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from Soccer Fields**

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Ethnic Cues and Conflict-Triggered Harassment: Evidence from Soccer Fields*

Efe Tokdemir[†], Arzu Kibris[‡], Asli Cansunar[§]

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Abstract

The literature on in-group favoritism and out-group discrimination in political and economic contexts is extensive. However, we know little about how these biases manifest in everyday contact, where routines of civility may coexist with latent ethnic tensions, particularly in conflict-affected settings. Using data from the Turkish Third Soccer League during a period of ethnic insurgency (1990-2019), we examine whether local exposure to conflict, measured by funeral ceremonies for fallen Turkish security personnel, increases ethnic harassment. Soccer games offer a unique context in which groups interact under strong norms of friendly contact and non-discrimination, while funerals serve as localized, random shocks that heighten ethnic salience. Our findings show that Turkish teams exhibit increased harassment toward Kurdish opponents in the immediate aftermath of local conflict events. Additionally, Turkish referees are more likely to overlook this aggression. Moreover, the incidence of conflict-triggered harassment increases substantially in venues where voters express stronger nationalist sentiments.

Keywords: ethnic harassment, conflict, inter-group bias, sports and politics

Word count: 12826

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“Colosseum was very much more than a sports venue. . . It was a political theatre” (Brichford, 1999)

1 Introduction

Multiethnic communities are often seen as sites of integration, where everyday interactions among diverse groups foster social cohesion and reduce prejudice. However, these same communities can also harbor latent tensions that remain dormant until triggered by ethnic conflict. At this point, they often erupt in the form of ethnic harassment and aggression.¹ For instance, following the 1974 Birmingham Pub Bombings, the city’s previously thriving Irish community experienced a sudden escalation in violence: Irish-owned businesses were vandalized, and community leaders received death threats.² Similarly, after a Tajik national carried out the March 2024 attack at Moscow’s Crocus City Hall, killing over 130 people, individuals perceived as Tajik became targets of violent assaults by Russians.³ Likewise, when twelve Turkish soldiers were killed by the PKK (Kurdistan Workers’ Party) in October 2007, Turkish nationalists vandalized Kurdish-owned restaurants and assaulted individuals perceived to be Kurdish (Gambetti, 2013).

Despite these examples, systematic evidence on how and when latent out-group biases escalate into overt harassment remains scarce, especially in contexts where civilian groups coexist as neighbors, friends, and coworkers, generally maintaining amicable and routine interactions. Do ethnic conflicts spontaneously trigger harassment even toward out-group individuals uninvolved in the violence simply because they share the ethnic identity of belligerents? Do episodes of conflict-induced harassment cause lasting damage to community co-

¹See EU-MIDIS (2017) and van Tubergen and Kros (2025) for comprehensive definitions of ethnic harassment.

²https://www.irishpost.com/news/irish-birmingham-40-years-birmingham-bombings-36823?utm_source=chatgpt.com

³<https://carnegieendowment.org/russia-eurasia/politika/2024/03/moscow-terror-attack-spotlights-russia-tajikistan-ties?lang=en>

hession, or does ethnic aggression merely fluctuate with repeated reminders of ethnic threats? Furthermore, how do contextual factors, such as the ethnic identities of officials tasked with preventing and punishing harassment or the demographic characteristics of settings where interactions occur, shape these patterns?

This paper addresses these critical questions. We theorize that episodes of ethnic conflict increase the incidence of ethnic harassment (e.g., verbal threats, racist insults, physical intimidation) against perceived out-group members by heightening perceptions of threat and fostering environments in which harassment becomes socially acceptable or legitimized. In addition, we expect that institutional and contextual factors significantly shape these outcomes. First, institutional actors with the responsibility to maintain order and the authority to adjudicate play a critical role: when these figures share the identity of the aggressors, their neutrality may be compromised, inadvertently legitimizing or failing to deter out-group harassment. Second, the environmental context matters: interactions in areas dominated by the in-group or in venues with stronger nationalist sentiment are more likely to amplify aggression.

Despite its prominence, ethnic harassment remains understudied in part because it is difficult to measure. Most incidents fall below the threshold of hate crimes and rarely escalate into large-scale violence, instead appearing as brief confrontations, verbal taunts, or casual slights. Though these acts carry psychological weight, they are often unreported or dismissed—sometimes by institutions that harbor their own biases. To address these measurement challenges, we draw on data from professional soccer matches, a context in which ethnic identities are visible, behavior is systematically recorded, and formal rules constrain aggression. Our analysis focuses on 40,803 games played in the Turkish Third Soccer League between 1990 and 2019 during intermittent ethnic conflict. We show that teams from Turkish-majority areas are significantly more aggressive, measured by red cards, toward Kurdish opponents in the immediate aftermath of local military funerals. This pattern

is consistent with our expectations about conflict-triggered harassment. We also find that referee behavior is shaped by ethnic alignment: officials from Turkish-majority areas are more likely to overlook aggression by Turkish teams. Finally, this pattern intensifies in politically nationalist environments, as measured by local vote shares for nationalist parties. In such settings, conflict events appear to heighten both the salience of ethnic identity and the acceptability of harassment.

