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Ethnic Diversity and Generalised Trust in Modern European Societies



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Abstract

This paper investigates the dominant perspective in society that ethnic diversity leads to a decline of social cohesion and more specifically, generalised trust among the ethnic majority group. Also the role of interethnic contact within this relationship is examined. Data from the European Social Survey from 2014 is used. This data includes respondents from 17 modern European societies. Multiple regression analyses showed that ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood affects generalised trust among the ethnic majority group, although the extent of ethnic diversity matters for the direction of the observed effect. No evidence was found for a moderating effect of interethnic contact. The evidence for a negative effect of ethnic diversity should not be overstated, thus adding this paper to the European literature on ethnic diversity that states that no substantial negative consequences for social cohesion are found.

1. Introduction

'In almost every country there is consensus that immigration is a problem, that diversity is a weakness and that multiculturalism has failed', according to political scientist Cas Mudde (Heck & Somers, 2018). There are plenty of examples across Europe to illustrate that a negative view of ethnic diversity and multiculturalism is dominant. One of those examples is the forthcoming withdrawal of the United Kingdom from the European Union. The majority of the voters in the referendum in June 2016 chose to leave the EU. This choice can be seen as, among other things, a reaction on multiculturalism that is being considered as undermining the nation state (Abbas, 2017). In Slovenia, the Slovenian Democratic Party won the elections of June this year (Sheftalovich, 2018). The victory of this anti-immigrant party led by Janez Janša is surprising, because Slovenia has only received 200 refugees in the years of 2015 and 2016 (De Gruyter, 2018). In other countries, such as Sweden and the Netherlands, radical-right discourse is also gaining popularity. Despite positive effects of ethnic diversity, such as enhancement of creativity, rapid economic growth, the offset of the effects of an aging population, and developments in the Global South (Putnam, 2007, p.140), the idea that ethnic diversity has negative consequences seems to dominate public discourse and politics. Especially the consequences for social cohesion seem to matter in this debate. Social cohesion can be understood as what keeps a community together and as the ability of citizens to live and work together (Jennissen, Engbersen, Bokhorst & Bovens, 2018).

According to Elias (1971), social scientists should investigate the prevailing ideas in society. In this paper the idea that ethnic diversity has negative consequences for social cohesion and leads to a decline of social cohesion, is investigated. Social cohesion exists of many aspects. Trust that citizens have in other unknown citizens, called generalised trust, will be focused on. Furthermore, the decline in trust among members of the ethnic majority group will be looked into. The ethnic majority group usually occupies the important positions in society. Since this group is more capable of shaping society, it is of importance to know how the members of this group perceive ethnic diversity.

Researching the effect of ethnic diversity on generalised trust is relevant for society for at least two reasons. Firstly, it is important to get closer to reality (Elias, 1971). When ethnic diversity is not as threatening for social cohesion as is thought, this should be made clear. If not, unfounded fear for ethnic diversity is maintained and existing and new unfounded policies with devastating effects are upheld and constructed. Secondly, generalised trust is found to have important consequences for society. There exist positive consequences for collective action, economic performance and democratic governance (Larsen, 2013; Dinesen & Sønderskov, 2015). At the individual level, research has also found positive associations with forms of pro-social behaviour, such as volunteering, donating to charity and tolerance (Uslaner, as cited in Dinesen & Sønderskov, 2015). If generalised trust is indeed affected by ethnic diversity, it is important to find out how. Therefore, the role of interethnic contact will be examined in this paper.

Many studies on the relationship between ethnic diversity and social cohesion have been conducted. A sizeable part of these studies have been conducted in the United States. These studies tend to find a negative effect of ethnic diversity on trust (Putnam, 2007; Stolle, Soroka & Johnston, 2008). Also in Denmark a negative effect is examined (Dinesen & Sønderskov, 2015). Nevertheless, other studies in Europe usually do not find convincing evidence (Gesthuizen, Meer & Scheepers, 2009; Sturgis, Brunton-Smith, Read & Allum, 2014; Hooghe, Reeskens, Dietlind & Trappers, 2006; Hooghe, Reeskens, Stolle & Trappers, 2009). Furthermore, studies on the contact theory and social capital theory and socio-psychological literature on inter-group relations, argue that bonds between members of different ethnic groups are important for building trust (Stolle et al., 2008). This has resulted in scholars integrating these two approaches: negative effects of ethnic diversity are moderated by interethnic contact. Also here disagreement exists. Stolle et al. and Sturgis et al. did find evidence for this moderating effect, but Dinesen and Sønderskov did not.

This paper will add to the existing knowledge by focusing on generalised trust as measure of social cohesion, by looking at European countries and by taking into account the effect of interethnic contact. Studies on this topic have been using different ways of conceptualization and operationalization of trust, which makes it difficult to arrive at general conclusions. I argue that generalised trust is the operationalization that is important for this topic, because this type of trust holds modern societies together. Furthermore, whereas studies have found quite consistent results in the United States, in Europe the evidence is mixed. More research conducted within European countries, that has a different history of immigration than the United States, is needed (Hooghe et al., 2009). Lastly, the effect of interethnic contact on the relationship between ethnic diversity and trust remains unclear. In clarifying how this relationship works, it is important to look into the role of contact. The research questions that will be investigated are the following:

Q1. What is the effect of ethnic diversity on generalised trust among members of the ethnic majority group?

Q2. Does the effect of ethnic diversity on generalised trust among members of the ethnic majority group differ for people that have interethnic contact?

In answering these questions, data from the European Social Survey of 2014 (ESS) will be used. In 2002 the first round of the ESS took place and since then, the ESS has been repeated every two year. In every round questions on generalised trust are included. Only two rounds have questions on the topic of immigration. However only one of them contains questions on interethnic contact in everyday life. Therefore round seven will be used to investigate the research question.

The findings of this paper support the idea that a lot of ethnic diversity negatively affects generalised trust. However, some ethnic diversity seems to have a positive effect on generalised trust. No evidence was found for the moderating effect of interethnic contact on the relationship between ethnic diversity and generalised trust.

In the following of the paper, first the theory will be presented, together with the hypotheses derived from the theory. Then, the methods and measures used will be highlighted, followed by the results. I will end with the conclusion and with some reflections and suggestion in the discussion.

2. Theory

In the following, first the type of society that is of interest for this paper will be discussed. Then, it is suggested that generalised trust is the most important type of trust for these societies and the foundations of generalised trust are discussed. This allows me to explain how ethnic diversity affects the forming of generalised trust. Theory on social isolation and theories from the field of social psychology will be used to show a negative relationship. However, contact theory offers the possibility that this negative relationship is moderated by interethnic contact.

Modern societies and organic solidarity

The countries that are of interest in this paper are modern societies. In these societies, ethnic diversity is on the rise, leading to discussions on the consequences for social cohesion. Durkheim (1893) distinguished pre-modern societies from modern societies (Larsen, 2013; Portes & Vickstrom, 2011). Pre-modern societies are kept together with mechanic solidarity. This kind of solidarity is based upon the similarities of citizens regarding their beliefs, feelings and values. In order to maintain this solidarity, strong norms of right and wrong are prescribed and citizens are intensely monitored. Durkheim realized that this kind of societies would come under pressure by the processes of industrialization, urbanization and democratization. Differences between citizens would increase, thus threatening mechanic solidarity. Also nowadays, many people, including politicians, think that the differences that exist in modern societies between citizens lead to erosion of society and that the sharing of moral standards must be restored.

