know anybody to invite”. Note that they did not even refer to their respective umbrella organizations, even though they and their members are known to

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\(^8\) There also is a sister umbrella organization, the Stichting Federatie Milli Görüş Zuid-Nederland, which serves the member organizations in the southern part of the Netherlands. The two federations tend to follow a different course; the one in Noord-Nederland is known to be more liberal than the one in Zuid-Nederland (den Exter & Hessels, 2003).
be closely connected. Only the Fatih mosque and the STISCCAN (both Diyanet mosques) mobilized one or more sister mosques. The former, in fact, seems to act as the local substitute for its umbrella organization given its central position at the heart of its sister organizations (see Figure 8.1).

A speculative explanation for the inactivity of the religious organizations is that they are primarily occupied with their objectives of practicing Islam and do not want to be involved in community mobilization. I would imagine that they do not regard themselves as relevant actors during a mobilization, but instead leave the coordination to their umbrella organization. On the other hand, this reluctance to play an active part in the mobilization may only concern the activation of other associations. By way of contrast, mosques are often regarded as places for information dissemination (or other kinds of mobilization) amongst their visitors (Kanmaz & Mokhless, 2002). However, if this is indeed the case, I would imagine that the mosques’ boards and their imams would only inform their communities if they were ordered to do so by their umbrella organizations.

8.8 Linking social capital

Linking social capital refers to connections between organizations and political or (semi-)governmental organizations. Whether organizations address their linking social capital or not is also a manifestation of a mobilizing strategy. However, very few used this strategy. Two actors, the cultural organization, the Stichting Aslan, and the women’s organization, the De Vrouwenlijn, mobilized semi-governmental organizations (Re-start, Amsterdam Centrum Buitenlanders and Stichting Opbouwwerk Noord). De Vrouwenlijn also activated a Turkish former member of the district council in Amsterdam-Noord. The football association, the AGB, also mobilized three politicians: Turkish district councilors in Geuzenveld-Slotermeer and Osdorp. Note that the organizations restricted their use of political social capital to Turkish politicians. This confirms the observations of Tillie (2000), who found that Turkish voters have a preference for ethnic candidates (within the party of their preference).

The umbrella organization, the FMGNN, was the only one which mobilized a government organization, i.e. the Adviesraad Diversiteit en Integratie. This Adviesraad had a crucial position in the network, since it served as a bridge between two ideologically opposed subgroups: on the one hand the Islamic organizations, and on the other the leftist associations. Furthermore, it was important in the mobilization process because if it were not for the Adviesraad, the opposing groups would not be connected at all. It is salient that it took a neutral Dutch (although the representative was Turkish) government go-between to keep an important part of the community together. Given the fact that the Adviesraad not only mobilized migrant organizations, but also several civil
servants from other municipal departments, its role as an intermediary also relates to the migrant organizations vis-à-vis the municipality.

8.9  The role of the individual in organizations

I explained in Chapter 2 that in this study I regard social capital as being something that an individual can produce, while the collective can profit from it. The position of the Adviesraad as an intermediary in the network has shown that a single organization can be of importance to the community as a whole. Additionally, in several instances the mobilization network revealed that individual board members, or other representatives of an organization, are sometimes crucial to the course of the mobilization and the functioning of their particular association. I have already discussed the determinative role of the ethnicity of contacts within organizations when it comes to Turkish employees in Dutch associations and Dutch board members in Turkish ones. Furthermore, two of the components, both coincidentally star-shaped (see Figure 8.1), underline the importance of the individual in an organization, because they both contain more individuals than organizations. The central actors in these two components are the educational organization, the Stichting Turks Onderwijs Centrum (STOC) and the football organization, the AGB. Both associations forwarded the invitation to several individuals who were not currently representatives of organizations, even though further investigation of these people revealed that they were ‘not just anybody’, e.g. the STOC mobilized two people in the employ of educational institutions (university and college). These connections are rooted in the activities of the STOC, as it offers language courses and other types of educational support. Another individual used to be related to the Turkish consultative body, the IOT, and the fourth was involved in a fairly large relief organization, the Samenwerkende Moslim Hulp Organisaties (SMHO)\(^89\). As the nature of these organizations and that of the STOC are not similar, I assume that the relationships between it and these individuals are based on personal familiarity. The AGB respondent

\[\text{STOC}\]
The educational centre, the STOC, has used the social capital of its chairman extensively. The STOC only mobilized individuals instead of organizations, even though these individuals did have ties to several well-known organizations. Factually, the STOC did not employ its social capital as defined in the current study. Furthermore, even though the STOC appeared to be a well-known and esteemed actor in the Turkish community, this lip service was not put into practice: none of the organizations have called upon the STOC. Most probably, this is caused by the fact that mobilizers stuck to the organizations closest to them (see ‘in case of urgency’) and the STOC is, in several respects, an outsider in the community. It is located in Slotervaart Overtoomseveld, in which only a few Turkish organizations are based. It is trying hard to reach out to other ethnicities, Dutch as well as non-Dutch. Furthermore, the chairman is an outspoken and enthusiastic man who is not afraid to attack sacred cows, which might be considered a reason not to include the STOC.
invited two of its members as well as three local politicians that he probably knew through his work: the respondent worked for the city district.