Several features of our setting make it an ideal empirical laboratory that closely resembles a controlled experiment, but with real, cost-inducing behaviors observed in a natural, everyday context. This approach helps us avoid social desirability biases or “cheap talk,” which often prevent researchers from accurately capturing genuine inter-group dynamics (Zizzo, 2010; Tourangeau, Rips and Rasinski, 2000; Bove, Efthyvoulou and Pickard, 2024). Specifically, players who behave aggressively, referees who officiate unfairly, or spectators who shout profanities and throw objects onto the field risk serious personal and professional consequences. Thus, unlike research designs in which participants’ actions carry little or no direct cost, or only incur costs within artificial experimental environments, our approach captures behaviors with tangible real-world implications.

A second crucial advantage of our empirical setting is the inherent exogeneities embedded in it, closely resembling a controlled experiment—an ideal that is typically impossible to achieve when studying the social consequences of ethnic conflict. In the Turkish soccer league, the exogeneities that provide us with a clear identification strategy arise from several sources: game schedules are determined by a fixture lottery shortly before each season, ensuring each team plays every other team exactly twice (home and away) in a random order; referee assignments, which are similarly done in advance of the season, depend solely on technical qualifications and availability, not ethnicity or personal preferences; and most importantly, the conflict events we study occur entirely independently from league tables, enabling us to credibly estimate the causal effects.

Our paper advances our understanding of the social consequences of identity-based conflicts, which scholars describe as “arguably the most important yet least understood” of conflict impacts (Blattman and Miguel, 2010; Balcells, Purdue and Voytas, 2024), in several ways. First, despite substantial measurement challenges, systematically studying ethnic harassment is critical, as such behaviors carry severe social and political consequences, including eroding trust in political institutions (Röder and Mühlau, 2012) and damaging overall well-being (Lewis, Cogburn and Williams, 2015). Yet, existing research remains limited in exploring how and to what extent inter-group biases propelled by ongoing conflicts influence civilians’ everyday interactions. Our findings demonstrate that ethnic conflicts indeed harm social unity by impairing everyday ethnic interactions and fostering harassment even in mundane, ostensibly apolitical environments that otherwise encourage norms of equality and friendliness, underscoring the far-reaching and damaging impact ethnic conflicts have on social cohesion.

Second, our findings highlight important limitations to the optimistic claims of the parasocial contact literature regarding social cohesion between different identity groups (Paluck, Green and Green, 2019; Mousa, 2020; Weiss, Ran and Halperin, 2023). A substantial body of research on parasocial contact suggests that regular, friendly interactions emphasizing fairness and cooperation can reduce out-group biases, foster inter-group acceptance, and promote peace, especially in conflict-ridden societies. However, our results demonstrate that prolonged ethnic conflict can quickly erode these positive effects—even among groups that have coexisted in shared social contexts for extended periods. Consequently, sustained efforts by NGOs or governments aiming to build social cohesion through increased inter-group contact may be undermined by recurring conflict events, particularly those involving significant losses and communal trauma. Relatedly and importantly, our findings demonstrate the important role institutional actors and their impartiality can play in moderating the success probability of such efforts.

Third, we contribute to and extend the literature on conflict exposure. Rather than narrowly defining conflict exposure as individual experiences that results in personal losses, we offer a group-level conceptualization of victimhood using exposure to the loss of in-group members which, as we will explain in detail shortly, is communally experienced in the public funeral ceremonies conducted for "martyred" local security force casualties. In so doing, we also leverage these ceremonies as a way to trigger out-group negativity considering the recency and saliency of the event. With this novel conceptualization, we move beyond treating conflict exposure as a fixed effect where exposure permanently shapes outcomes. Instead, we approach it as a time varying factor. Thus, individuals exposed to conflict may not exhibit its consequences indefinitely or with the same intensity over time.

Finally, building on naturally occurring data and a powerful identification strategy, we show that ethnic harassment emerges primarily when conflict incidents activate ethnic identities. Importantly, these effects diminish quickly unless reinforced by subsequent events that renew perceived threats. Therefore, hostility is not driven by ethnicity alone but rather by the heightened salience of recent conflict events, such as funeral ceremonies following armed clashes. While we cannot precisely determine how severe or lasting the damage is for groups targeted by such hostilities, our findings underscore the importance of ending violence for a society to heal and restore social cohesion.