However, Durkheim saw another way in which modern societies are kept together. The functioning of modern societies rests upon organic solidarity. This kind of solidarity arises not because of shared moral standards, but because of the awareness of citizens that they are dependent on each other. An example by Portes and Vickstrom (2011, p. 473) might clarify this: When you step into a crowded metro in any modern society, you would not experience a close community. No one knows each other, there is almost no communication. Nevertheless, everything functions. The train (usually) arrives at time, people step out and step in, go on to their jobs or their homes. For the functioning of these societies it is not important that the citizens share beliefs, feelings and values. It is important that every citizen fulfils his or her role in society. Organic solidarity is thus based upon trusting unknown fellow

citizens that they fulfil their roles to make the whole system work, just like organs in a body.

Generalised trust

This requirement for organic solidarity to trust unknown citizens can be captured with the concept of generalised trust (Larsen, 2012). Generalised trust can be understood as an abstract attitude toward people in general (Freitag & Traunmüller, 2009). This is one type of interpersonal trust. Another type is particularised trust. This type is about the trust we put in the people who are close to us and with whom we have interactions frequently, such as family members, friends and neighbours. As described above, especially generalised trust is important for the functioning of modern societies. To understand how ethnic diversity might influence generalised trust, it is important to look at how generalised trust is brought about. Freitag and Traunmüller (2009) have found that people with higher levels of trust in the people of their immediate social surrounding, also tend to have higher levels of trust in people in general. Thus, particularised trust serves as a foundation for generalised trust. However, special conditions stimulate this spill over-effect. Positive contacts with strangers is in fact found to be essential for building generalised trust. Trustworthy political institutions provide a stimulation for this spill over-effect. They effectively and credibly sanction untrustworthy behaviour and their representatives serve as role models for trustworthiness.

The effect of ethnic diversity on generalised trust

Many scholars have been looking at how generalised trust is affected by ethnic diversity. Typically, although not always explicitly mentioned, it is assumed that this effect works through exposure to people of a different ethnic background. Indeed, Dinesen and Sønderskov (2012) have found support for this mechanism of interethnic exposure. In the literature, the neighbourhood has been most frequently investigated as the domain in which this exposure occurs. Because almost everyone lives in a neighbourhood and is exposed to other people in this neighbourhood on a regular basis, this domain is more suited for studies than for example school or work place settings. To explain how ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood negatively affects generalised trust, first we have to understand that ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood leads to certain experiences in one's social environment that have effect on one's belief about the trustworthiness of others (Dinesen & Sønderskov, 2015). The social environment exists of signs that help people to make the decision to trust others or not.

What kind of signs people from the ethnic majority group 'receive' from people that belong to an ethnic minority group, can be explained by different theories. According to the

conflict theory, people from an ethnic minority group can ‘send’ signs to people from the ethnic majority group that evoke feelings of tension and hostility (Sturgis et al., 2014; Bobo & Hutchings, 1996). These negative feelings are theorized to arise due to competition over scarce resources.

There are at least two reasons why the use of conflict theory is problematic in this case. Conflict theory assumes that ethnic diversity leads to negative feelings towards people from an ethnic minority group, in this case the out-group members. It also assumes that this goes hand in hand with positive feelings towards the people from the ethnic majority group, the in-group members (Dinesen & Sønderskov, 2015; Putnam, 2007). Both out-group and in-group trust are related to generalised trust. For this reason, conflict theory cannot completely explain why generalised trust declines as effect of ethnic diversity. Secondly, these negative feelings of tension and hostility towards out-group members arise especially in the case of one sizeable ethnic minority group (Jennissen et al., 2018). Whereas in many European societies there are different ethnic minority groups, conflict theory is not completely suited for this paper.

Putnam (2007) modified the conflict theory and offered a new hypothesis to explain the effects of ethnic diversity: the constrict thesis. He states that ethnic diversity reduces both out-group and in-group solidarity. People that live in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods become socially isolated. This view correlates with the idea of anomie (Jennissen et al, 2018). Ethnic diversity goes hand in hand with a variety of languages and values. People feel insecure on how they should behave and avoid contact with others. When people in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods have less contact with their neighbours due to this insecurity, less particularised trust is build, which in turn also hinders the building of generalised trust.

Scholars from social psychology and related fields have also come up with hypotheses to explain why people from the ethnic majority group ‘receive’ negative signals from other ethnic groups. Adams et al. (2010) looked at the evolutionary basis of this tendency and found that people can easier infer thoughts, intentions and feelings of people who belong to their own ethnic group. This ability is important for building trust in others. When people from the ethnic majority group do not trust people from an ethnic minority group that live in their neighbourhood, this hinders positive contact with a stranger that belongs to that ethnic group. As we have seen, positive contacts with strangers are essential for the spill over-effect of particularised trust on generalised trust. Due to the distance people from the ethnic majority group feel, the chance on positive contacts with strangers from ethnic minority groups is low

and less generalised trust is formed. These two theoretical approaches point to a negative relationship between ethnic diversity and generalised trust.

According to Portes and Vickstrom (2011) we should not exaggerate the effects on generalised trust. Because of strong political institutions that can be found in some modern societies, no major decline of generalised trust will be found. Nevertheless, in this paper it will be hypothesized that there exists a negative relationship.

Hypothesis 1. Ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood has a negative effect on generalised trust among members of the ethnic majority group.

The moderating effect of interethnic contact

Besides the negative effects of ethnic diversity claimed by the constrict/anomie thesis and evolutionary models, studies on contact theory have found positive effects of ethnic diversity. More specifically, interethnic contact can have a positive effect on generalised trust. According to the contact theory, absence of contact with or knowledge about people from another group, results in prejudices about members from these groups (Stolle et al., 2008). Social interaction between members of different groups, reduces these prejudices (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Whereas before, members of a different group were seen as the out-group, intergroup contact has the possibility to create an overarching identity that includes former members of the out-group. This process of inclusion promotes particularised trust in people from a different ethnic group and promotes positive contacts with strangers from a different ethnic group. This results in the building of more generalised trust.

These seemingly contradictory perspectives on the effects of ethnic diversity can be reconciled (Stolle et al., 2008; Sturgis et al., 2014). There is heterogeneity in the effect of diversity on trust: contact between people from the ethnic majority group and people from ethnic minority groups potentially moderates the negative impact of ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood (Dinesen & Sønderskov, 2015). The frequency and quality of interethnic contact are both important (ESS, 2015). Even when there is high frequency of contact, if this contact is generally seen as bad, then the positive effect of the contact disappears and this contact might even have a negative effect on generalised trust. This leads us to the second hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: For people that have interethnic contact, the negative effect of ethnic diversity on generalised trust among members of the ethnic majority group is weaker.

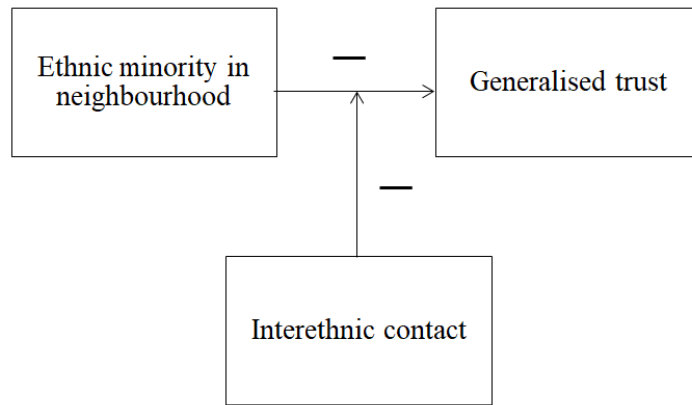


Figure 1. Schematic representation of the negative relationship between ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood and generalised trust and the weakening effect of interethnic contact on this relationship.