8.10 How do social capital and mobilized social capital relate?
Comparing the networks

Now that it is clear which organizations were involved in the mobilization and how the process elapsed, it is possible to address one of the main questions in this research: how does the mobilization network relate to the social capital? Do the actors in the Turkish community rely on the resources they have been revealed to have, or do they draw on other channels when it comes to the crunch? In the rest of this chapter I will compare the mobilization network to the two networks that build social capital.

To begin with, a structural comparison of the ties in the three networks revealed that 50% of those that are found in the mobilization network were also present in the contact network. Alternatively, as few as 3.4% of the ties in the contact network were addressed during the mobilization process. The ties in the network of interlocking directorates were used even less. Only a single formal tie, the interlock between the two Kurdish organizations, the Stichting Kurdische Nationale Bibliotheek and the FEDKOM, was addressed during the mobilization (the former mobilized the latter). This means that not even 1% of the ties in the network of interlocking directorates were also part of the mobilization network. In summary, the organizations involved in the mobilization have scarcely used the potential available to them. However, even though the three networks do not contain the same actors, it is still possible to compare them generally on relevant characteristics. Such comparisons bring some interesting matters to light.

A striking finding resulting from the comparison of social capital and mobilized social capital in Amsterdam is that the ideological divides between leftist, rightist, religious, non-religious, political and non-political organizations are present in each network, but these are not as pronounced in each one. In Chapter 5, I pointed out that the links at the formal level (i.e. the interlocking directorates) in particular reveal the fragmentation of the Turkish community along these lines. In everyday life, however, the divisions were much less clear, even though they were still present. In general, the contact network demonstrated that organizations of a certain ideological background did tend to flock

90 The AGB was the only organization that also invited members. The relationship between organizational boards and the members of the organizations is an interesting subject for future study.
91 This is calculated on the basis of ties in the mobilization network between organizations, where at least one was interviewed and was, thus, potentially incorporated in the contact network. I disregarded whether these actors were the receiving or the sending organization in the mobilization network. Note that I, therefore, ignored the directedness of the ties in both the contact and the mobilization networks.
together, but that their everyday practices (being in a neighborhood where other kinds of organizations are located, participating in consultative bodies etc.) ‘forced’ them to connect to other types of associations with respect to ideology, ethnicity and activities. The mobilization network was again characterized by clearer divisions between ideological groups. What can explain this variation between networks?

The fact that the network of interlocking directorates and the mobilization network are both characterized by clear ideological distinctions can both be viewed as expressions of high trust. Organizations invite people they are familiar with to take a seat on the board of a newly founded organization. In other words, they turn to the ones they think they can trust\textsuperscript{92}. The network of interlocking directorates shows that organizations usually trust those counterparts that are ideologically close to them. In everyday life, however, it is apparently less relevant to be connected only to highly trusted organizations, since the contact network contained many more, less similar, contacts. In the mobilization process, however, the organizations addressed ideologically similar contacts again; the high-trust relationships are activated. The structural comparison did reveal that the high-trust relationships in the network of interlocking directorates and the mobilization network do not completely correspond. However, the structures of the networks do match up; they have similar characteristics. The question now is why would the organizations have addressed highly trusted connections instead of the numerous, relatively less trusted, ones?

8.11 In case of urgency

I would argue that the organizations have acted during the mobilization as if it was ‘a case of urgency’. I can best explain what I mean with an analogy. Studies have revealed that an individual has an estimated circle of acquaintances which contains about 3000 to 5000 alters (Freeman & Thompson, 1989). Naturally, some of these are more important to ego than others. People have close friends and casual acquaintances, as well as family and professional relationships, and generally we are more attached to some of these groups than to others. In a pilot study that I performed, I found that individuals very often tended to do things with, discuss, and help only a small number of people very often, while most acquaintances are addressed only rarely. Furthermore, whether an alter is important to the individual depends on the circumstances. Different situations need different reactions, and in extreme or unexpected scenarios people rely on what is familiar to them. For example, many diaries have a first page upon which it is stated:

\textsuperscript{92} Studies on the relationship between high trust and similarity between actors (‘homophily’) have been conducted by scholars including McPherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook (2001), and Yuan and Gay (2006), and are related to the principle of bonding social capital, as explained in Chapter 2.
“notify in case of emergency”. Usually, these are the names and numbers of a partner, parents and siblings. This shows that, in general, people who feel they have only a limited amount of time to inform others about an event make sure that they at least contact the people they are closest to, or those who are the most important with respect to the particular incident. In the case of illness or other emergencies, these are family members for most people, but at times of uncertain career prospects, one might call upon colleagues and university friends.