2 Ethnic Identity, Conflict, and Harassment

Identity is an important determinant of our beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. People tend to act consistently with their identities as well as the associated norms, beliefs, and values, using these as cognitive shortcuts that guide their political and social attitudes. Social Identity Theory (SIT) proposes that individuals derive a part of their self-concept from their membership in social groups (Huddy, 2013a). Consequently, they perceive themselves not

only as unique persons but also as integral members of collective groups, forming psychological attachments to group characteristics and members and adopting their beliefs, attitudes and behavior (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). These perceptions and attachments are particularly strong for ethnic, religious, and racial identities as they are persistent, visibly distinguishable, and deeply rooted, making them politically salient and significantly effective on group cohesion and collective behavior (Tajfel and Turner, 1979; Oakes, 2002). In other words, ethno-religious identities substantially shape people's political perceptions, emotions, preferences, and actions.

A core feature of the SIT is in-group favoritism which refers to the preferential treatment and positive biases people exhibit toward their own group members. In times of heightened competition, this favoritism can be accompanied by out-group negativity, where members of other groups are perceived with suspicion, hostility, or fear (Conover, 1984). However, identities are complex and multidimensional, and the salience of a given dimension, which is the likelihood that the dimension will be activated to influence behavior and judgment, varies considerably depending on the social and political contexts (Chandra, 2006). Group-identity activation becomes likely in contexts rich in group-identity-related cues and in which group-specific attributes gain prominence (Coser, 1956; LeVine and Campbell, 1972).

Ethnic conflicts vividly illustrate how social contexts powerfully activate group identities. The salience of ethnic identities escalate through mechanisms involving emotions of fear and anger caused by perceptions of existential threat emanating from other ethnic groups. These perceptions are further boosted by political entrepreneurs and media actors who frequently leverage these emotions by emphasizing recent injustices or ongoing discrimination, reinforcing collective grievances and perceived threats (Wilkinson, 2001; Gurr, 2000; Brubaker, 2004). In times of crisis or uncertainty, individuals commonly rely on heuristics and engage in biased information processing when making decisions (Popkin, 1991; Lau and Redlawsk, 2001; Lupia, 1994; Kahneman, Slovic and Tversky, 1982). Within the framework of ethnic

conflicts, ethnic identity becomes the cognitive shortcut and the perceived threats, whether material (i.e., economic or physical harm) or symbolic (i.e., threats to values, identity, or cultural norms), prompt group members to align their attitudes and behaviors with collective group objectives (Sherif, 1961). Moreover, the resulting inter-group biases stay alive and deepen by conflict events that continually refresh the salience and immediacy of ethnic identity and related cues.

Empirical studies consistently demonstrate how in-group favoritism and out-group discrimination intensify under conditions of elevated ethnic identity salience and perceived threat. Empirical research on the social outcomes of ethnic conflicts has documented increased prejudice (Rohner, Thoenig and Zilibotti, 2013; Kibris and Cesur, 2023), greater parochialism (Bauer et al., 2014; Ingelaere and Verpoorten, 2020), intensified societal polarization, hardened attitudes, and heightened preferences for aggressive, conflict-resolution strategies targeting out-groups (Grossman, Miodownik and Manekin, 2015; Canetti et al., 2017). Additionally, exposure to conflict has been found to erode political and social trust (Kijewski and Freitag, 2018; De Juan and Pierskalla, 2016).

Alongside these attitudinal outcomes, clear behavioral evidence of inter-group biases is also documented. For instance, Shayo and Zussman (2023) identify judicial bias in Israeli small claims courts, where judges demonstrate greater favoritism toward plaintiffs from their own ethnic group following nearby terrorist attacks. Fisman et al. (2020) show that Hindu bank managers who had previously experienced communal violence are significantly less likely to lend to Muslim borrowers, clearly demonstrating how past conflict shapes discriminatory practices. Similarly, Korovkin and Makarin (2023) report that Ukrainian firms from regions with fewer ethnic Russians drastically reduced their trade with Russia following the Ukraine war, illustrating significant economic repercussions driven by inter-group tensions.