3. Methods and measures

To answer the research question, data of the seventh round of the European Social Survey will be used (ESS, 2014a). The ESS was established in 2001 and since then, every two years data of newly-selected samples of populations in different European countries are collected (ESS, 2016). These samples are obtained by means of strict random probability sampling, which provides a sample representative of the target population (ESS, 2014b). This target population consists of residents within private households that are 15 years or older. In some cases, an individual is treated as 15, when he or she is 15 at the 1st of September. The quality of the sample may differ from country to country, depending on the available lists of residents and households. Nevertheless, the ESS is seen as a valid and reliable source for survey data on political and social attitudes in Europe (Dinesen & Sønderskov, 2015).

The seventh round of the ESS, that was collected in 2014, is suitable for this paper, because it is the only round that includes questions on trusting people in general, ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood and interethnic contact. The seventh round was collected in 21 countries: Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Data for 40185 respondents was collected. In this paper the focus will be on the respondents from European modern societies and respondents that consider themselves as part of the ethnic majority. As mentioned in the theory section, generalised trust is especially important in modern societies. To make clear which European countries are modern societies, the classification of countries of the World

Economic Outlook is used (IMF, 2014). The World Economic Outlook is a survey conducted and published by the International Monetary Fund. They divide the world in advanced economies and emerging market and developing economies, based upon organizing data over time. Hungary, Lithuania and Poland are not classified as advanced economies and therefore are excluded. Israel is excluded as well, because the focus is on European countries. To filter out the respondents that do not belong to the ethnic majority group, the question '*Do you belong to a minority ethnic group in [country]?*' is used. Respondents who answered *yes* are excluded from the analysis. Also respondents that refused to answer the question (N=11), did not know (N=446) or for some other (technical) reason (N=75) did not answer the question, are excluded. This has resulted in a subpopulation of 29859 respondents.

Missing values

The missing values on the dependent, independent and moderating variables were analysed for existing patterns. On these variables there were 516 respondents with missing values, 1.73% of the total subpopulation. It could be that the respondents that refuse to answer a question or do not know what to answer, have similar characteristics that can explain this. This is called missing at random (Acock, 2005). Common characteristics that explain the missing values are education, ethnic group, age, gender, and indicators of psychological well-being. Deleting the respondents with missing values will make the remaining data less generalizable, since some type of people is not included. To check whether the missing values are at random, the mean of some characteristics can be compared from before and after filtering. This is done for gender, years of education, age and financial satisfaction by means of one sample t-tests. No significant differences were found between the means of these variables before and after filtering. This supports the fact that there is no missing at random. However, because the relative size of the respondents with missing values is really small (1.73%), it is unlikely to find a significant difference. It cannot be assumed that the missings are completely at random and thus, that they are randomly divided over the respondents. In this case, listwise deletion is problematic. However, we have seen that there are no big differences in mean and therefore, listwise deletion was used. Respondents that had a missing value on one or more of the variables of interest, have been excluded. The eventual sample consists of 28741 respondents.

Dependent variable: Generalised trust

The dependent variable in this research is generalised trust. Generally, relying on a single item for measuring attitudes is not reliable (Reeskens & Hooghe, 2002). Therefore, generalised trust is measured by a three-item scale. The scale is based upon three questions of the ESS that are about trust in unknown others: ‘*Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people?*’; ‘*Do you think that most people would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance, or would they try to be fair?*’; and ‘*Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful or that they are mostly looking out for themselves?*’. All three items were measured on a Likert-scale with eleven points, in which 0 corresponds with “*You can’t be too careful*”/”*Most people would try to take advantage of me*”/”*People mostly look out for themselves*” and 10 corresponds with “*Most people can be trusted*”/”*Most people would try to be fair*”/ “*People mostly try to be helpful*”. Of each item, the answer categories *refusal*, *don’t know* and *no answer* are converted into missing values and not taken into the analyses. This results in only a few less cases: for the first and respectively the second and third question, $N = 36$, $N = 101$ and $N = 63$.

Before the scale can be constructed, it has to be checked whether the scale will be valid and reliable. To test the validity, factor analysis is conducted. In this way the underlying structure of the correlations between the items can be analysed (Kline, 1994). Factor analysis with principal axis factoring and without rotation, due to the hypothesized one factor, is conducted. And indeed, one factor was identified as underlying the three items (see Table 1). This factor accounted for 49.44% of the variance on these items.

Table 1. Factor loadings of the three items on attitudes towards trusting unknown others

Item	Loadings on factor
1. <i>Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people?</i>	.737
2. <i>Do you think that most people would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance, or would they try to be fair?</i>	.746
3. <i>Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful or that they are mostly looking out for themselves?</i>	.619
Percentage of Variance	49.44%

$N = 28.775$

Furthermore, it has to be checked whether the three items are consistent over time. A reliability analysis with Cronbach's alpha is conducted. Cronbach's alpha is .74. This alpha of above 7 is acceptable to state that the scale is reliable (Allen & Bennett, 2012, p. 217).

After ensuring that the scale is valid and reliable, the scale is constructed. By calculating the mean of the three items together, a scale is formed running from 0 to 10. Likert-scales are ordinal variables, but 11 points on a Likert-scales bring it close to normality and to interval variables (Wu & Leung, 2017). This is important, because it makes it possible to conduct a linear regression analysis later on. Therefore, the variable for generalised trust will be considered as an continuous variable in this paper.

Independent variable: Ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood

Whereas most studies have looked at objective measures of ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood, in this paper a subjective measure will be used: the perception of the ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood. The perception is important because it is a strong predictor of attitudes, even more so than actual diversity (ESS, 2015). However, there are also downsides to this approach. Those who have less generalised trust tend to have a perception of the neighbourhood as more ethnically diverse. Therefore, we cannot rule out reversed causality. In the case of an objective measure, this reversed-causality is implausible (Dinesen & Sønderskov, 2014). People with less generalised trust are not likely to move to an ethnic diverse neighbourhood. The reverse is more likely: people with less generalised trust tend to move to a homogenous neighbourhood. Therefore, the people living in ethnic neighbourhoods might have more generalised trust than the average person. Instead of reversed causality, this risks underestimation of the effect of ethnic diversity on general trust. An approach in which both objective and subjective measures are involved would be the best, but due to lack of data, only the subjective measure could be used.

Ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood will be measured with the question '*How would you describe the area where you currently live?*'. There are three answer categories: 1) almost nobody minority race/ethnic group; 2) some minority race/ethnic group; and 3) many minority race/ethnic group. It is also possible to answer *refusal*, *don't know*, or *no answer*, but these were converted into missing values and not included for the analysis ($N = 203$). The variable is categorical ordinal. For the analysis, the variable is converted into three dummy variables.

