More than recruitment : how social ties support protest participation

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Abstract - Social movement scholars have frequently pointed to individuals' personal networks to explain protest participation. While the recruitment function of micro networks—the being asked part of mobilization—has been explored in depth, the support effect of networks received only scant attention. The study explores to what extent and how social support and social constraints in people's personal network explain differential protest participation. Three dimensions of support are distinguished: the politicization of a person's network, the political agreement about the protest topic within a person's network, and the social approval of protest participation within a person's network. Drawing on panel survey data (N=1,684) of a large protest in Belgium including both participants and non-participants, we test whether the support effects of networks play a role on top of the recruitment effect. We find evidence that two functions of social networks (politicization and social approval) affect protest participation. Additionally, we find differences in support-effects across types of social ties. Co-members of an organization exert influence on protest participation across a variety of support functions. The most intimate ties prospective participants have (partners), in contrast, only matter in so far as they approve of participation.

Keywords: protest; mobilization; differential participation; interpersonal networks; social ties.

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Introduction

The networks we are embedded in affect our tastes, attitudes, and behavior. This sociological truism applies to our political behavior as well. Political scientists have extensively studied how networks influence political behavior such as canvassing, voting (e.g.: Huckfeldt and Sprague 1992) and political participation more generally (e.g. Verba, Schlozman, and Burns 2005). Also participation in social movements has often been explained by potential participants' network embeddedness. Interpersonal networks matter for participation: *"Most scholars would call this the most thoroughly documented finding about social movements."*(Jasper and Young 2007, 276). Networks have a direct recruitment effect: the simple fact that one knows people who are active in a social movement increases the chance that one is asked to participate; networks increase the odds that one will be explicitly confronted with a participation opportunity. Yet, interpersonal networks can also have an implicit effect on participation. This means that networks may somehow be supportive for protest participation beyond asking one to participate. In other words, networks may *initiate* protest participation but they can also *validate* someone's intention to participate. While the explicit recruitment effect (initiating) is well-known and has been examined in detail, the implicit supportive effect of networks (validating) has received less scholarly attention. What this 'support' for protest participation exactly entails and how it should be conceptualized, has not been spelled out clearly. And, the empirical evidence with regard to what we call a 'support effect' of networks has been systematic nor broad.

This study examines the support effect of social networks in mobilizing for a large anti-government demonstration named *De Grote Parade*, staged in March 2016 in Brussels (Belgium). Demonstrations are one of the most frequently used forms of protest and we use this single demonstration case to examine protest participation more broadly. In a rare panel design, we surveyed potential participants *before* the event and asked them in detail about the supportive or non-supportive character of their personal network. Then, *after* the protest took place, we contacted the same potential participants again, asking them whether they actually participated. We use pre-demonstration network features to predict potential participants' actual later participation.

Our theoretical claim is that, at least among people who are already linked to a movement and who have protest experience, interpersonal networks, on top of their recruitment effect, may also exert a support effect, positively affecting participation when those networks (1) are politicized, (2) when they consist of people who share the same political convictions with regard to the protest issue, and (3) when other network members approve of one's participation. We find that more politicized and participation approving networks positively influence participation, whereas substantive political agreement within one's network does not. In addition to these general effects and speaking to an ongoing debate about which social ties matter for participation, we find differences across types of social ties. Co-members of an organization exert a positive influence on protest participation via all support dimensions. The most intimate tie prospective participants have, their partner, matters by approving participation.

How ties support and constrain protest participation

A host of previous research showed that protest participation is enhanced by network embeddedness. Mobilization for protest can happen through non-personal means of communication (e.g. mass media) but it mostly happens via people who know each other personally (see for example: McAdam 1988; McAdam and Paulsen 1993; Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995; Gould 2003; Schussman and Soule 2005; Kitts 2000; Lim 2008). There is compelling evidence that people participate because they are being asked explicitly to participate by other people in their interpersonal network; this is the *recruitment* effect of social ties (see among many others Schussman and Soule 2005).

While their recruitment effect has been explored in depth, the *support* effect of networks received less attention. Even if they are not explicitly asking to participate, the people surrounding potential participants can still influence the decision to take part (see for example Opp 1986 who speaks about 'soft incentives'; see also Gould 1993; Kim and Bearman 1997). People do not take the decision to participate in protest in a social vacuum; they are influenced by the attitudes and

(anticipated) reactions of the people around them. Other people in someone's network, for example, can agree with the goal of a protest event and this can send the implicit message that participation is a worthy endeavor; or they can even openly applaud participation in the event. The opposite may be the case as well, of course; social ties may constrain participation (McAdam & Paulsen 1993). Conflicting pressures can make it harder for people to take part (see also: Kitts 2000). All this, often implicit, positive and negative 'advice' that a potential participant receives, affects the final decision to participate. Passy (2001) calls this the 'decision-shaping function' of networks: "*Through exchanges and conversational activities, prospective activists develop or strengthen their decision to participate (or not) in protest action*"(Passy and Monsch 2014, 28). Importantly, many conversation partners surrounding a potential participant are not activists themselves but simply other individuals—parents, friends, colleagues etc.—that matter somehow to the potential participant and whose opinions may influence their decision to join the protest. While we will mostly use the term network 'support' in this study, we use it here to refer both to the supportive and constraining effect of interpersonal ties.

Apart from a recruitment and support effect of social ties, there is a third and even more implicit way in which networks may spur participation: their *collective identity* building (e.g. Friedman and McAdam 1992). Through networks and conversations with others, people develop a certain identity and come to share a particular culture that enhances (or thwarts) protest participation (see for example: Passy and Monsch 2014). A large literature on movements and identity argues that collective identities are carried by interpersonal networks (see for example: Friedman and McAdam 1992; Tindall 2004). While we recognize the socializing effects of networks on participation, these effects develop over a longer period of time and the empirical scope of our study is confined to the 'campaign' period running up to a protest event. Additionally, our empirical material is limited to a sample of self-declared social movement supporters, making the collective identity to a considerable extent pre-given. While acknowledging the socialization path, we fully focus on the support effect of social ties here.

Extant work on networks and participation recognizes that networks have an effect that goes beyond merely increasing the odds of being confronted with participation requests (recruitment effect). Lacking, however, is an integrative theoretical account of how these different support functions relate to each other, as well as an operationalization that allows for empirical measurement. As such, the lamenting 25 year old quote of McAdam and Paulsen (1993: 645) still holds: "*We have demonstrated a strong association between social ties and activism, but have largely failed to account for the relationship theoretically*"(for similar older and more recent complaints, see: Marwell, Oliver, and Prahl 1988; Passy 2001; McAdam and Boudet 2012, 203–5; Passy and Monsch 2014).

Over the years, the social movements literature has put forward several loosely connected accounts of why other people in someone's network may influence one's decision to participate. Social influence theory in social psychology, allows to meaningfully conceptualize and integrate these mechanisms. Concretely, recent studies integrating reasoned action (e.g. Fishbein and Ajzen 2010) and social influence network theory (e.g. Friedkin 1998), help conceptualizing the support effect of social ties. Friedkin (2010) summarizes the social influence argument stating that people's planned behavior is preceded by attitudinal evaluation. Taking part in a demonstration is deliberative, planned behavior and rarely entirely spontaneous. People first develop the intention to participate and take part only later. The intention to manifest the protest behavior (just like any other action) is unstable, though, and subject to pressure from others. In between intention and participation, the evaluations of the prospective participant are influenced by displays of significant others. In sum, the initial intention to act may be generated by explicit recruitment efforts but it needs to be socially 'validated' in one's interpersonal network.

The positive validation of individuals' propensity to protest is more likely to happen when their network displays several characteristics: (1) politicization, (2) political agreement, and (3) social approval.

Politicization relates to the salience of politics in someone's network. Participating in protest is political behavior and politically engaged ties are more likely to support engaging in such behavior.

Additionally, there is a quite extensive literature showing that politicized networks tend to be ideologically homogenous. People prefer to talk politics—talking politics being the prime indicator of politicization—with others they agree with (see for example: Abelson 1979; Huckfeldt, Johnson, and Sprague 2004). That people frequently discuss politics with others is a good indicator of *both* the politicization of their network and of the fact that they are surrounded by people who, in general, politically agree with them. Network politicization and ideological homogeneity are empirically associated but analytically distinct, though. Politicization as such may exert a supportive effect on protest participation since protest behavior essentially is political behavior and as co-politicized others tend to care more about such behavior. This is all the more the case, however, when politicization entails ideological similarity. In that case, network politicization not only leads to caring about the behavior itself but also about the cause the protest is pursuing. Classic work in the broad field of political participation found that political disagreement in one's network decreases political participation (Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet 1945). More recent evidence is not entirely straightforward (see for example: Huckfeldt, Johnson, and Sprague 2004) but most of it points in the direction of political disagreement attenuating political participation (Mutz 2002; McClurg 2006). In sum, network politicization is likely to have a direct supportive effect on potential participants and an indirect effect through the ideological homogeneity it entails.

The second potentially protest-supportive feature of networks is closer connected to the actual event. The *agreement* focal individuals experience among their significant others with regard to the general object and goal of a protest should play a role as well. Even in networks that are politicized (and ideologically congruent) there may be disagreement about the goals of a specific protest. McAdam and Paulsen (1993) argue that, when people consider participating in protest, they look for validation and first discuss their intention with those they expect to share their stance regarding the issue. Social ties that agree with the prospective participant, and share common values, goals, symbols or attachments, exert special social influence. These reference persons are more likely to be consulted, they are more likely to give their blessing, and, third, people are generally more influenced by people

who are similar to them (equivalence leads to social influence; see: Marsden and Friedkin 1993; applied to social movement participation, see: Somma 2009). In other words, the validation of a prospective protester's disposition is more influential when it comes from someone with whom the potential participant shares political convictions underlying the protest (Lim 2008).