However, negative attitudes and discriminatory behaviors are not the only adversities faced by out-group members, especially in contexts where ethnic identities and their salience

are intensified by ongoing conflict. In such environments, discriminatory attitudes and behaviors can escalate into ethnic harassment. Conflict can shape such behaviors through two key mechanisms. First, heightened negative attitudes may directly translate into harassing behaviors. Second, the increased salience of ethnic identities and intensified perceptions of ethnic threat can foster an environment where harassment, typically illegal and socially unacceptable in integrated societies, becomes implicitly tolerated. Additionally, individuals who would ordinarily intervene to formally or informally sanction harassment (e.g., neighbors, coworkers, friends, or authority figures like police officers, judges, security personnel, and teachers) may instead turn a blind eye either because their heightened negativity reduces their willingness to act, or because widespread implicit tolerance lowers their sense of formal and informal accountability (Valentim, 2024).

Studying ethnic harassment—minor acts of aggression that typically go unrecorded as official crimes, yet significantly impact social justice and cohesion during conflict—is inherently challenging. Many instances of harassment are ephemeral and subtle: a derogatory remark shouted across the street, stones thrown at the windows of out-group businesses late at night without witnesses, or a deliberate shoulder bump on a crowded sidewalk. Capturing such behaviors experimentally is nearly impossible, as researchers cannot randomly assign conflict events to provoke real-world harassment. Moreover, aside from measuring changes in attitudes through unexpected events during surveys, researchers face substantial difficulties in systematically observing these transient interactions. Consequently, despite the profound implications ethnic harassment holds for political dynamics, social cohesion, and individual well-being, robust empirical evidence remains scarce.

However, sporting contexts, with their structured interactions, clearly defined rules of acceptable conduct, and considerable social salience, offer a unique empirical opportunity to directly observe how heightened ethnic salience, group identity dynamics, and perceptions of threat manifest in tangible behaviors, such as ethnic harassment. In the following section,

we discuss in detail the theoretical rationale that makes sports settings particularly effective for systematically examining the social identity and conflict-driven mechanisms central to our study.

Sports and Politics: A Platform for Clash of Identities

Sports arenas have long served as platforms where social and political identities are expressed and contested. Spectators project onto players and teams collective identities rooted in ethnicity, religion, class, or politics. These sentiments are amplified by the emotional energy and social license afforded by collective fandom (Huddy, 2013b). Historical and contemporary cases abound. Soccer rivalries between Glasgow Rangers vs. Celtic in Scotland, Partizan vs. Red Star in Yugoslavia, Real Madrid vs. FC Barcelona in Spain, AC Milan vs. Inter Milan in Italy, Olympiakos vs. Panathinaikos in Greece constitute only a small number of examples showing how the rivalries are rooted back in political divides and identity-related schism (Dmowski, 2017).

Previous works on sports and politics contend that sports fields could provide a useful analytical tool to analyze political ramifications of group interactions (Gift and Miner, 2017; Belcastro, 2022). On one hand, existing research investigating whether sports impacts upon politics has demonstrated how it can foster social cohesion and even positively influence attitudes toward refugees (Molnar and Whigham, 2021; Frey and Eitzen, 1991). In a recent example, Mousa (2020) examines the role of inter-group contact in building social cohesion by experimentally manipulating team formation in amateur soccer games in Iraq. In another interesting study, Marble et al. (2021) find that the premier league player Mohamed Salah is responsible for a significant drop in hate crimes against Muslims in Liverpool area as positive feelings toward him are generalized to Muslims.

On the other hand, there is also evidence of sports games damaging the social fabric. A strand of literature examining the dark side of sports has found that competitive games

and tournaments can promote nationalist sentiments (Molnar and Whigham, 2021), fuel hostilities between countries (Bertoli, 2017), shape socialization and social change (Frey and Eitzen, 1991), negatively influence attitudes towards refugees (Rosenzweig and Zhou, 2021), and cause high levels of xenophobia among citizens (Pinto, 2024). Liston and Deighan (2019) show that, far from dissolving divisions between Northern Ireland’s communities, sports competitions actually reinforce them with their visual and oral symbols serving as “symbolic walls of the mind.”

If sporting arenas can magnify political divides, it follows that the political arena can likewise imprint itself on the playfield. Sports fields have always been venues where various social and political identities and ideologies compete in the embodiment of athletes and teams. We therefore expect the potential effects of ethnic conflicts on social cohesion and group perceptions to reflect on the soccer pitch. Moreover, because soccer games unfold in highly charged, unscripted environments where interactions are public and immediate, we expect to capture a broad range of outcomes including not only discrimination, which can be observed in other settings even in the absence of conflict, but also aggression. Recent studies support our expectations. Miguel, Saiegh and Satyanath (2011) analyze international players of the European professional soccer leagues and show a strong relationship between the extent of civil conflict in a player’s home country and his likelihood of violent behavior on the field. Following a similar path Cecchi, Leuvelde and Voors (2016) analyze data from a soccer tournament in Sierra Leone and find competitiveness and aggressiveness of players to be exacerbated by conflict exposure during their childhood.