Moderating variable: Frequency of interethnic contact

As mentioned in the theory section, both frequency and quality of interethnic contact are important. Because there is no variable available that covers both aspects, the operationalization for interethnic contact will happen on two ways: for frequency and for quality. The item on frequency uses the question ‘*How often do you have any contact with people who are of a different race or ethnic group from most [country] people when you are out and about? This could be on public transport, in the street, in shops or in the neighbourhood.*’ This could be verbal or non-verbal. The answer categories to this question are: 1) *never*; 2) *less than once a month*; 3) *once a month*; 4) *several times a week*; 5) *once a week*; 6) *several times a week*; and 7) *every day*. It is also possible to answer *refusal*, *don’t know* or *no answer*. The scores on these categories are filtered out of the data. This item is a categorical ordinal variable that uses a Likert-scale of 7 points. The variable is converted into a dummy variable. The score of (0) includes the respondents that have contact several times a month or less. The score of (1) includes the respondents that have contact once a week or more often. In my opinion, this division reflects the strongest distinction between respondents with a low and a high frequency of interethnic contact. As also showed in Table 3, these two categories exist of approximately the same number of respondents (44% and 56%).

Moderating variable: Quality of interethnic contact

The question that will be used to measure the quality of contact is: ‘*Do you have any close friends who are of a different race or ethnic group from most [country] people?*’. Answer categories on this question are 1) *yes, several*; 2) *yes, a few*; and 3) *no, none at all*. It was also possible to answer with *don’t know*, but respondents with these scores ($N = 151$) are excluded out of the data, just as respondents that refused to answer ($N=19$), or that due to another (technical) reason did not have a score ($N=21$). This variable is then transformed in a dummy variable. A score of (0) refers to respondents that have no friends that belong to an ethnic minority group, whereas a score of (1) refers to those respondents that have several or a few of these friends.

Individual level control variables

Previous studies have shown that many individual level variables are related to generalised trust and that these are important to control for. Women are found to be more trusting than men (Hooghe et al., 2006). Also the older, the high educated and the financially more secure are in general more trusting. On an individual level, the variables that will be controlled for

are gender, age in years, education in years, financial satisfaction, unemployment and country of residence (Stolle et al., 2008; Dinesen & Sønderskov, 2014).

Of these variables, gender is recoded into a dummy variable. A value of (0) resembles males and a value of (1) resembles females. After further inspection, also the variable of education in years is recoded. This variable contained many outliers: some people had answered that they had 50 years of education. General speaking, the maximum number of years of educations is around 22. All the scores that were above this, were assigned to the score of 22. This results in a normal distribution of scores.

Furthermore, a measure of income is used as control variable. However, because multiple countries are included, income is a difficult measure: whereas the value of money differs per country, it is difficult to compare income across countries. Therefore, financial satisfaction is the variable that is controlled for (Hooghe et al., 2006). This variable also has the advantage that people feel more comfortable answering it and that people know better what to answer. There are many less missing values on this item than on the item about the household's total net income. The item that is used asks the question: *'Which of the descriptions on this card comes closest to how you feel about your household's income nowadays?'*, with the answer categories: 1) *Living comfortably on present income*, 2) *Coping on present income*, 3) *Finding it difficult on present income* and 4) *Finding it very difficult on present income*. Scores on *don't know*, *refusal* and *no answer* are filtered out of the data. First, dummy variables were constructed, but because there are similar intervals between the four categories, finally this ordinal variable is treated as a continuous variable. This variable is rescaled, so a higher score refers to being more satisfied with household's income.

Lastly, I will control for the country context. As is viewed in Table 2, generalised trust and perceived ethnic minority in the neighbourhood differ between the different European advanced societies. In Portugal, the score on generalised trust is 4.34, whereas in Denmark it is 6.79. Also regarding ethnic diversity there are differences. 24% of the French respondents stated that there are many people from an ethnic minority group in the area where they live. In neighbouring country Germany, this percentage is 11%. These differences make it likely to assume that in which country people live, has an effect on generalised trust and of the perception of the ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood. Therefore, it is important to control for this.

Table 2. Mean of generalised trust and ethnic diversity per country

Country	Generalised trust	Ethnic minority in neighbourhood		
		Nobody	Some	Many
Austria	5.34	0.36	0.48	0.15
Belgium	5.18	0.48	0.39	0.13
Switzerland	5.93	0.28	0.53	0.19
Czech Republic	4.60	0.44	0.47	0.10
Germany	5.47	0.43	0.47	0.11
Denmark	6.76	0.55	0.36	0.09
Estonia	5.62	0.41	0.45	0.14
Spain	4.87	0.34	0.48	0.18
Finland	6.54	0.55	0.38	0.06
France	5.14	0.30	0.47	0.24
United Kingdom	5.74	0.43	0.42	0.16
Ireland	5.65	0.37	0.49	0.14
Netherlands	6.07	0.51	0.38	0.12
Norway	6.56	0.39	0.51	0.11
Portugal	4.34	0.61	0.31	0.08
Sweden	6.40	0.46	0.42	0.12
Slovenia	4.65	0.45	0.43	0.12
Average	5.60	0.43	0.44	0.13

Note: Generalised trust measured by the mean of the scores on the three questions:

1) ‘Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people?’ 2) ‘Do you think that most people would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance, or would they try to be fair?’ 3) ‘Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful or that they are mostly looking out for themselves?’. Minimum score is 0, maximum score is 10.

Contextual level control variables

Contextual variables are also important to control for. Many researches on the topic of ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood and trust have found that the social environment, especially the socioeconomic environment, has an important effect on trust. Sturgis et al. (2014) even argue that “neighbourhood socio-economic deprivation and the degree of social integration of individuals within their communities (...) are more appropriate sites of academic and policy concern” (p.58). However, in the data available there are not many contextual variables, which makes it difficult to control for these effects. One item measures how safe the

respondent feels or would feel walking alone in his or her area after dark. There are four answer categories: 1) *very safe*, 2) *safe*, 3) *unsafe* and 4) *very unsafe*. After filtering the scores of *don't know*, *no answer* and *refusal* out of the data, first dummy variables are constructed. However, after closer inspection, this categorical variable can be treated as a continuous variable. The intervals between the different categories are of approximately the same distance. The variable is rescaled, so a high score means that the respondent feels safe. The descriptive statistics of the dependent, independent and moderating variable and of the control variables are viewed in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics

Variables	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation
Generalised trust	0	10	5.60	1.76
Ethnic minority in neighbourhood				
Nobody	0	1	.43	-
Some	0	1	.44	-
Many	0	1	.13	-
Interethnic contact – frequency	0	1	.56	-
Interethnic contact - quality	0	1	.52	-
Gender (female)	0	1	.52	-
Age	14	104	49.69	18.55
Financial satisfaction	1	4	3.17	.80
Education (years)	0	22	12.99	3.87
Unemployed	0	1	.04	-
Feeling of safety in local area after dark	1	4	3.10	.76
Country (17 dummies)	0	1	-	-
N = 28741				

Method of analysis

A correlation between the main variables will be conducted in order to see whether these variables are associated with each other. These variables are ethnic diversity, generalised trust and the two measures for interethnic contact, on frequency and quality. The original variable of ethnic diversity is used. The reason for this is that the three dummy variables that were constructed for ethnic diversity will make it difficult to interpret the correlation. The item that is used contains three answer categories: *almost nobody*, *some* and *many from a minority ethnic group living in the neighbourhood*. If there is no association between these variables, regression analysis would not make sense.