Third, the perceived *approval* of concrete participation in the specific protest should play a role as well. Even if the surrounding people may generally care about politics, and even if they agree with the goals of the protest, they may still not be supportive of an individual's participation in the concrete event. Interpersonal networks support or constrain participation because they are sources of social approval or disapproval. Social influence theorists argue that people develop a so-called 'subjective norm', being "*a person's perception of the extent to which significant others believe that the person should manifest the behavior*"(Friedkin 2010, 200). This subjective norm affects the final decision to manifest the planned behavior. Applied to protest, Klandermans (1984) stated that people have, 'social motives' to participate. Potential participants take the expected reactions from significant others to their (non-)participation into account when deciding. Opp (1986a, 91) raises a similar point when he talks about the 'normative expectations of reference persons' affecting the decision to participate (see also Kitts 2000). Note that the approval or disapproval does not need to imply any political agreement and that it is related to participation in a specific event. It is *social* approval, not political approval. For instance, the event might be considered by one's social ties as being potentially dangerous, one could be injured because of police repression. Or, a reference person may consider the protest to be useless, even when agreeing with its goals. In sum, the protest-specific social approval of others in one's network affects someone's decision to participate too.

All three mechanisms of network support—politicization, political agreement and social support—have been suggested in the literature but empirical evidence distinguishing them is lacking. Even McAdam and Paulsen's (1993) seminal study did not tap into the different support functions of networks. Their Freedom Summer (non-)participants were asked to rank order groups or individuals who "*positively influenced your decision to apply to the Freedom Summer Project*" (McAdam and

Paulsen 1993, 652). The question is not very detailed and it is not clear what this 'influence' entails. In the present study, we have measures that allow for testing the separate mechanisms.

H1: Prospective protest participants have a larger chance to take part in protest when their interpersonal network is politicized (politicization).

H2: Prospective protest participants have a larger chance to take part in protest when their interpersonal network shares their political beliefs (political agreement).

H3: Prospective protest participants have a larger chance to take part in protest when their interpersonal network approves of their participation in the protest event (social approval).

PROTEST PARTICIPATION SUPPORT VARIES ACROSS TIES

The three hypotheses above do not distinguish between different types of ties. Not all social ties carry an equal weight, social influence scholars argue. Some referents are more persuasive in motivating an individual to comply (Friedkin 2010, 201). The previous section analyzes *how* networks—via the three support mechanisms—affect protest participation. An equally important matter, however, is *which* social ties primarily fulfill the participation-supportive functions.

There is an ongoing debate in the literature about what kinds of ties matter for participation. Are weak or rather strong ties (Granovetter 1973) most influential (for a discussion, see: Passy and Monsch 2014)? Some say that strong ties matter most (see for example: Passy 2001; McAdam and Paulsen 1993; Somma 2009) while others make a plea for weak tie effectiveness (see for example: Lim 2010; Fisher 2010; Bedoyan, Van Aelst, and Walgrave 2004). Most of this work does not focus on the support effect of social ties but on their recruitment effect. But the support effect of social ties as well may differ across tie type. The question is to what extent politicization, political agreement and social approval vary across tie type.

McAdam and Paulsen (1993) distinguish two sets of people that are particularly important. People first discuss their disposition to participate with those with whom they share a political identity.

They want to check whether especially these people agree that the protest is about the right cause. Second, McAdam and Paulsen say, prospective participants deliberate about their possible participation with the people they care about most, their most strong ties. The importance of especially these two sorts of people relates to the fact that prospective participants *want* their intentions to be validated by these groups in particular and that their political behavior is also most *visible* for these specific others. Therefore, these two kinds of ties exert strong social control. For instance, it is tricky to participate in a demonstration without one's partner knowing and it is also more difficult to hide one's participation for the people with whom one regularly talks about politics. In sum, we expect that especially the support of two kinds of social ties matters: the most significant others and the political peers.

McAdam and Paulsen (1993: 647) argue that social tie support comes about in two consecutive 'phases'. Prospective participants first look for confirmation from their political peers and only afterwards discuss their intention with their most intimate social ties. We believe these two phases to be not just two temporally consecutive steps but also to have a different content and fulfill different functions. More concretely, people first look for *political* support for their plans and only then for *social* approval, at least this is what McAdam and Paulsen (1993) suggest. In other words, what intimate peers mostly do is, at the very end, to approve of (or not object to) one's participation plans. What politicized peers do, earlier in the participation process, is to politically galvanize the intention to participate. So, after discussing their intention to take part by talking to politically like-minded accomplices, potential participants ask 'permission' to their closest peers.

In operational terms and applied to the evidence we have at our disposal, we expect especially co-members on the one hand and partner and family members on the other to generate most protest-supportive effects. Co-members are the people with whom the prospective participant shares political values and goals, this is the reason they joined the same organization. Their relationship is largely based on the fact that they share political values (see for example: Lim 2008). Co-members should thus play a role with regard to a variety of protest support dimensions. Partner and family members are

crucial intimate contacts; it would be risky to engage in any kind of political behavior without their blessing. Their role is mainly to provide social approval at the end of the process. This leads to two additional hypotheses.

H4: Compared to when other social tie types support participation, prospective protest participants have a larger chance to take part in protest when co-members of an organization support participation.

H5: Compared to when other social tie types approve of participation in a protest event, prospective protest participants have a larger chance to take part in protest when their partner and family approve of their participation in the event.

METHODS

The interpersonal mobilization literature is plagued by two design problems: selection on the dependent variable by only examining *participants*, and the fact that participants (and non-participants) have only been questioned *after* they took part (or not). As far as we know, only McAdam's Freedom Summer study (see: McAdam, 1988McAdam and Paulsen 1993), a series of case-studies with Klandermans in the Netherlands (see: Klandermans 1984; Klandermans and Oegema 1987; Oegema and Klandermans 1994), and a single Belgian study (Van Laer 2017) overcame both problems. The first problem is the most serious one. It is hard, if not impossible, to examine what makes people take part in protest if one does not compare with those who do not. *"Without control groups of nonparticipants, neither social networks nor organizational affiliations can be said to have any particular effects."*(Jasper and Young 2007, 280)

The second problem entails that people's (non-)participation colors their memory and interpretation. Post-hoc questioning raises endogeneity problems as attitudes and behavior that the researcher would consider to be the cause of participation could in reality also be the consequence of it.

This study overcomes both problems by examining participation and non-participation in a single protest demonstration staged in Brussels, Belgium, on March 20th, 2016. *De Grote Parade (The Grand Parade)* was organized by a diverse coalition of social movement organizations opposing the right-wing government's austerity policy and pleading for an alternative social and economic policy. The organizing coalition, named *Hart boven Hard (Heart over Hard)*, consisted of all major trade unions, but also third world movements, anti-racist movements, environmental movements etc.—both typically old and new social movement organizations. According to the organizers, 25,000 people participated; according to the Brussels police the turnout was 14,000. Due to a collaboration with *Hart boven Hard*, we could survey both participants and non-participants in a panel design before and after the demonstration.

We contacted *Hart boven Hard* (HbH) two months before the demonstration and got access to their email address database. People in the database all previously signed the so-called *September Declaration;* the declaration was signed online and having an email address was a precondition for being able to sign. The petition was the first action set-up by HbH when the organization was founded when a right-wing government came into power in Belgium after the 2014 elections (for the practice of using petitions as a pool of potential activists, see: Durso et al. 2018). The declaration listed a number of pledges the government should have made 'if it really cared' about the well-being of all Belgians. All signees of the *September Declaration* were targeted by HbH via email and by a newsletter asking them to participate in the March 2016 demonstration. In sum, it is safe to assume that most respondents in our sample of potential participants consisted of sympathizers already agreeing with the goals of *De Grote Parade*—they all signed a petition underscoring the core ideas of the organizers. This constrains the generalizability of our findings. Our study does *not* tackle participation versus non-participation broadly conceived. Even our non-participants are somehow associated with the movement (signed a petition). So, we deal with how, among a group of already engaged individuals, some go a step further than signing a petition and actually participate in street protest. In Klandermans' (1997) famous terms, we explain how, among those who already are 'consensus

mobilized', some also become 'action mobilized' (see also: Beyerlein and Hipp 2006). Additionally, our respondents not only agreed with the goals of the protest, most of them had participated in protest before; the share of them declaring they never participated in any protest was only seven per cent. So, the specific features of the group of people we are looking at here should make us cautious when drawing conclusions about protest participation more generally.

In total, we got access to 20,457 valid email addresses—the population of registered HbH sympathizers. Between two weeks and a half till the day before the demonstration, we sent them all a request to participate in our 'survey about social movements'. 5,496 HbH sympathizers participated in the wave 1 survey fielded before the demonstration, representing a response rate of 27 per cent. Then, right after the demonstration held on a Sunday, from Monday onwards, we contacted the participants that completed our wave 1 survey to answer another, briefer questionnaire. After two reminders, 3,921 respondents participated in wave 2, representing a response rate of 71 percent of the wave 1 participants. In the next few paragraphs, we elaborate on the quality of our sample in terms of composition, panel attrition, and item non-response.

First and unfortunately, it is not possible for us to test the representativeness of our initial wave 1 sample. We, nor HbH, have any information about the features of the full population of HbH sympathizers. The only thing we know is that they probably were left-wing, as HbH represented a left-wing voice against a right-wing government. The respondents in our sample clearly define themselves as left-wing (see below). Next, it could be that more committed sympathizers, those who were more likely to participate in the protest, were also more likely to collaborate in our study. We elaborate on this below.