To a certain extent, this reaction to uncertain situations also applies to the Turkish organizations and their mobilization during the Big World Experiment. The analysis of the social capital revealed that most organizations have a considerable number of related organizations. Just as individuals use different acquaintances for different ends, so do organizations choose their partners, i.e. which of the related associations they contact depends on the demands of the situation. This refers to what I explained in Chapter 7 about the different types of mobilization. The subject of the mobilization, or the nature of the ‘urgency’, has an effect on the assessment by the mobilizer as to who or what organizations are the most important alters and need to be approached. Spreading a piece of information could trigger actors to address different alters when, for instance, drumming up participants for a political protest or silent march against violence (this asks for politically and socially involved organizations), or raising funds to send to the homeland (this needs organizations with money or fund-raising skills).

In a way, the participants in the Big World Experiment were in an ‘urgent’ situation as well. They were asked to name, on the spot, organizations that would be interested in an invitation to a lecture and they had to react almost immediately. The BWE in Amsterdam has revealed that in the case of a communication mobilization in the Turkish community, many organizations are prone to address alters that fit their own ideology; the data demonstrated that they preferred them over, for example, the organizations that they deal with the most in everyday life. Apparently, when it comes to the crunch, organizations act upon a motto such as “close is my shirt, but closer is my skin”. The evaluation of the piece of information (i.e. the invitation) was such that, to use

**Milli Görüş organizations**

The Milli Görüş organizations have been shown to have a high amount of bonding social capital with respect to the type of organization as well as to ethnicity. Given the idea presented above, that organizations tend to act upon the motto of ‘in case of urgency I connect to the organizations closest to me’, one would expect the Milli Görüş associations to mobilize their sister organizations. Furthermore, given that the Milli Görüş organizations are generally rather active, one would expect to find many of them active in the mobilization. But this was not the case. Only two Milli Görüş organizations took part in the mobilization, the federation and a youth organization, and neither of them turned to its member or sister associations. The Milli Görüş women’s organization, the MGKT Hilal, had a high amount of social capital in the neighborhood (Bos en Lommer), but because of its sister organizations, failed to use these connections for the mobilization.
Granovetter’s typology, it triggered the addressing of strong ties over the weak ones.

It is important to realize that it is not self-evident that organizations mobilize their ideological bonding social capital. On the contrary, with good reason one might have expected the exact opposite: a contact network dominated by bonding ties and a mobilization network consisting of bridging ties. The line of reasoning for this would be that as long as organizations are fulfilling their primary aim, which is often related to their ideology, they do not need connections to others which do not fit these aims. However, these organizations might be aware that in a community mobilization as many organizations as possible need to be reached, and therefore it would be useful to mobilize ideologically dissimilar associations.

### 8.12 Ethnically bonding and bridging social capital

A comparison of the amount of ethnically bonding and bridging social capital in the three networks confirms the theory set out above. At the formal level, there were relatively few connections between Turkish and non-Turkish organizations. The majority of organizations with interlocking directorates were connected to ethnically similar organizations. The day-to-day contacts between them, as indicated by the interviewees, corrected this imbalance somewhat. In other words, the majority of the organizations in the contact network were still connected more to ethnically similar organizations, but to a less extreme extent. The network of interlocking directorates knew many organizations that either bonded or bridged only, whereas the contact network demonstrated that most of them have a more diverse circle of acquaintances, even though there is still a tendency to connect to those with the same ethnicity. The mobilization network lays bare the fact that the organizations had a very strong inclination to mobilize Turkish counterparts over those of other ethnicities. This finding, once again, confirms what I referred to above as the ‘in case of urgency’ reflex. Apparently, organizations are willing to collaborate with all sorts of associations of all sorts of backgrounds, but when something special happens, they prefer to turn to what is familiar.