Then, a hierarchical multiple regression will be conducted to investigate whether there exists a linear negative relationship between ethnic diversity and generalised trust and whether there exists a moderating effect of interethnic contact. Whereas there are two ways of operationalization for interethnic contact, two different hierarchical multiple regression analyses will be conducted. For the first analysis, an interaction variable is constructed with ethnic diversity and the frequency of interethnic contact. For the second analysis, an interaction variable is constructed with ethnic diversity and the quality of interethnic contact. This is done by multiplying the three dummy variables of ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood with the dummy variable for frequency or quality of interethnic contact.

Both analyses consist of three models. Model 1 contains the main effect of ethnic diversity on generalised trust. Model 2 contains, besides this main effect, the moderating effect of the frequency or quality of interethnic contact. In Model 3 the control variables are added.

Assumption checks

In the correlation, an ordinal variable of ethnic diversity is used. The assumptions for normality, linearity and homoscedasticity are not met and therefore, Pearson's r cannot be used. Kendall's Tau-b test is used.

In order to conduct the multiple regression analyses for both frequency and quality of interethnic contact, there are also assumptions that have to be met. The assumptions that can be checked before the analysis are whether the continuous variables are normally distributed, named normality, whether there are no outliers and whether there are no high correlations between predictor variables (multicollinearity). The first two assumption are tested by conducting a stem-and-leaf plot and a boxplot. The boxplot showed that age in years is normally distributed and has no outliers. Generalised trust has some outliers and years of

education has many outliers and extreme scores. The outliers on generalised trust are explainable: it is possible that respondents answer all three questions on trust with a 0. Therefore generalised trust will be left like this. Years of education is transformed, as described in the methods section, in order to correct for the outliers. Regarding multicollinearity, there are no dangerously high correlations between the predictor variables, as is viewed in Table A1 (see Appendix). The assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity are checked for both analyses with the output of the regression analysis. Besides the correlation matrix viewed in Table A1, the regression analysis also shows two measures of multicollinearity: tolerance and VIF. When the tolerances for the predictor variables are smaller than 0.2, there is reason for closer inspection of high correlations between some predictor variables. VIFs higher than 5 point at multicollinearity. In both analyses, multicollinearity is not at stake. Also normality, linearity and homoscedasticity of the residuals are not threatened. The Normal Probability Plot of Regression Standardized Residuals shows that the residuals are normally distributed. The scatterplot shows an absence of any clear pattern in the spread of points. This means that the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity are met for the analysis for frequency and for the analysis for quality of interethnic contact.

4. Results

The results of the correlation are shown in Table 4. The correlation between ethnic diversity and generalised trust is negative and significant, although not very strong, $\tau = -.04$, $p < .001$, two-tailed, $N = 28741$. Someone who has the perception of many people from an ethnic minority group in his or her neighbourhood is more likely to have less generalised trust than someone who has the perception of some or none people from an ethnic minority group in the neighbourhood. Furthermore, Table 4 shows that there exist a positive significant correlation between the two measures of interethnic contact and general trust, $\tau = .06$ for frequency and $\tau = .03$ for quality, $p < .001$, two-tailed, $N = 28.741$. Also this correlation is not very strong.

Regression with frequency of interethnic contact

The results of the multiple regression analysis with frequency of interethnic contact are noted in Table 5. The variables in Model 1 account for 1.3% of the variance of generalised trust, $R^2 = .013$, $F(3, 28737) = 122.58$, $p < .001$. In this model, having some people of an ethnic

Table 4. Correlation between dependent, independent and moderating variables

	Generalised trust	Ethnic diversity in neighbourhood	Interethnic contact - frequency	Interethnic contact - quality
Generalised trust	-			
Ethnic diversity in neighbourhood	-.04**	-		
Interethnic contact - frequency	.06**	.25**	-	
Interethnic contact - quality	.03**	.19**	.28**	-

** . Correlation is significant, $p < .001$ (two-tailed)

$N = 28.741$

Note: Here, the item used for ethnic diversity in neighbourhood is ordinal: it contains three answer categories. The two items for interethnic contact are both dummy variables. Kendall's Tau-b is used.

minority in the neighbourhood has a significant negative effect on generalised trust, $B = -.044$, $t(28737) = -1.945$, $p < .05$. For having many people of an ethnic minority in the neighbourhood a stronger negative significant effect was observed, $B = -.476$, $t(28737) = -14.248$, $p < .001$. Furthermore, a positive significant effect was found for frequency of interethnic contact, $B = .316$, $t(28737) = 14.708$, $p < .001$. When the interaction effect is added in Model 2, no additional variance was explained, $R^2_{\text{change}} = .000$, $F_{\text{change}}(2, 28735) = 2.96$, $p = .052$. The added variables do not help to predict generalised trust. Having many people from an ethnic minority group still has a strong negative significant effect, $B = -.477$, $t(28735) = -7.430$, $p < .001$. One of the interaction variables has a significant effect. For people of the ethnic majority group that live in a neighbourhood with some ethnic diversity and that have frequent interethnic contact, a negative significant effect on generalised trust was found, $B = -.108$, $t(28735) = -2.392$, $p < .01$. In this model, a positive significant effect was found for frequency of interethnic contact as well, $B = .366$, $t(28735) = 11.538$, $p < .001$. The variables in Model 3 account for an additional 11.5% of the variance explained, $R^2_{\text{change}} = .115$, $F_{\text{change}}(7, 28728) = 540.28$, $p < .001$. The variables of all three models together explain 12.8% of the variance in generalised trust, $R^2 = .128$, adjusted $R^2 = .127$, $F(12, 28728) = 350.40$, $p < .001$. According to Cohen (1988), this can be considered as medium high

Table 5. Unstandardised Regression Coefficients and Standard Error for Each Predictor Variable on Generalised Trust in the Analysis with Frequency of Interethnic contact

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Main effect		Main effect and interaction		Main effect, interaction and control variables	
	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
Constant	5.501***	.018	5.480***	.021	2.180***	.081
Ethnic minority in neighbourhood						
nobody	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref
some	-.044*	.023	.014	.033	.100***	.030
many	-.476***	.033	-.477***	.064	-.118*	.058
Interethnic contact - frequency	.316***	.021	.366***	.032	.083**	.029
Interaction effect						
freq. contact*nobody			ref	ref	ref	ref
freq. contact*some			-.108**	.045	-.032	.040
freq. contact*many			-.021	.076	.042	.068
Gender (female)					.224***	.019
Age					.006***	.001
Education (years)					.044***	.003
Financial satisfaction					.360***	.013
Unemployed					-.228***	.047
Feeling of safety in local area after dark					.330***	.013
Country (17 dummies)					yes	
N	28741		28741		28741	
R Square	.013		.013		.215	

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$, one-sided

(Allen & Bennett, 2010). When the control variables are added in this model, a positive significant effect appears for having some ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood, $B = .100$, $t(28713) = 3.367$, $p < .001$. A negative significant effect of having many people of an ethnic minority group in the neighbourhood still exists in Model 3, although less strong, $B = -.118$, $t(28713) = -2.027$, $p < .05$. No interaction effect is found to be significant. The effect of frequency of interethnic contact does maintain to be positive and significant, but less strong as well, $B = .083$, $t(28713) = 2.821$, $p < .01$. All the control variables are found to have a significant effect on generalised trust. Figure 2 below shows the hypothesized relationships and the observed effects from Model 3. In the Appendix, a figure is added that visualizes the interaction effect of frequency of interethnic contact (Figure A2).