Second, panel attrition resulted in several—but not out of the ordinary—biases when comparing wave 1 with wave 2 respondents. Full results of the comparison between only-wave-1 with also-wave-2 respondents are shown in Appendix A. We find that wave 2 respondents are older, more politically interested, more embedded in associations and have more protest experience. Yet, they do not differ in terms of education nor gender. Importantly, panel attrition is unrelated to several central

characteristics of our analyses. Although wave 2 respondents felt more represented by HbH and appeared to have a somewhat more supportive network, wave 2 and wave 1 respondents were equally motivated, equally leftist, equally (dis)satisfied, had equal faith in the effectiveness of the demonstration, talked equally frequently about politics, experienced equal participation approval in their networks and these networks considered the demonstration's issue equally salient. In sum, on a host of central variables used in our analyses, only-wave 1 and also-wave 2 respondents are indistinguishable.

Finally, while 3,921 respondents participated in both waves, only 1,684 respondents are included in the analyses below. We decided to exclude all respondents for whom we did not have full information on *all* variables included in the study. More concretely, quite some respondents did not provide answers to all questions in our intensive battery of social tie measures. On average, 20 per cent of respondent failed to complete all social tie questions. For the variable *Demonstration participation approval* this number even reached up to 30 per cent. In Appendix B, we detail the missings for all variables employed in our analysis. As our explicit ambition in this paper is to disentangle the full and multidimensional support effects of interpersonal networks, we believe being strict on the completion of social tie measures is necessary. Instead of excluding respondents without full information, another option would have been to keep those respondents on board. We also ran analyses without excluding non-full completers. Results—now on a sample of 2,626 respondents and thus including a thousand extra respondents—are exactly the same and can be found in Appendix C. In Appendix D, finally, we compare those who fully answered the network questions with those who did not. In brief, more politically interested respondents and those who had heard of the demonstration were more likely to complete the social tie batteries.

In sum, we are aware of the potential weaknesses of our data but consider these to some extent unavoidable when employing a rare and powerful research design including original social tie measures. In the result section and conclusion we revisit these points, their potential consequences and present some solutions for future research.

The wave 2 participation measure (*Participation*) is our *dependent* variable ("*Did you participate in De Grote Parade held on March 20th in Brussels?*"). Among the respondents who completed both questionnaires, 33 per cent reported participation, 67 per cent non-participation. All descriptives can be found in **Table 1**.

The wave 1 questionnaire measured the social ties forming the *independent* variables. Our measure of the politicization of someone's personal network (*Talking politics*) reads as follows: "*With whom of the following people around you, do you talk about politics, and how often?*" Respondents were asked to complete a table featuring the following groups of people: partner, family members, friends, acquaintances, colleagues or co-students, co-members of an organization. Per group the answer categories were: (1) never, (2) seldom, (3) sometimes, (4) often, and (5) very often. The resulting aggregate score is the mean score of all six separate scores. So, a higher score refers to more frequent talking politics with more different sorts of people and, thus, to a more politicized network. Since people's networks are probably to differential degrees heterogeneous, meaning that some of their ties are more politicized than others, Appendix E presents the correlations between the *Talking politics* across different groups as well as inter-tie correlations for the three other network variables, justifying both our aggregate and tie-specific approach.

Note that our network questions (also those explained below) ask a respondent to rate a *group* of ties and not an *individual* tie (probably with the exception of the 'partner'-category). We do not have information about the number of ties the respondent had within the different categories (e.g. how many friends they had). And, our questions ask respondents to provide an overall estimation of a type of tie even if these ties are internally heterogeneous (e.g. they talk politics with some of their friends but not with others). This way of generating information on people's network is different from the approach of network scholars, who would ask respondents to generate names that were relevant to their participation decision, following-up with questions about each of these names. Despite our alternative mapping of a respondents' network, we believe that our measures do warrant the use of the term 'social network'. None of the dozens of social movement studies looking into the effect of

social ties uses, as far as we can tell, real dyadic data and they all invariably use the 'social network' concept drawing on data that were most of the time much less detailed than the evidence we use here. In any case, our measures lack detail about the very individual pressures respondents may have experienced from specific individuals (e.g. maybe one friend in particular was especially relevant). This non-specificity injects noise in our data and makes them less powerful than truly dyadic data would be. If anything, we believe this measurement error works against finding support for our hypotheses. We revisit this point in the conclusion.

TABLE 1 could be about here

The degree of political agreement among a person's social ties is tapped by two questions. The first grasps the extent to which a person's ties *agree* with the demonstration goal (*Demonstration issue position*): "*To what extent does your opinion about the present economic policy* [this was the issue put forward by the organizers] *match with the opinion of the following sorts of people around you?*" Respondents were asked to complete a table with the same kinds of people as mentioned above. Per group the answer categories were: (1) totally not, (2) not, (3) a little, (4) reasonably, and (5) totally. The resulting score is the mean score of all six scores. A higher score refers to more agreement with the goal of the demonstration of more different sorts of people in someone's network.

The second political agreement variable (*Demonstration issue salience*) measures agreement about the *salience* of the demonstration issue: "*How important do the following people around you think the present economic policy is?*". Respondents were asked to complete a table with the same six social tie groups with the answer categories being (1) very unimportant, (2) unimportant, (3) important nor unimportant, (4) important, and (5) very important. The resulting score is the mean score of all six scores. A higher score refers to a higher salience of the demonstration issue among more different sorts of people in a respondent's network.

The *social approval* of demonstration participation in prospective participants' network (*Demonstration participation approval*) drew on the following question: "*How many of the following sorts of people around you would approve of the fact that you would participate in De Grote Parade?*" The same six social ties were offered with the answer categories being: (1) nobody, (2) a few, (3) most, and (4) everybody. The resulting score is the mean score of all six scores. A higher score refers to more approval of demonstration participation among more different sorts of people in someone's network.

For all network questions, except for talking politics, we presented respondents with an 'exit' option—a 'Do not know/not applicable'(DK/NA) answer category, for in case that respondents had no partner, for instance, or in case they really had no clue about how their friend would think of their participation. Respondents who ticked the DK/NA box for a certain tie (or for several ties) were included in the analysis and received a value of zero for that particular tie in the calculation of the network variables: if one has no partner (or friends, family,…), or one is ignorant about one's partner's stance, the influence of that tie logically should be absent (zero).

Each network question distinguishes the same six types of social ties: partner, family members, friends, acquaintances, colleagues or co-students, and co-members of an organization. Roughly, one could consider these as ordered from strong to weak. It is, of course, debatable, whether co-members of an organization are really 'weak' ties when it comes to participating in a political demonstration. This is exactly our argument leading to hypothesis 4 when we say that co-members of an organization are probably the first with whom individuals validate their disposition to participate. Generally speaking, co-members may be weak ties—they are less loaded with trust and intimacy (Granovetter 1973)—but since they are specialized and politicized, we expect them to matter most.

The three different dimensions of network support correlate, but not to the extent that incorporating them in a single model would be problematic. The highest Pearson r between two of the network variables is .439 (between *Demonstration issue position* and *Demonstration issue salience*). A formal test shows multicollinearity not to be an issue. The highest variance inflation factor (VIF) of the independent variables we use in our models is 1.67; well below the standard threshold of 10 (a full

correlation matrix can be found in Appendix F). Still, in order to test whether the different network dimensions matter independently of one another, in the results section, we introduce them separately in the models.

A first control variable is a recruitment question (*Being asked*) taken from wave 2: "*Please tick which persons asked you to participate*" (partner, family members, friends, acquaintances, colleagues or co-students, co-members of an organization). In the models below we include *Being asked* as a simple dummy variable (yes/no). The question is whether we find an additional support effect of social networks *on top of* the (expectedly large) recruitment effect. Related, we control for Protest experience and Active membership. For *Protest experience,* respondents were asked: "*How many times have you in the past (during your life) taken part in a demonstration?*". We coded answers to this open question, distinguishing those who have and those who do not have protest experience. For respondents' *Active membership*, we summed their number of active memberships in up to 10 categories of political associations (trade unions, environmental organizations, etc.) in the past 12 months.

Next, we control for the intensity of a person's daily contacts (*Daily contacts*). The more people one interacts with on a daily basis, the larger the chance that one would be asked to participate. "*Do you think that, in comparison to other people, you have more daily contacts with other people.*"((1) A lot less, (2) a little less, (3) same number, (4) a little more, (5) a lot more).

As additional controls, our models include four attitudinal variables that tap into traditional theories of protest participation (*Political interest, Left-right self-placement, Feeling represented by organizers, Demonstration efficacy perception*), three socio-demographic measures commonly associated with differential protest participation (*Age, Sex,* and *Education*) and three controls for biographical availability (whether respondents have *Children, Work,* and are *Married or living together with their partner)* (see Beyerlein and Hipp, 2006). Question wording of these more standard controls can be found in Appendix G. In sum, we bring *many* competing horses in the race, subjecting our hypotheses to a tough test.

RESULTS

Can we offer evidence that social ties have a support effect and affect protest participation beyond the effect of recruitment? The answer is positive. **Table 2** contains the results of six binomial logistic regressions predicting participation in *De Grote Parade*. Model 1 is a control-variables-only model; Model 2 to 5 introduce step by step the separate network measures; Model 6 presents the full model. The results with regard to the variables of interest are quasi identical across models; providing clear backing for Hypothesis 1 and 3, while Hypothesis 2 does not get confirmation. We discuss Model 6, the full model with the highest explained variance[1].