### 8.13 The role of collaborative bodies

The strategy of mobilizing one’s most familiar organizations is probably the main reason why the mobilization network in Amsterdam is so fragmented. The consultative bodies that unite organizations of different movements, and which could, potentially, unite the

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93 For the Kurdish associations the figures refer to the number of connections between them and non-Kurdish organizations.
community are largely ignored. The interviews demonstrated that several organizations do have access to the migrant councils around which immigrant associations of various ethnicities and types gather. Given this plurality, it would be reasonable to assume that mobilizing such councils is a way of easily spreading information and requires little effort. Yet, the councils were rarely addressed during the mobilization. Only the laborers' organization, the HTIB, mobilized a collaborative body (the Landelijk Overleg Minderheden), through which it reached eight (national) organizations at once. These were mainly non-Turkish associations, except for one, the national Turkish Advisory Council (Inspraak Orgaan Turken, IOT). This then exposes a possible explanation for the lack of migrant councils in the mobilization process. Most collaborative or consultative bodies contain organizations of different backgrounds, and addressing these obviously means that not only the highly trusted, but also low trust relationships are mobilized. Given the assumption that the organizations have acted upon a 'case of urgency' scenario, it follows that the consultative bodies are not included in the mobilization.

8.14 Neighbors are convenient for the paperwork, not for the real deal?

The physical location of organizations was expected to play a key role in the mobilization. This is on the basis that they only have limited time and means with which to maintain contact with each other and would, therefore, mainly connect to the organizations that are located close to them. However, the issue of location turned out to have a dominant role in the network of interlocking directorates, hardly any role in the contact network and a more crucial role in only some cases in the mobilization network.

On the formal level, most of the organizations only have, or have more, ties to counterparts that are in the same neighborhood, and are even often based at the same address. This can be interpreted on the basis that the vicinity of organizations is relevant when it comes to the foundation of a new association. Indeed, as Vermeulen (2006) has argued, it is most likely that organizations are geographically close to each other as a result of the organizing process. New organizations not only use the board members of existing ones, but they also often find accommodation in the same building or neighborhood. Hence, the network of interlocking directorates contains many organizations that are physically close to each other.

In the contact network, the organizations were seen to connect to associations all over the city, even if they are locally active. But, again, some of these organizations only turned to others in their neighborhood when they faced the assignment of the mobilization. Those in the city districts of Bos en Lommer and Amsterdam-Noord particularly displayed these intra-neighborhood connections, and indeed seemed to have a more active neighborhood network than other organizations. So, even though
their circles of acquainted organizations do extend beyond the borders of their respective city districts, the associations that are closest literally are also the closest figuratively. The 'urgency' in these cases triggered the intensive connections that organizations maintain, instead of ideological partners.

8.15 The role of governmental organizations

The local government plays an important role in the everyday lives of migrant organizations. It provides financial means through subsidies, often supplies accommodation, and sometimes finds ways to (quasi-)collectively organize events in the city district. Most interviewees claimed to be related to the local government in their respective city districts, as well as to the local government of the municipality (the Centrale Stad). Nevertheless, this linking social capital was rarely used in the mobilization process. On the one hand, this could have been because of the phrasing of the question used in the experiment, which states: “Which other organizations or people could we invite to the lecture as well?” The explicit reference to organizations could have led the participants to regard governmental institutions as being irrelevant in these circumstances. On the other hand, during the interviews there was no explicit reference to government organizations either, with the interviewer only asking in general terms about the connections maintained. Nevertheless, respondents often mentioned government agencies spontaneously. Thus, it is not impossible to imagine that the question in the experiment could have elicited a similar response. Indeed, the experiment did trigger at least some organizations to name district councilors from several city districts (even though all of these were of Turkish descent) or semi-governmental institutions.

The governmental organizations that were addressed during the mobilization turned out to be effective disseminators of the invitation. The Adviesraad Diversiteit en Integratie as well as the Stichting Opbouwwerk Noord both mobilized a relatively large number of organizations. More importantly, even though they are government organizations they did mobilize several Turkish associations. In other words, they led the mobilization back into the Turkish community. This means that governmental organizations can play an important role in the mobilization of an ethnic community, even if it is not, officially, a part of it and even if not many recognized this role.

8.16 In summary

The comparison of social capital and mobilized social capital has shown that in Amsterdam the actors have acted according to a 'case of urgency' reflex. Most
organizations have mobilized only highly trusted connections, which were either ideologically similar or geographically close. Furthermore, several actors were revealed to be conscious of their own structural position in relation to that of others, because they mobilized organizations that are more highly placed in the local hierarchy. Since the Turkish community in Amsterdam is not familiar with umbrella organizations, or any other kinds of representative bodies, the mobilization did not proceed in a coordinated or centralized manner; instead, it was fragmented. As the next chapter will show, the mobilization in Berlin occurred in a different way.