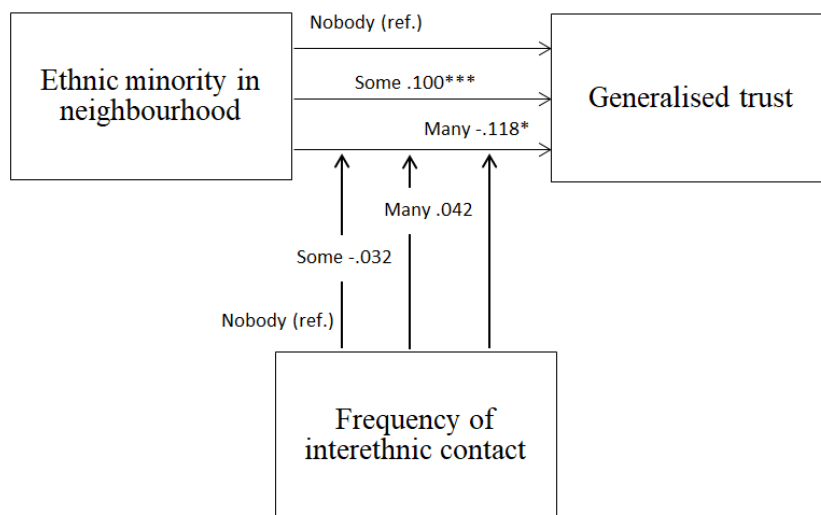


Figure 2. Schematic representation of the hypothesized relationships with the effect from Model 3, Table 5. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

Regression with quality of interethnic contact

The results of the multiple regression analysis with quality of interethnic contact are showed in Table 6. The variance of generalised trust that can be explained by the variables of Model 1 is .08%, $R^2 = .008$, $F(3, 28737) = 74.91$, $p < .001$. Furthermore, the table shows that having many people that belong to an ethnic minority group in the neighbourhood has a negative significant effect on generalised trust, $B = -.412$, $t(28737) = -12.465$, $p < .001$. The quality of interethnic contact has a significant positive effect, $B = .182$, $t(28737) = 8.606$, $p < .001$. When the interaction variable is added in Model 2, this explained variance does not increase, $R^2_{\text{change}} = .000$, $F_{\text{change}}(2, 28735) = 4.53$, $p = .011$. The added variables do not predict more of generalised trust. In this model, a negative and significant effect exists for having many

Table 6. Unstandardised Regression Coefficients and Standard Error for each predictor variable on generalised trust for the analysis with quality of interethnic contact

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	Main effect		Main effect and interaction		Main effect, interaction and control variables	
	B	S.E.	B	S.E.	B	S.E.
Constant	5.563***	.018	5.541***	.052	2.191***	.080
Ethnic minority in neighbourhood						
nobody	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref	ref
some	-.011	.022	.052	.032	.109***	.028
many	-.412***	.033	-.433***	.054	-.112*	.048
Interethnic contact - quality	.182***	.021	.237***	.032	.081**	.029
Interaction effect						
qual. contact*nobody			ref	ref	ref	ref
qual. contact*some			-.126**	.045	-.046	.040
qual. contact*many			.009	.069	.054	.061
Gender (female)					.226***	.019
Age					.006***	.001
Education (years)					.043***	.003
Financial satisfaction					.361***	.013
Unemployed					-.235***	.047
Feeling of safety in local area after dark					.329***	.013
Country (17 dummies)					Yes	
N	28741		28741		28741	
R Square	.008		.008		.126	

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$, one-sided

people of an ethnic minority group in the neighbourhood, $B = -.433$, $t(28735) = 8.092$, $p < .001$. A positive significant effect was also found for quality of interethnic contact, $B = .237$, $t(28735) = 7.373$, $p < .001$. One of the interaction variables was found to be significant. People of the ethnic majority group that live in a neighbourhood with some ethnic diversity and that have friends from an ethnic minority group, have a negative significant effect on generalised trust, $B = -.126$, $t(28735) = -2.791$, $p < .01$

Explained variance increases with 11.8% when the control variables in Model 3 are added, $R^2_{\text{change}} = .118$, $F_{\text{change}}(7, 28728) = 554.98$, $p < .001$. The three models together explain 12.6% of the variance, $R^2 = .126$, $F(12, 28728) = 933.84$, $p < .001$.

When the control variables are added in this model, a positive significant effect appears for having some ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood, $B = .109$, $t(28713) = 3.857$, $p < .001$. Having many people of an ethnic minority group in the neighbourhood continues to have a negative significant effect in Model 3, although less strong, $B = -.112$, $t(28713) = -2.324$, $p < .05$. No interaction effect is found to be significant. The effect of frequency of interethnic contact does maintain to be positive and significant, but less strong as well, $B = .081$, $t(28713) = 2.782$, $p < .01$. All the control variables are found to have a significant effect on generalised trust. Figure 3 below shows the hypothesized relationships and the observed effects from Model 3. In the Appendix, one figure is added to show for both analyses the effect of ethnic diversity on generalised trust (Figure A1). Another figure is added that clarifies the interaction effect of quality of interethnic contact (Figure A3).

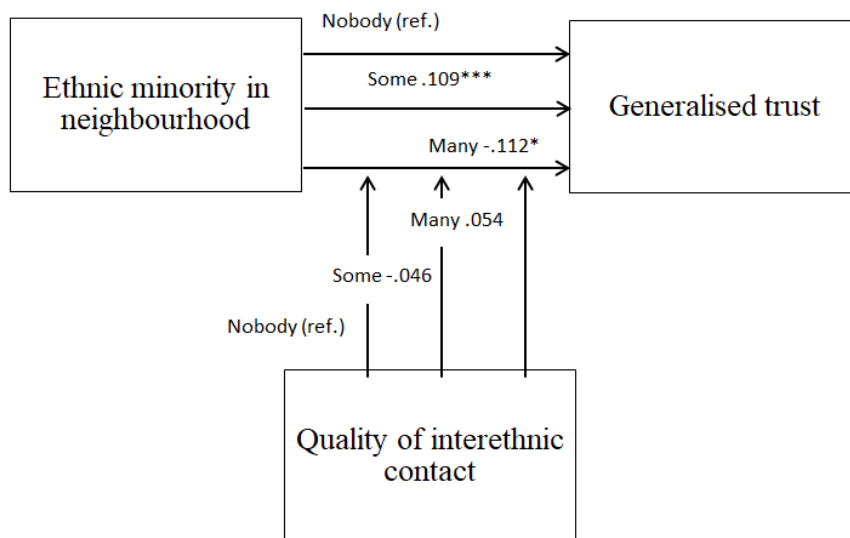


Figure 3. Schematic representation of the hypothesized relationships with the effect from Model 3, Table 6. * $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$.