Whether someone's network is politicized or not matters a great deal. The coefficient of *Talking politics* is significant and the size of the effect is substantial. We calculated predicted probabilities based on Model 6, comparing the probability of participation for a respondent situated at one standard deviation below and above the mean for the variable of interest, while keeping all other variables at their mean. For *Talking politics*, this comparison of standard deviations across the mean results in a 10 per cent participation difference. At the higher level of *Talking politics*, the probability that an individual takes part is 36 per cent; at one standard deviation below the mean, the probability is 26 per cent. This difference is quite large, as all our respondents are politicized themselves, having signed the highly political *September Declaration* (which made them end up in the pool of potential respondents of our study). So, even among people who have strong political convictions themselves and who have a track record of past protest participation, the role of a politicized network is substantial. Hypothesis 1 is corroborated.

The story is different for the two political agreement variables, *Demonstration issue position* and *Demonstration issue salience.* Both coefficients are not significant in a multivariate setting. Note

[1] Note that while the Pseudo R^2s increase, the explained variance of our full model is still quite modest—despite many significant correlations, it appears that predicting who participated and who did not for our sample of HbH sympathizers is challenging.

that our initial sample was relatively homogenous in this regard and that wave 2 participants experienced more issue position network support. We reject Hypothesis 2.

In contrast, social approval exerts a considerable influence; the coefficient for *Demonstration participation approval* is positive and significant. The effect is considerable. While the expected probability of participating one standard deviation below the mean is 27 percent, it is 34 per cent one standard deviation above the mean, a difference of seven per cent. Hypothesis 3 gets confirmation.

TABLE 2 could be about here

Also several control variables contribute to explaining actual participation. We discuss results following Model 6. Our evidence, first of all, underscores the effect of direct recruitment: *Being asked* matters importantly (predicted probability going from 25% to 33%). Of the sociodemographic controls, only *Education* is significant (the lowest educated have a 18% chance of taking part, the highest educated 37%). None of the biographical availability controls proves significant.

The attitudinal controls too lead to some interesting findings that are in line with what we know from the participation literature, and this reinforces confidence in the validity of our results. Being left-wing rather than right wing (*Left-right self-placement*) matters strongly (predicted participation probability quadrupling from 9% for the most right-wing respondent to 39% for the most left-wing); this is not very surprising for a left-wing demonstration challenging a right-wing government. Those who score high on *Feeling represented by organizers* participate much more as well (predicted probabilities going from 15% for those who feel not all represented, to 36% for those who feel very much represented) which confirms again the importance of collective identification processes for protest participation (Simon and Klandermans 2001). The work on efficacy perception stating that people participate because they think the protest will make a difference gets support from our data as well. Those scoring high on *Demonstration efficacy perception* participate more than those who think the protest will make no difference (predicted probabilities going up from 25% to 42%).

Finally, all these reported findings hold when controlling for associational embeddedness and past protest participation, the latter being the strongest predictor of participation according to our model. Respondents who are not associationally embedded have a 27 per cent chance of participating; those who are an active member of an organization have a 31 per cent change. Respondents without *Protest experience*, finally, have only a 14 per cent chance of participating. This probability more than doubles for respondents with protest experience (32 per cent). The fact that our network support findings hold when controlling for a host of control variables, direct recruitment, past participation and associational embeddedness—where these latter could be interpreted as measures of previous rounds of support by networks—makes us belief that networks play not only an *important*, but also an *enduring* role when it comes to fostering protest participation.

In sum, in addition to their recruitment effect and while controlling for a whole range of other competing variables, interpersonal networks do appear to play a considerable supporting role in getting people to participate in protest, even among people who already share the goals of the protest and who have protested before. Extant work had already suggested this to be the case, but this study, for the first time, disentangles the different support mechanisms of networks and demonstrates which matter more. In the protest event we look at here, especially the politicization of individuals' network (talking politics) and the social approval of their potential participation from the people around them foster participation. The political agreement individuals perceive in their network—whether people around them agree with the fact that the protest issue is important and whether they share her opinion about the protest issue—seems to matter less.

We hypothesized that not all social ties would play an equally important role in supporting protest participation. We anticipated that especially co-members of an organization would be instrumental in supporting participation via multiple mechanisms. Also someone's partner and family were expected to play a role, but especially via the social approval mechanism. Dealing with four variables tapping into network support (*Talking politics*, *Demonstration issue position*, *Demonstration issue salience* and *Demonstration participation approval*) and with six sorts of social ties at the same

time (partner, family, friends, acquaintances, colleagues or co-students, and co-members) we need to summarize the evidence to present it in a comprehensible way. **Figure 1**[2] presents the results: each bar represents the difference between the predicted probability of taking part in the protest when the tie variable at stake is one standard deviation above the mean compared to one standard deviation below the mean. The direction of the bars indicates whether the effect is positive or negative; black bars refer to significant effects. Let us give a reading example. The black bar of *Participation Approval* in the 'partner' subgraph indicates that, when a partner shows more than average approval compared to less than average approval, the chance of an individual participating increases with .133.

FIGURE 1 could be about here

So, are there any differences between social ties? Figure 1 shows there are. Hypothesis 4 expected that co-members, due to the fact that they have a common political identity with the potential participant, matter most. This is borne out by the facts; many bars in the co-member graphs of figure 1 are black, indicating significant (and positive) effects. By talking politics with a potential participant, by indicating that the protest issue is important and by approving participation, co-members of an organization are key in making someone take part. Again we do not find an issue-specific position effect. If one adds up co-members' aggregate effect via all four support mechanisms, the chance that a sympathizer actually participates goes up starkly from 24 per cent when all co-member support is at one standard deviation below the mean to 43 per cent when all co-member support is at one standard

[2] Specifically, Model 6 from Table 2 was run 24 times (4*6). Each regression included the base set-up of Model 6, yet, every time one combination of one of the four network support variables and a specific social tie was included. All other variables in the model were kept identical. For example, in the first model represented by the first bar in Figure 1 we are interested in the effect of *Talking politics* with one's partner. In that model, we therefore dropped the *aggregate Talking Politics* variable and changed it by the specific *Talking politics with partner* variable. The other three network support variables included in the model—in this case, *Demonstration issue salience, Demonstration issue position,* and *Demonstration participation approval*—were simply the aggregate versions, as originally included in Model 6 of Table 2. Then, for each of these 24 models, we calculated predicted probabilities of the variable of interest (the combination of a social tie and a network support variable; in this example *Talking politics with one's partner*) while keeping all other variables at their mean. We calculated predicted probabilities by comparing standard deviations across the mean. The difference in predicted probabilities is represented by the bar in the Figure.

deviation above the mean (model not shown in table or graph). Put differently, the odds of participation in somewhat supportive co-member networks are about twice as high compared to in somewhat unsupportive co-member networks. Hypothesis 4 gets straightforward confirmation; especially co-members are important providers of participation support. Note that, in contrast to in the aggregate models, *Demonstration issue salience* is a significant predictor of participation when they relate to co-members. This sheds another light on Hypothesis 2 that we rejected earlier. Political agreement *does* play some role, but only when it is conveyed by co-members.

Hypothesis 5 stated that partners and family members would be important specifically because of their social approval effect. The evidence confirms the expectation, but only partly. The strongest, most intimate social ties with a person's most significant others do not play a large supportive role overall. But our results suggest that one's partner seems to be important for giving the final blessing to participate. Turned upside down, if partners do not approve of participation—note that we did not ask about their disapproval but just the absence of approval—the chance that an individual will participate goes down significantly. All things being equal, when partner approval is one standard deviation below average, the probability of participation drops 14 per cent (compared to partner approval one standard deviation above average). The effect of family approval is positive but does not reach statistical significance. In line with hypothesis 5, we find that partners exert significant social control.

Wrapping up, our theoretical framework gets, by and large, confirmation of the empirical results put forward. Social tie support effects matter on top of direct recruitment, they have an effect in the aggregate and different support functions are transmitted to different degrees by different social ties.

CONCLUSION

Micro mobilization is one of the largest research subdomains in the social movements field. It generated overwhelming evidence that interpersonal ties impact people's decision to participate in protest and social movements. Networks matter because they increase the chance that people are recruited for an event. But scholars agree that networks do a lot more than allowing people to directly ask one another. In networks and through interaction with social ties, people may be encouraged to participate and/or they can be constrained. While many scholars have speculated about, what we call, network support functions, few have actually tackled them empirically and a framework explaining how and why social networks support or constrain participation has been lacking. This study's ambition was to provide such a framework and test it empirically.

We theorized that interpersonal networks produce incentives to participate (1) because, and in so far, they are politicized, (2) because they are populated by people who agree with the political goals and importance of the protest event, and (3) because network members approve of participation in the concrete event. Networks' broad politicization, specific political agreement, and particular social approval are three distinct features that may encourage, or discourage, protest participation. Individuals' networks consist of different types of others, some very close others more distant. We expected the weight of these ties' (implicit) participation 'advice' to vary. Because they share a political identity with the prospective participant co-members are the first with whom an intention to participate is discussed. Still, the primary circle of people plays a role as well, but a more limited one and, maybe, at a later stage: the strongest ties (partner and family) merely give the final blessing.

The study drew on novel evidence regarding a big protest event in Belgium. In a rare panel design, a large sample of potential participants—all sympathizers of the staging organization and almost all people with a protest track record—were surveyed before and after the event. Most of our theoretical expectations held the track. Especially network politicization and social approval foster activism. The role of political agreement—the fact that the social ties of prospective participants agree

about the protests issue and its importance—turned out to exert hardly any effect. Additionally, co-members were indeed the key support givers, but the most intimate group of partners played a significant role as well by approving of possible participation. These findings speak to a central debate among scholars of protest and movement involvement. Both strong *and* weak ties matter for participation; it is not a matter of 'or' but of 'and'.

One of our most interesting findings is that, of all ties, support from co-members of an organization is most instrumental in bringing about participation, even when controlling for active membership in associations. Yet, this result needs to be put in perspective as the co-members that respondents thought about when answering our questions could actually be a very broad and heterogeneous group. In fact, some people (and especially those who are active in a social movement and signed a petition of that movement) are members of many organizations and all these different members of different organizations may play a different role in supporting or discouraging participation. The other tie types we asked the respondents about, in contrast, are more homogeneous and refer to more specific other people. It could be the case that the large support effect of co-members is due to the fact that 'co-members' form an amalgam of very different types of co-members as people think each time about co-members of *other* organizations when they answered our support questions. So, a first recommendation for further research would be to flesh out the role played by co-members by asking potential participants about the role played by co-members of *specific* organizations.

The limitations of our study are obvious. The most important is that we only looked at people who already supported a given movement and who had participated in protest in the past (note that most previous work about differential participation with a panel design also drew on respondents that somehow registered or subscribed to a cause before). Moreover, our missings and panel attrition analyses show an increased skew of that sample. This implies that our respondents already had overcome a good deal of participation barriers and, in general, were much more likely to participate in a movement event than those who were completely disconnected. The question is what our results

tell about possible participation of people who are not closely affiliated to the movement already? Would the network support effect be smaller or larger? It could go both ways, we think. On the one hand, our finding that even among engaged and experienced movement supporters network support exerts an effect is remarkable. Since they are close to participating anyway social tie support may make less of a difference for this group of movement sympathizers. On the other hand, exactly because they are on the brink of participation anyway the small push of network support may be all these people need to actually participate. So, we are unsure whether our results form a conservative estimation or not. In any case, our findings underline the enduring importance of network support; even for highly 'socialized' activists network support matters. In sum, our evidence suggest that mobilization is a constant struggle, and that participation—even among likely participants—never can be taken for granted.

Further, our evidence related to a single case of protest activism, involvement in *De Grote Parade*, in a single country. Whether the results apply to other events and nations remains an open question. Also in the past, single-case studies have helped the field of networks and protest forward. The work of McAdam and colleagues on Freedom Summer or Klandermans' work on several Dutch cases have been among the most influential contributions. Doubtlessly, *De Grote Parade* has some particulars that do not apply to other instances of protest. Although it was by no means an exceptional event it could still be that, for example, the effect of co-members is more limited in other instances. Yet the fact that our findings clearly speak and contribute to what McAdam and Paulsen (1993) found with regard to a much older and a very different instance of high-risk participation in another country—the Freedom Summer action of 1964 in Mississippi—makes us more confident that our findings have at least some generic potential. Added to that, non-violent street demonstrations, are—maybe with the exception of being a member of contentious organizations—among the most common types of protest participation (Norris, Walgrave, and Van Aelst 2005). The point is that our case in itself is not unique at all. Future research should scrutinize whether network support effects play out differently across types of protest.

A final point for improvement is developing even more detailed network support questions without causing additional respondent fall-out. Truly dyadic network data by means of name generator questions, instead of the aggregate measures we developed here might be one way to solve this issue—it is likely that having people think about the advice of concrete, relevant peers is less demanding. Still on the data front, the fact that our results are found on top of an impressive battery of control variables, are robust when modelled differently (Appendix C), and largely replicate established mobilization theories make us more confident that our results contribute to the key puzzle of differential protest participation.

In closing, we developed a framework of what support mechanisms in interpersonal networks entail. We showed that these mechanisms can be operationalized and empirically measured. The exact effect sizes of the different mechanisms of support are likely to vary across cases but we showed that these mechanisms can be analytically disentangled and co-exist in reality. Clearly, network embeddedness fosters protest activism because social ties support participation in different ways. And, these different aspects of support in networks are fulfilled by different sorts of social ties. The research domain of networks and movements, although a mature field of study, can profit from analytical precision and systematic measurement. Networks matter strongly, but only by theoretically and empirically carefully disentangling the different roles networks play, can we make headways with better understanding why networks matter.

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Tables

Table 1 – Variable descriptives (N=1,684)

Variable	Average	SD	Min	Max
Participation	0.33	0.47	0	1
Talking politics	3.38	0.66	1	5
Demonstration issue position	3.82	0.57	1	5
Demonstration issue salience	4.06	0.52	1	5
Demonstration participation approval	3.26	0.56	1	4
Daily contacts	3.07	1.04	1	5
Political interest	3.34	0.65	1	4
Left-right self-placement	1.99	1.38	0	10
Feeling represented by organizers	4.19	0.72	1	5
Demonstration efficacy perception	2.42	0.88	1	5
Age	47.39	13.08	19	83
Sex	0.53	0.50	0	1
Education	8.20	2.01	1	11
Children	0.68	0.47	0	1
Married	0.76	0.43	0	1
Works full time	0.46	0.50	0	1
Works part time	0.21	0.41	0	1
Being asked	0.72	0.45	0	1
Protest experience	0.93	0.25	0	1
Active membership	0.85	0.99	0	6

Table 2 – Binomial logistic regressions explaining demonstration participation

		Model 1		*Model 2*		*Model 3*		*Model 4*		*Model 5*		*Model 6*	
		Coef.	SE.	Coef.	SE.	Coef.	SE.	Coef.	SE.	Coef.	SE.	Coef.	SE.
Past participation	Protest experience (yes)	**1.142**	**.300**	**1.048**	**.302**	**1.139**	**.300**	**1.139**	**.300**	**1.102**	**.301**	**1.021**	**.303**
Associational embeddedness	Active membership	**0.252**	**.056**	**0.213**	**.057**	**0.249**	**.056**	**0.248**	**.056**	**0.241**	**.057**	**0.210**	**.058**
Recruitment	Being asked (yes)	**0.454**	**.132**	**0.419**	**.133**	**0.450**	**.132**	**0.442**	**.132**	**0.445**	**.133**	**0.417**	**.133**
Politicization of network (H1)	Talking politics	-	-	**0.401**	**.105**	-	-	-	-	-	-	**0.358**	**.108**
Political agreement in network (H2)	Demonstration issue position	-	-	-	-	0.090	.101	-	-	-	-	-0.057	.111
	Demonstration issue salience	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.189	.112	-	-	0.040	.126
Social approval in network (H3)	Demonstration participation approval	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**0.331**	**.108**	**0.283**	**.117**
Social network control	Daily contacts	**0.126**	**.058**	0.087	.059	**0.125**	**.058**	**0.127**	**.058**	0.112	.058	0.081	.060
Sociodemographic controls	Age	0.003	.005	0.005	.005	0.003	.005	0.003	.005	0.005	.005	0.006	.005
	Sex (female)	-0.186	.119	-0.183	.119	-0.189	.119	-0.201	.119	-0.198	.119	-0.193	.120
	Education (high)	**0.102**	**.029**	**0.101**	**.029**	**0.102**	**.029**	**0.101**	**.029**	**0.103**	**.029**	**0.102**	**.029**
Attitudinal controls	Political Interest	0.081	.094	-0.091	.105	0.082	.094	0.070	.095	0.070	.095	-0.086	.106
	Left-right self-placement (right)	**-0.200**	**.045**	**-0.190**	**.045**	**-0.199**	**.045**	**-0.195**	**.045**	**-0.193**	**.045**	**-0.185**	**.045**
	Feeling represented by organizers	**0.309**	**.084**	**0.292**	**.084**	**0.297**	**.085**	**0.293**	**.084**	**0.293**	**.084**	**0.286**	**.085**
	Demonstration efficacy perception	**0.196**	**.064**	**0.193**	**.064**	**0.195**	**.064**	**0.196**	**.064**	**0.192**	**.064**	**0.190**	**.064**
Biographical controls	Children (yes)	-0.162	.138	-0.164	.139	-0.162	.138	-0.163	.138	-0.172	.138	-0.173	.139
	Married (yes)	-0.099	.137	-0.178	.140	-0.101	.137	-0.105	.138	-0.117	.138	-0.184	.140
	Works: full time (yes)	0.259	.142	0.262	.143	0.260	.142	0.266	.142	0.280	.143	0.280	.143
	part time (yes)	0.032	.167	0.044	.168	0.038	.167	0.040	.167	0.054	.168	0.059	.168
	Constant	**-5.246**	**.692**	**-5.733**	**.710**	**-5.524**	**.762**	**-5.882**	**.793**	**-6.214**	**.770**	**-6.470**	**.838**
	Pseudo R^2	0.0847		0.0916		0.0851		0.0860		0.0892		0.0947	
	N	1684		1684		1684		1684		1684		1684	
	Chi^2 (sig.)	181.6 (.000)		196.4 (.000)		182.4 (.000)		184.5 (.000)		191.3 (.000)		203.1 (.000)	