5. Conclusion

Many people, including politicians, presume a negative relationship between ethnic diversity and social cohesion. Previous studies have found evidence for a negative effect of ethnic diversity on generalised trust. This is worrisome, because generalised trust has many positive consequences for society and for individuals, for example for collective action and for forms of pro-social behaviour. In this paper it was investigated whether ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood affects generalised trust among the ethnic majority. Furthermore, the role of interethnic contact within this relationship was examined. Results of the analyses have shown that there indeed is some evidence that there exists a negative relationship between ethnic diversity and generalised trust. People from the ethnic majority group that live in a neighbourhood with many people from an ethnic minority group, have less generalised trust than people from the ethnic majority group that live in a neighbourhood with no ethnic diversity. However, the results also show that people from the ethnic majority group that live in a neighbourhood with some ethnic diversity, display the highest levels of generalised trust. Interethnic contact was not found to influence the relationship between ethnic diversity and generalised trust.

Based on theories on constrict/anomie, it was expected that ethnic diversity negatively affects generalised trust among the ethnic majority group. These theories state that having people from different ethnic groups in the neighbourhood means that there is a variety of languages that is spoken and values that is adhered to. People feel insecure on how they should behave and therefore avoid contact with others. Less contact with close others hinders the building of generalised trust (Jennissen et al., 2018; Putnam, 2007). Also the hypothesis from Adams et al. (2010) points towards this negative effect. They found that it is more difficult for people to infer thoughts, intentions and feelings of people from another ethnic group. The ability to 'read' someone is important for trusting others. When people from the ethnic majority group are less likely to trust people from an ethnic minority group, this impedes positive contacts with strangers from other ethnic groups. Few of these positive contacts results in less generalised trust. The results found in this paper support the first hypothesis that was derived from these theories: that ethnic diversity has a negative effect on generalised trust among the ethnic majority group. However, the results do suggest that the extent of ethnic diversity is important. Some ethnic diversity does not lead to less generalised trust.

Based on the contact theory, it was expected that interethnic contact could moderate the negative effect of ethnic diversity. Social interaction between members of different ethnic groups has the ability to reduce prejudices about the other ethnic group (Stolle et al., 2008; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006). Through contact, people of the ethnic minority group are less seen as members of the out-group and more as member of the in-group. This overarching identity promotes generalised trust. The second hypothesis that states that the negative effect of ethnic diversity on generalised trust among members of the ethnic majority group is weaker for the people that have interethnic contact, was not supported. No results were found that support the theory on intergroup contact.

This paper is in line with the literature that did not find substantial evidence for a decline in social cohesion due to ethnic diversity (Gesthuizen et al., 2009; Sturgis et al., 2014; Hooghe et al., 2006; Hooghe et al., 2009). These studies are often conducted in Europe. Studies that did find a negative effect are usually conducted in the United States (Putnam, 2007; Stolle et al., 2008). This might suggest a divide between the American and the European context. The European literature on ethnic diversity goes against the dominant assumption within public discourse and politics that ethnic diversity has a negative effect on social cohesion of societies. Results from this paper suggest that generalised trust seems to benefit from a certain extent of ethnic diversity. Politicians that abandon multicultural policies based upon this assumption, should be aware of the damage these ungrounded policies can cause.

6. Discussion

This paper has added to the existing knowledge on the consequences of ethnic diversity by emphasizing the importance of the use of generalised trust within this topic, and by investigating Europe and the role of interethnic contact. Nevertheless, there are some weaknesses in this paper that we should be aware of when looking at the results. First, for the operationalization of ethnic diversity in the neighbourhood a subjective measure was used. Subjective measures for ethnic diversity are important, because they say more about the experience of people than objective measures of ethnic diversity (ESS, 2015). However, it is very likely that people that have less generalised trust feel more threatened by ethnic diversity and perceive more ethnic diversity. This makes it unreliable to say that perceived ethnic diversity affects generalised trust. Namely, generalised trust can also affect perceived ethnic diversity. Due to this reversed causality, stating that there is an one-way causal effect is

questionable. The second weakness is the absence of controlling for the socio-economic status of the neighbourhood. Many studies have found that the negative effect of ethnic diversity disappears when the socio-economic status of the neighbourhood is taken into account (Sturgis et al., 2014; Gesthuizen et al., 2009). This suggests that not so much ethnic diversity, but the low socio-economic status that is often found in ethnically diverse neighbourhoods, affects generalised trust. The inability of this paper to take socio-economic status into account, might have resulted in an exaggerated effect of ethnic diversity. Third, the measures used for interethnic contact are not that suitable for the theory used on intergroup contact. Frequency and quality of interethnic contact was measured based on two different groups; everyday contacts and friends. Whereas both frequency and quality of contact with a person are important (ESS, 2015), ideally we want to measure the frequency and quality of this contact. The observed frequency of interethnic contact with everyday contacts could also be qualitative very low, meaning this contact is not positive and has no positive effect on generalised trust. Fourth, we should be aware of the fact that because of the large number of cases, significant effects are easy to find, but they do not have to substantially mean something.

Lastly, I set out some ideas for future research. Research would be wise to include subjective and objective measures of ethnic diversity. Until now, most researches on ethnic diversity have been using objective measures. Ethnic diversity is measured on the national level (see for example Gesthuizen et al., 2009) and neighbourhoods are based upon official classifications (See for example Sturgis et al., 2014). However, according to Wong, Bowers, Williams and Simmons (2012), how people perceive the environment is most important for political phenomena to have an impact. Objective measures of ethnic diversity in one's environment do not reflect how people experience ethnic diversity. However, the value of objective measures must not be underestimated. As we have seen in this paper, solely the use of subjective measures risks reversed causality. The use of both objective and subjective measures gives more reliable insights into the effect of ethnic diversity. Another suggestion for future research regards the extent of ethnic diversity. As seen in this paper, some ethnic diversity is related to more generalised trust among the ethnic majority group than no or a lot of ethnic diversity. It would be interesting to examine more in-depth what degree of ethnic diversity yields the most positive outcomes on generalised trust. To conclude, research on other topics of ethnic diversity is encouraged. Many European studies on ethnic diversity, including this paper, have shown that there is no devastating effect on social cohesion. Modern societies seem to function also with a variety of ethnicities and cultures. To quote

Portes and Vickstrom (2011): “Preoccupation with declining expressions of trust and with alleged effects of diversity serves to detract attention from real and far more urgent problems” (p. 476). Other aspects within the topic of ethnic diversity might provide us with important insight on how to solve social problems.

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Appendix Table A1. Correlation matrix

		Generalised trust	Ethnic diversity			Interethnic contact - frequency	Interethnic contact - quality	Gender (female)	Age (yrs)	Financial satisfaction	Education (yrs)	Unemployed	Feeling of safety after dark
			Nobody	Some	Many								
Generalised trust		-											
Ethnic diversity	Nobody	.019**	-										
	Some	.030**	-.769**	-									
	Many	-.072**	-.337**	-.343**	-								
Interethnic contact – frequency		.072**	-.238**	.122**	.170**	-							
Interethnic contact – quality		.042**	-.195**	.115**	.118**	.275**	-						
Gender (female)		.012*	.000	-.016**	.023**	.003	-.024**	-					
Age (yrs)		.027**	.116**	-.065**	-.074**	-.250**	-.256**	.016**	-				
Financial satisfaction		.276**	.043**	.022**	-.094**	.088**	.048**	-.059**	-.015**	-			
Education (yrs)		.169**	-.074**	.074**	.000	.172**	.166**	.002	-.242**	.196**	-		
Unemployed		-.082**	-.031**	.004	.039**	-.002	.041**	-.023**	-.109**	-.183**	-.008	-	
Feeling of safety after dark		.210**	.111**	-.011	-.148**	.045**	.080**	-.272**	-.096**	.192**	.124**	-.008	