Figure 1

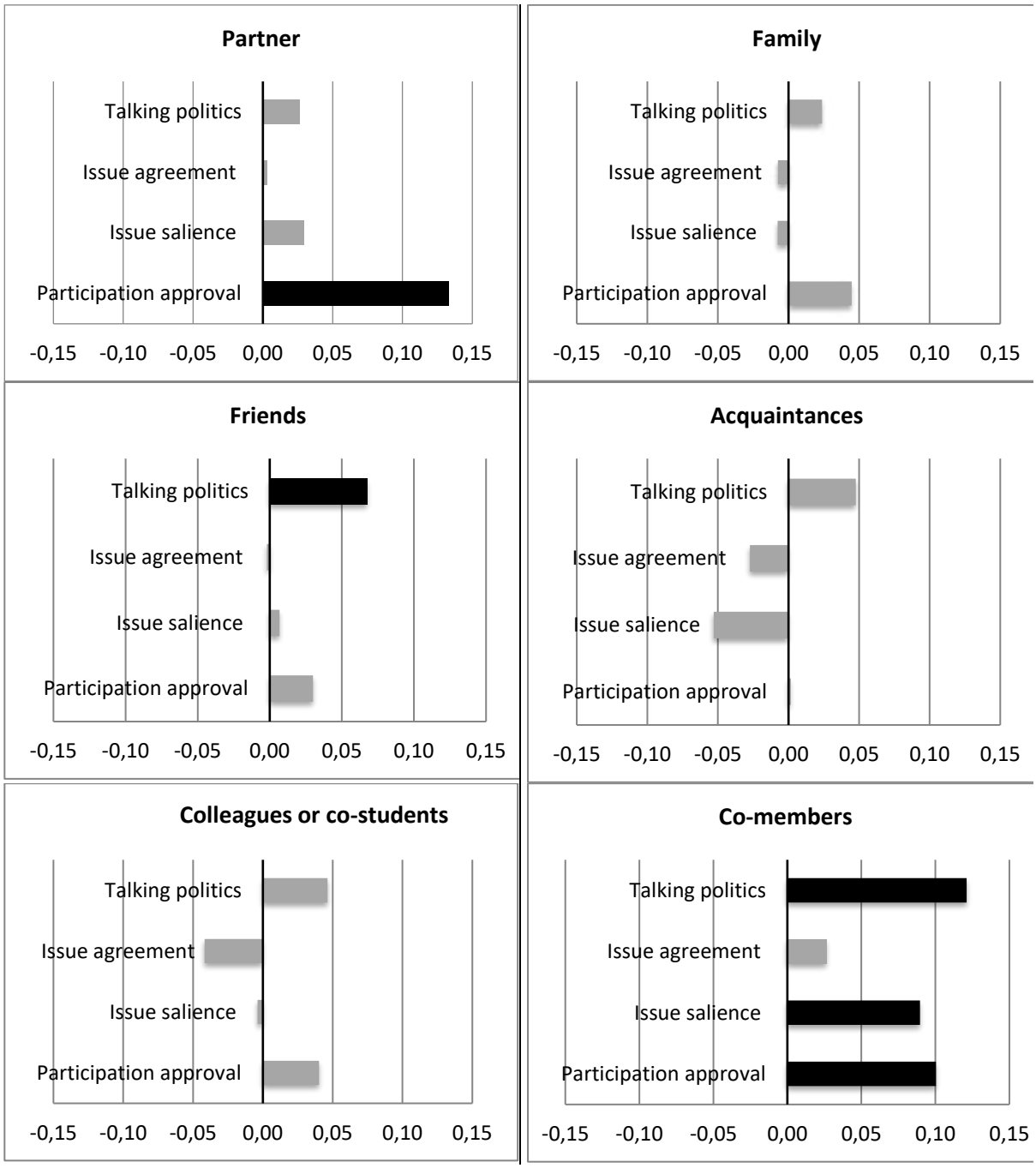

Figure 1 — Predicted probabilities of protest participation for support effects across ties

Appendix

Appendix A – Attrition bias analysis (T-tests)

		Wave	Mean	S.E.	N	M. diff	Sig.
Standard variables	Gender	w1	0.534	0.017	892	-0.018	0.327
		w2	0.552	0.008	3515		
	Education	w1	7.942	0.071	894	-0.103	0.185
		w2	8.045	0.035	3515		
	Age	w1	45.374	0.464	886	-4.332	0.000
		w2	49.706	0.232	3499		
	Political Interest	w1	3.194	0.217	1059	-0.103	0.000
		w2	3.296	0.011	3583		
Demo. Specific variables	Participation Intention	w1	0.757	0.015	855	0.009	0.598
		w2	0.748	0.007	3102		
	Demo efficient	w1	2.471	0.032	787	0.040	0.255
		w2	2.431	0.016	2883		
	Left-Right	w1	2.136	0.051	866	0.073	0.187
		w2	2.062	0.025	3449		
	Satisfaction democracy	w1	5.086	0.080	891	0.092	0.298
		w2	4.994	0.039	3520		
	Represented by org.	w1	4.103	0.025	825	-0.071	0.015
		w2	4.174	0.013	3036		
	Protest experience	w1	0.868	0.011	954	-0.037	0.000
		w2	0.905	0.005	3535		
	Active membership	w1	0.686	0.030	1074	-2.162	0.031
		w2	0.761	0.017	3601		
Network variables	Daily contacts	w1	3.015	0.032	1083	0.099	0.008
		w2	2.916	0.018	3591		
	Talking Politics	w1	3.312	0.021	1061	-0.031	0.190
		w2	3.343	0.011	3593		
	Issue Salience	w1	4.039	0.020	937	-0.032	0.125
		w2	4.071	0.009	3492		
	Issue Position	w1	3.784	0.021	949	-0.047	0.031
		w2	3.831	0.010	3501		
	Part. Approval	w1	3.306	0.021	719	0.032	0.173
		w2	3.274	0.010	2990		

Appendix B – Missings of variables used in analyses

	N missing	% missing	Total N
Participation	3	0.1	3921
Being Asked	735	18.8	3921
Protest Experience	1007	18,3	5496
Active membership	821	14.9	5496
Talking politics	842	15.3	5496
Demonstration issue position	1046	19	5496
Demonstration issue salience	1067	19.4	5496
Demonstration participation approval	1787	32.5	5496
Daily contacts	822	15	5496
Political interest	854	15.5	5496
Left-right self-placement	1181	21.5	5496
Feeling represented by organizers	1635	29.8	5496
Demonstration efficacy perception	1826	33.2	5496
Age	1111	20.2	5496
Sex	1089	19.8	5496
Education	1087	19.8	5496
Married	237	6.0	3921
Children	236	6.0	3921
Full time	230	5,9	3921
Part Time	230	5,9	3921

Appendix C – Replication of Table 2 – robustness check

	Model 0		*Model 1*		*Model 2*		*Model 3*		*Model 4*		*Model 5*		*Model 6*	
	Coef.	SE.	Coef.	SE.	Coef.	SE.	Coef.	SE.	Coef.	SE.	Coef.	SE.	Coef.	SE.
Protest experience (yes)	-	-	**1.003**	**.247**	**0.945**	**.248**	**0.989**	**.247**	**1.039**	**.252**	**0.944**	**.249**	**1.021**	**.303**
Active membership	-	-	**0.231**	**.048**	**0.201**	**.049**	**0.234**	**.049**	**0.227**	**.049**	**0.224**	**.049**	**0.210**	**.058**
Being asked (yes)	-	-	**0.368**	**.111**	**0.347**	**.111**	**0.368**	**.111**	**0.368**	**.112**	**0.372**	**.112**	**0.417**	**.133**
Talking politics	**0.337**	**0.081**	-	-	**0.310**	**.089**	-	-	-	-	-	-	**0.358**	**.108**
Demonstration issue position	-0.017	0.087	-	-	-	-	0.134	.088	-	-	-	-	-0.057	.111
Demonstration issue salience	0.089	0.097	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.179	.098	-	-	0.040	.126
Demonstration participation	**0.275**	**0.089**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	**0.308**	**.092**	**0.283**	**.117**
Daily Contacts	**0.337**	**.081**	**0.136**	**.050**	**0.111**	**.051**	**0.126**	**.050**	**0.135**	**.050**	**0.123**	**.050**	**0.081**	**.060**
Age	-0.017	.087	-0.002	.004	-0.001	.004	-0.002	.004	-0.002	.005	0.001	.005	0.006	.005
Sex (female)	0.089	.097	-0.130	.103	-0.133	.103	-0.138	.104	-0.141	.104	-0.134	.104	-0.193	.120
Education (high)	**0.275**	**.089**	**0.095**	**.025**	**0.095**	**.025**	**0.093**	**.025**	**0.095**	**.025**	**0.095**	**.025**	**0.102**	**.029**
Political Interest	0.108	.044	**0.173**	**.083**	0.045	.091	**0.173**	**.083**	**0.176**	**.083**	0.153	.083	-0.086	.106
Left-right self-placement (right)	**0.006**	**.004**	**-0.153**	**.038**	**-0.145**	**.038**	**-0.152**	**.038**	**-0.146**	**.038**	**-0.147**	**.038**	**-0.185**	**.045**
Feeling represented by organizers	**-0.129**	**.093**	**0.283**	**.071**	**0.273**	**.072**	**0.274**	**.072**	**0.280**	**.072**	**0.279**	**.072**	**0.286**	**.085**
Demonstration efficacy perception	**0.080**	**.022**	**0.219**	**.056**	**0.217**	**.056**	**0.213**	**.056**	**0.212**	**.056**	**0.203**	**.056**	**0.190**	**.064**
Children (yes)	0.100	.083	-0.062	.117	-0.066	.118	-0.081	.118	-0.075	.118	-0.098	.119	-0.173	.139
Married (yes)	**-0.147**	**.034**	-0.145	.109	-0.181	.110	-0.140	.110	-0.149	.110	-0.160	.111	-0.184	.140
Works: full time (yes)	**0.250**	**.063**	0.230	.123	0.240	.123	**0.244**	**.124**	**0.248**	**.124**	**0.246**	**.124**	**0.280**	**.143**
part time (yes)	**0.223**	**.050**	0.133	.143	0.154	.144	0.143	.144	0.154	.144	0.127	.144	0.059	.168
Constant	**-0.002**	**.108**	**-5.165**	**.589**	**-5.606**	**.607**	**-5.573**	**.658**	**-5.892**	**.690**	**-6.052**	**.658**	**-6.470**	**.838**
Pseudo R^2	0.0641		0.0789		0.0831		0.0797		0.0819		0.0813		0.0859	
N	2626		2233		2232		2216		2216		2197		2175	
Chi² (sig.)	216.8 (.000)		233.5 (.000)		235.2 (.000)		224.1 (.000)		230.1 (.000)		227.1 (.000)		237.7 (.000)	

Note: coefficients reaching p<=.05 printed in bold

Appendix D

Who filled in the network support questions and who did not? In total, we asked respondents four network support questions for six ties each. Because of the intensity of the four batteries, we placed them quite up front in the survey. We did not make the network questions compulsory, meaning that respondents could go to the next page without answering them. The network support questions were asked in the following order: (1) talking politics; (2) issue salience; (3) issue position; (4) social approval. All respondents were exposed to the network questions.

To get the survey started, respondents were first asked a general question about the importance of societal topics—they had to select the three topics they considered most salient. Next, they were asked whether they had heard about "the Grand Parade" taking place in Brussels. Those who answered "yes", were asked a number of specific short follow-up questions (about their intention to go, their motives to (not) go, etc.). Those who answered "no" were directed to questions later in the survey (Political interest, network size) still before the network batteries. 86 percent of all respondents heard about the demonstration. For those who heard about the demonstration, the batteries of network questions started from the 16th question. For those who did not hear about the demonstration, the network battery started with the 6th question.

Given the placement of the battery of network questions up front in the survey, we have little analytical leverage to make sense of who completed the network questions and who did not, as the best test for this would be using questions that were asked before the network questions. Model 1 of the Appendices D1 to D4 presents the results for a missing analysis with variables to which all respondents were exposed before answering the network batteries. Model 2 of the Appendices D1 to D4 presents the results for a missing analysis with variables that were asked before the network batteries but to which not all respondents were exposed given the precondition of answering "yes" on the "informed"-question. Model 3 of the Appendices D1 to D4, finally, presents the results for a missing analysis complementing the previous models with a number of standard variables asked after the batteries of network questions (and, as a consequence, the total N logically is lower).

What do these analyses show? Firstly, quite some respondents who started the survey and filled in the "informed" question quickly dropped out afterwards. Put differently, using the respondents who engaged with the informed question (N= 5496) as the population of our survey is a legitimate, but also to some extent quite arbitrary decision—given the extensive amount of respondents who left the survey quickly after that question. Second, respondents who did not know about the parade, and respondents who were less politically interested, were more likely to not fill in the network questions. In other words, our sample consists of informed and more politically interested respondents. Thirdly, respondents with more daily contacts, were more likely to fill in the "issue salience" battery; and, people who showed intention to participate, were more likely to fill in the "social approval" battery. These correlations make sense: if you have a network, you are more likely to fill out information about that network; if you intend to participate, probably social approval

matters to you and you care to share something about it in an online questionnaire. Finally (not shown in the Appendix D1-4 tables), when we introduce the missings of the previous network questions as independent variables in a regression predicting the missings of the next network question, the explained variance skyrockets and these "missing predictors" show large effects. This suggest that our intensive battery of network questions indeed was intensive. We stress this in the methods and concluding sections of the paper.

In all, what these analyses (combined with the attrition analyses results from above) show, is that our effects of network support our found within a sample of more "committed" participants, even when controlling for an impressive battery of variables. So, even within a group of "quite" or "more" likely participants, network support effects matter. We stress this claim in the methods and concluding section.

Appendix D1: Binomial Logistic Regressions predicting missings for "Talking Politics"

	Model 1			*Model 2*			*Model 3*		
	Coef.	S.E.	Sig.	Coef.	S.E.	Sig.	Coef.	S.E.	Sig.
Informed	*omitted*			*omitted*			*omitted*		
Daily contacts	-0.626	0.475	0.188	-0.676	0.487	0.166	-0.156	0.681	0.819
Political Interest	0.527	0.846	0.534	0.445	0.860	0.605	-0.775	1.186	0.513
Demonstration efficacy perception	-	-	-	0.352	0.536	0.511	0.106	0.964	0.913
Participation Intention	-	-	-	*omitted*			*omitted*		
Feeling represented by organizer	-	-	-	-0.359	0.587	0.541	-0.673	0.847	0.427
Age	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.108	0.095	0.258
Gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	*omitted*		
Education	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0.381	0.375	0.309
Legt-right self-placement	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.239	0.347	0.492
Satisfaction democracy	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.176	0.296	0.553
Constant	-7.035	3.169	0.026	-5.712	3.982	0.151	-6.214	8.767	0.478
Pseudo R^2	0.0348			0.0481			0.2312		
N	3871			2673			1326		
Chi^2 (sig)	2.19 (0.335)			2.89 (0.577)			6.93 (0.544)		

Appendix D2: Binomial Logistic Regressions predicting missings for "Issue Salience"

	Model 1			*Model 2*			*Model 3*		
	Coef.	S.E.	Sig.	Coef.	S.E.	Sig.	Coef.	S.E.	Sig.
Informed	**-0,654**	**0,157**	**0,000**	*omitted*			*omitted*		
Daily contacts	-0,029	0,064	0,650	*-0,154*	*0,081*	*0,057*	**-0,315**	**0,158**	**0,046**
Political Interest	**-0,471**	**0,097**	**0,000**	**-0,364**	**0,128**	**0,004**	**-0,503**	**0,244**	**0,039**
Demonstration efficacy perception	-	-	-	-0,028	0,103	0,788	0,073	0,185	0,695
Participation Intention	-	-	-	0,005	0,203	0,979	-0,193	0,373	0,605
Feeling represented by organizer	-	-	-	-0,065	0,116	0,576	-0,074	0,208	0,721
Age	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0,006	0,013	0,628
Gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0,509	0,345	0,140
Education	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0,140	0,076	0,067
Legt-right self-placement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0,115	0,121	0,343
Satisfaction democracy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0,071	0,073	0,335
Constant	-2,214	0,430	0,000	-1,246	0,533	1,515	0,533	1,515	0,725
Pseudo R^2	0.0254			0.0112			0.0470		
N	4622			3533			3309		
Chi^2 (sig)	45.17 (0.000)			13.09 (0.0225)			19.94 (0.0298)		

Appendix D3: Binomial Logistic Regressions predicting missings for "Issue Position"

	Model 1			*Model 2*			*Model 3*		
	Coef.	S.E.	Sig.	Coef.	S.E.	Sig.	Coef.	S.E.	Sig.
Informed	**-0,712**	**0,163**	**0,000**	*omitted*			*omitted*		
Daily contacts	-0,049	0,067	0,460	-0,056	0,084	0,508	-0,018	0,182	0,920
Political Interest	**-0,374**	**0,102**	**0,000**	**-0,297**	**0,134**	**0,026**	-0,321	0,293	0,273
Demonstration efficacy perception	-	-	-	-0,048	0,108	0,653	0,171	0,214	0,422
Participation Intention	-	-	-	-0,001	0,211	0,994	-0,446	0,426	0,295
Feeling represented by organizer	-	-	-	-0,115	0,119	0,332	-0,306	0,221	0,166
Age	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0,001	0,015	0,961
Gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0,305	0,404	0,451
Education	-	-	-	-	-	-	*-0,176*	*0,091*	*0,053*
Legt-right self-placement	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0,050	0,134	0,708
Satisfaction democracy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0,146	0,089	0,103
Constant	-2,629	0,454	0,000	-1,564	0,662	0,018	-0,236	1,775	0,894
Pseudo R^2	0.0219			0.0068			0.0449		
N	4622			3533			3309		
Chi^2 (sig)	36.26 (0.000)			7.40 (0.193)			14.51 (0.151)		

Appendix D4: Binomial Logistic Regressions predicting missings for "Social Approval"

	Model 1			*Model 2*			*Model 3*		
	Coef.	S.E.	Sig.	Coef.	S.E.	Sig.	Coef.	S.E.	Sig.
Informed	*omitted*			*omitted*			*omitted*		
Daily contacts	-0,080	0,070	0,251	-0,049	0,075	0,514	0,027	0,120	0,819
Political Interest	**-0,363**	**0,109**	**0,001**	**-0,265**	**0,118**	**0,025**	-0,205	0,200	0,306
Demonstration efficacy perception	-	-	-	-0,109	0,097	0,263	-0,167	0,160	0,296
Participation Intention	-	-	-	**-0,519**	**0,172**	**0,002**	**-1,269**	**0,267**	**0,000**
Feeling represented by organizer	-	-	-	-0,178	0,103	0,083	-0,269	0,151	0,075
Age	-	-	-	-	-	-	0,020	0,011	0,064
Gender	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0,047	0,272	0,862
Education	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0,074	0,063	0,235
Legt-right self-placement	-	-	-	-	-	-	0,059	0,082	0,474
Satisfaction democracy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-0,057	0,058	0,331
Constant	-1,578	0,397	0,000	-0,674	0,577	0,243	-1,375	1,252	0,272
Pseudo R^2	0.0084			0.0185			0.0730		
N	3871			3533			3309		
Chi^2 (sig)	12.49 (0.002)			24.48 (0.019)			45.53 (0.000)		