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

N = 28.741

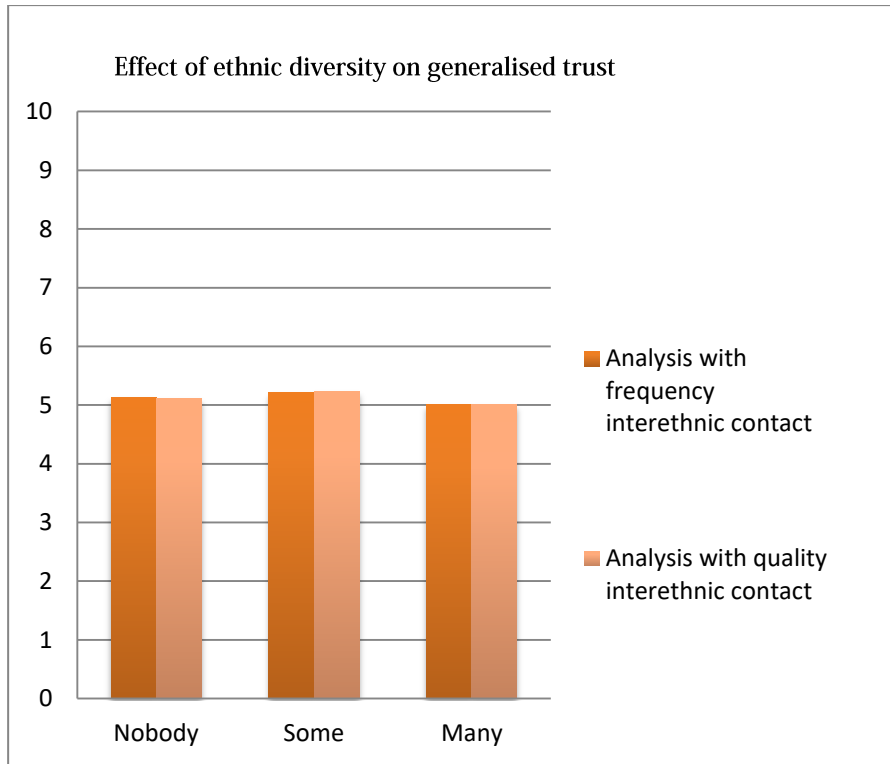


Figure A1. For the two analysis, generalised trust in the three different neighbourhoods.

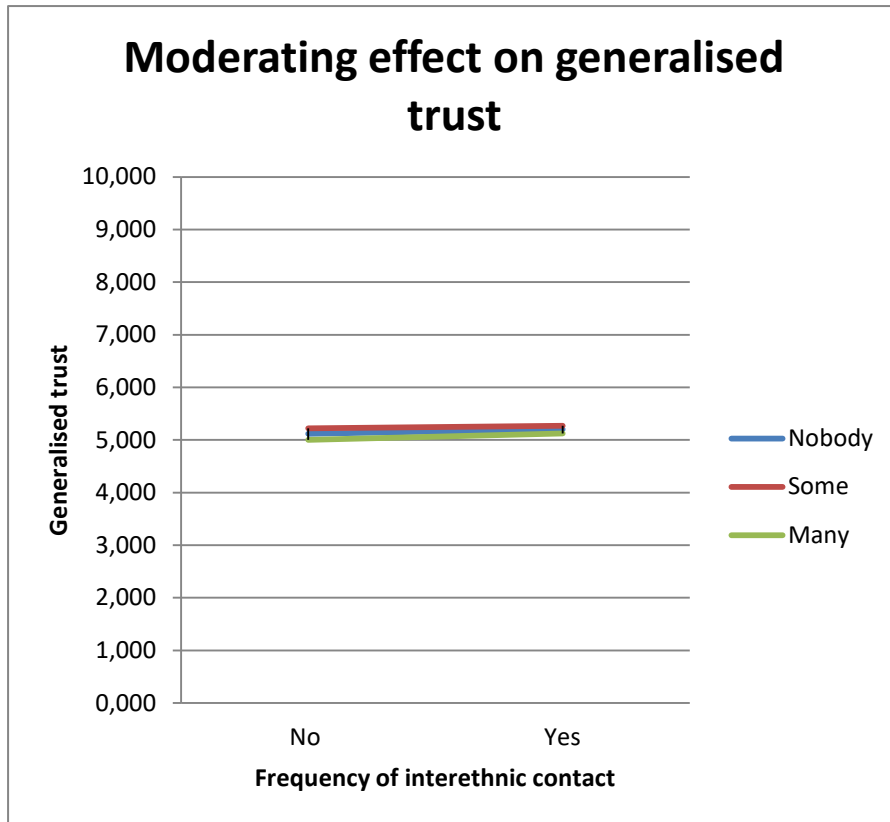


Figure A2. Interaction effect of frequency of interethnic contact

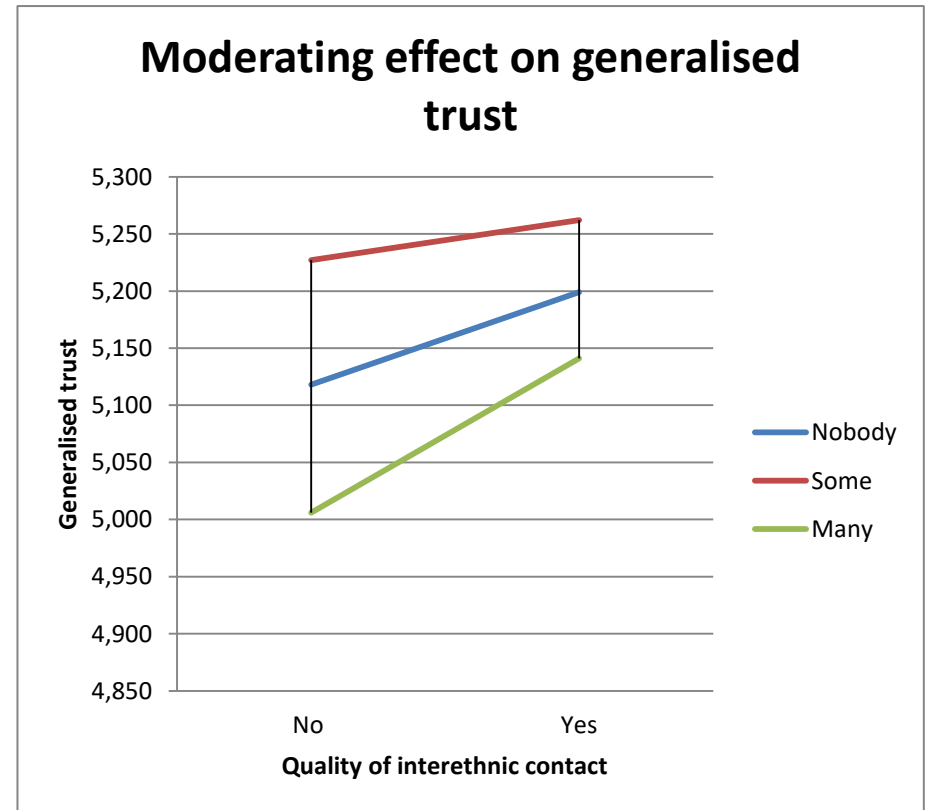


Figure A3. Interaction effect of quality of interethnic contact, zoomed in