Appendix E – support function* tie correlation matrix

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
A	Prtn	1	1.000																							
	Fam	2	0.412	1.000																						
	Frnd	3	0.278	0.399	1.000																					
	Acqu	4	0.175	0.336	0.597	1.000																				
	Clgs	5	0.209	0.255	0.345	0.378	1.000																			
	co-m	6	0.212	0.277	0.429	0.443	0.392	1.000																		
B	Prtn	7	0.305	0.135	0.069	0.061	0.056	**0.049**	1.000																	
	Fam	8	**0.032**	0.304	**-0.005**	**0.027**	**-0.012**	**-0.006**	0.390	1.000																
	Frnd	9	**0.013**	**0.046**	0.222	0.100	**0.012**	**0.025**	0.337	0.288	1.000															
	Acqu	10	-0.076	**-0.015**	0.056	0.184	**0.014**	**0.042**	0.186	0.218	0.475	1.000														
	Clgs	11	**-0.019**	**0.006**	**0.040**	0.070	0.374	0.086	0.181	0.140	0.255	0.349	1.000													
	co-m	12	**-0.004**	**0.039**	0.102	0.099	0.094	0.377	0.382	0.235	0.341	0.227	0.351	1.000												
C	Prtn	13	0.398	0.187	0.136	0.094	0.075	0.125	0.484	0.109	0.086	0.057	**0.041**	0.107	1.000											
	Fam	14	0.108	0.363	0.063	0.055	**0.015**	0.057	0.135	0.552	0.070	0.082	**0.023**	0.055	0.388	1.000										
	Frnd	15	**0.017**	0.076	0.271	0.135	**0.030**	0.074	0.109	0.128	0.468	0.265	0.132	0.131	0.294	0.296	1.000									
	Acqu	16	**-0.018**	**0.039**	0.136	0.239	**0.041**	0.095	0.072	0.118	0.244	0.503	0.211	0.130	0.195	0.262	0.496	1.000								
	Clgs	17	**-0.003**	**0.035**	0.072	0.107	0.447	0.134	**-0.003**	**0.038**	0.079	0.195	0.672	0.140	0.118	0.123	0.224	0.346	1.000							
	co-m	18	**0.011**	**0.048**	0.108	0.124	0.132	0.473	0.084	0.060	0.077	0.089	0.204	0.560	0.255	0.184	0.260	0.262	0.319	1.000						
D	Prtn	19	0.251	0.134	0.122	0.066	0.095	0.122	0.347	0.121	0.079	**0.051**	**0.046**	0.074	0.361	0.140	0.124	0.090	0.073	0.130	1.000					
	Fam	20	0.085	0.294	0.077	0.083	0.105	0.115	0.135	0.452	0.094	0.079	0.097	0.066	0.145	0.400	0.106	0.100	0.096	0.105	0.432	1.000				
	Frnd	21	0.058	0.121	0.233	0.127	0.113	0.126	0.087	0.133	0.360	0.169	0.154	0.119	0.104	0.106	0.331	0.188	0.131	0.148	0.351	0.551	1.000			
	Acqu	22	**0.017**	0.099	0.138	0.203	0.120	0.104	**0.054**	0.101	0.181	0.342	0.220	0.126	0.059	0.068	0.178	0.336	0.215	0.140	0.289	0.505	0.677	1.000		
	Clgs	23	0.055	0.093	0.111	0.112	0.369	0.148	**0.002**	**0.029**	0.086	0.151	0.560	0.142	**0.037**	**0.022**	0.114	0.172	0.570	0.189	0.249	0.354	0.476	0.592	1.000	
	co-m	24	**0.011**	**0.037**	0.122	0.074	0.153	0.367	**0.044**	0.057	0.073	0.076	0.242	0.489	0.072	**0.050**	0.113	0.111	0.215	0.558	0.250	0.320	0.421	0.423	0.481	1.000

Note: Bold = p>0.05; A = Talking Politics ; B = Issue Position ; C = Issue Salience ; D = Social Approval

Appendix F – Full Correlation Matrix

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
(1) Being asked	1.000																	
	0.000																	
(2) Age	-0.128	1.000																
	0.000	0.000																
(3) Gender	0.054	-0.205	1.000															
	0.025	0.000	0.000															
(4) Education	0.029	-0.266	0.139	1.000														
	0.227	0.000	0.000	0.000														
(5) Issue position	0.068	0.029	0.030	-0.007	1.000													
	0.005	0.240	0.218	0.789	0.000													
(6) Issue salience	0.100	0.035	0.049	0.021	0.439	1.000												
	0.000	0.149	0.043	0.393	0.000	0.000												
(7) Talking politics	0.156	-0.037	-0.113	0.043	0.162	0.255	1.000											
	0.000	0.131	0.000	0.080	0.000	0.000	0.000											
(8) Participation approval	0.100	-0.112	0.041	0.038	0.343	0.354	0.242	1.000										
	0.000	0.000	0.097	0.121	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000										
(9) Daily contacts	0.124	-0.193	0.046	0.061	0.032	-0.001	0.235	0.119	1.000									
	0.000	0.000	0.059	0.013	0.196	0.998	0.000	0.000	0.000									
(10) Political Interest	0.059	0.119	-0.271	0.033	0.025	0.114	0.489	0.084	0.039	1.000								
	0.016	0.000	0.000	0.180	0.304	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.106	0.000								
(11) Left-right placement	-0.069	0.098	-0.031	-0.030	-0.058	-0.112	-0.157	-0.117	-0.018	-0.151	1.000							
	0.005	0.000	0.200	0.227	0.018	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.453	0.000	0.000							
(12) Feeling represented	0.082	-0.020	0.053	0.038	0.181	0.153	0.131	0.133	0.052	0.065	-0.195	1.000						
	0.001	0.415	0.029	0.121	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.033	0.008	0.0000	0.000						
(13) Demonstration efficacy	0.062	-0.073	0.089	-0.019	0.062	0.043	0.052	0.075	0.028	-0.025	-0.078	0.210	1.000					
	0.011	0.003	0.000	0.426	0.011	0.078	0.032	0.002	0.252	0.314	0.001	0.000	0.000					
(14) Protest experience	0.078	0.093	-0.017	0.018	0.041	0.059	0.162	0.090	0.031	0.114	-0.048	0.042	0.049	1.000				
	0.001	0.000	0.477	0.459	0.091	0.015	0.000	0.002	0.206	0.000	0.050	0.082	0.045	0.000				
(15) Children	-0.055	0.408	-0.055	-0.079	0.025	0.023	0.015	-0.015	0.022	-0.020	0.058	0.072	-0.012	0.095	1.000			
	0.023	0.000	0.025	0.001	0.307	0.338	0.533	0.551	0.365	0.408	0.017	0.003	0.620	0.000	0.000			
(16) Married	-0.007	0.106	-0.043	-0.002	0.021	0.022	0.121	0.025	0.067	-0.017	0.024	0.038	-0.049	0.029	0.351	1.000		
	0.769	0.000	0.077	0.948	0.401	0.367	0.000	0.313	0.006	0.474	0.323	0.121	0.046	0.234	0.0000	0.000		
(17) Full time	0.060	-0.243	-0.068	0.078	-0.003	-0.027	0.130	0.029	0.285	0.062	-0.014	-0.030	-0.001	0.062	0.001	0.075	1.000	
	0.015	0.000	0.005	0.001	0.891	0.265	0.000	0.238	0.000	0.011	0.570	0.224	0.974	0.011	0.985	0.002	0.000	
(18) Part time	0.038	-0.054	0.192	0.014	-0.014	-0.009	-0.049	0.007	0.073	-0.131	-0.016	0.081	0.017	-0.006	0.059	0.070	-0.475	1.000
	0.118	0.027	0.000	0.557	0.566	0.706	0.044	0.768	0.003	0.000	0.504	0.001	0.483	0.794	0.015	0.004	0.000	0.000
(19) Ass. membership	0.151	0.121	0.070	0.070	0.079	0.084	0.277	0.099	0.123	0.203	0.089	0.075	0.065	0.070	0.035	-0.011	0.073	-0.019
	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.004	0.001	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.002	0.008	0.004	0.156	0.649	0.003	0.448

Appendix G – Question wording and response categories standard control variables

Attitudinal controls		
Variable	**Question**	**Categories**
Political interest	"How interested are you in politics?"	(1) Not at all, (2) rather not, (3) a little, (4) very much
Left-right self-placement	"In politics people talk about 'left and 'right'. Where would you place yourself on a scale whereby 0 means left and 10 right?"	0=Left; 10=Right
Feeling represented by organizers	"Do you have the feeling that your opinion about the present economic policy is represented by the organizers of de Grote Parade?"	(1) Not at all, (2) rather not, (3) more or less, (4) rather yes, (5) very much.
Demonstration efficacy perception.	"How large do you think the chance is that De Grote Parade reaches its goal?"	(1) Very small chance, (2) small chance, (3) moderate chance, (4) big chance, (5) very big chance
Sociodemographic controls		
Variable	**Question**	**Categories**
Age	Recoding of: "In which year were you born?"	Dropdown menu with birth years
Sex	Are you:	(1) male; (2) female
Education	What is the highest degree of education you obtained? If you are studying, at what level are you studying?	(1) None; (2) primary; (3) Lower secondary: technical/professional (4) Lower secondary: general; (5) higher secondary: technical/professional; (6) higher secondary: general; (7) Higher non-university: short type; (8) university: bachelor/candidate; (9) Higher non-university: long type; (10) university: master; (11) post-university
Biographical controls		
Variable	**Question**	**Categories**
Children	"Do You have children?"	(0) No, (1) Yes
Married	"Are you married or living together with your partner?"	(0) No, (1) Yes
Work: full time	"What is your current work situation? Option: I work full time"	(0) No, (1) Yes
Work: part time	"What is your current work situation? Option: I work part time"	(0) No, (1) Yes