Building on the in-group versus out-group dichotomy, we argue that inter-group games played in the shadow of an ongoing ethnic conflict might be the scene to elevated ethnic harassment. Acts of violence and the resulting losses are expected to heighten fear and hostility, and increase the prominence of identity cues. Individuals from threatened groups may therefore perceive conflict events as indicators and reminders of an existential threat,

and respond with aggression towards groups they associate with this threat. We, however, do not expect all conflict events to have a similar effect. Instead, we argue that effects will be driven by proximate and salient events that lead to confrontation with the violence and the costs of the conflict. The resulting aggression therefore is not necessarily strategic; rather, it arises from fear, grief, and resentment, primarily manifesting at the group level. Hypothesis 1 thus emphasizes that aggression is not driven solely by static ethnic divisions but rather by events amplifying the salience of inter-group biases.

H1: Exposure to conflict-related events increases ethnic harassment toward teams associated with the out-group.

Understanding aggression and discrimination requires looking beyond player behavior alone. Soccer games involve another central actor: the referees. They decide what constitutes harassment and aggression and determine the punishment. However, referees are not neutral actors; they are embedded in the same social and political context as the players, and as such they are likely to respond to conflict events with elevated parochial biases in their decisions. Like players, referees interpret contextual cues, and —consciously or unconsciously—align their decisions with in-group interests.

The theory of motivated reasoning offers an explanation for such referee biases. It refers to a cognitive process where reasoning is shaped by a desired conclusion, leading to a bias in how information is processed and interpreted (Kunda, 1990; Lau and Redlawsk, 2001). Needless to say, motivated reasoning is expected to be stronger in cases where group identities are rendered salient by an inter-group conflict (Bolsen, Druckman and Cook, 2014; Taber and Lodge, 2006). Accordingly, referees' decisions may also reflect biases shaped by their ethnic identity and the broader conflict-driven context in which they operate.

H2: The effect of conflict exposure on ethnic harassment toward teams associated with the out-group is conditioned by the ethnic identity of the referee.

Another important actor that needs to be considered is spectators. Prior research shows that crowds affect player performance and referee decisions (Magistro and Wack, 2022). In the Turkish context, away games are particularly challenging for visiting teams. Although the Turkish Football Federation (TFF) reserves 10% of stadium seats for the supporters of the visiting team, the costs of travel and lack of interest in lower-league games mean that away teams often play without significant fan support. As a result, stadiums become highly homogeneous spaces, where the home crowd can create a hostile atmosphere towards the players of the away team. This environment can shape field behavior in two ways. First, players may act more aggressively, either hyped up or aggravated by the crowd thereby increasing their likelihood of receiving a card. Second, spectators may exert pressure on referees to penalize the away team more harshly or to overlook infractions by the home team, thereby influencing the observed harassment within a game. Accordingly, our third hypothesis concerns the mediating effect of game location.

H3: The effect of conflict exposure on ethnic harassment toward teams associated with the out-group is conditioned by the characteristics of the game venue.

3 Research Design

3.1 Turkish Case: Ethnic Conflict, Military Response, and Funerals

At the end of the World War I, Türkiye emerged as a new republic composed of ethnically diverse Muslim groups initially unified under the shared banner of Islam. This unity became strained, however, when republican elites initiated a top-down process of secularization (Azak, 2010). Without religion as a unifying force, state leaders sought to foster national unity and homogeneity through assimilation policies. However, these efforts encountered significant obstacles, due largely to limited state capacity, financial constraints,

and weak bureaucratic authority, particularly when it came to integrating the geographically isolated Kurdish population in eastern and southeastern Türkiye (Van Bruinessen, 1992).

In line with its nation-building strategy through assimilation and homogenization, the Turkish state officially adopted policies denying ethnic diversity within its Muslim population (Yeğen, 2014). For example, since 1965, Turkish censuses have stopped recording citizens' ethnic identities, identity cards carry no ethnic markers, and civil laws similarly avoid explicit ethnic distinctions (Mutlu, 1995; Tezcür and Gurses, 2017).⁴ Indeed, the absence of formal ethnic recognition makes precise official categorization nearly impossible. Apart from a few distinctively Kurdish names, Kurdish and Turkish names are typically indistinguishable, and visible ethnic markers are rare. However, ethnicity often is inferred informally. Due to the geographical concentration of Kurdish populations in Türkiye's southeast, place of origin frequently serves as a proxy for ethnic identity. For example, an individual from Diyarbakır, a prominent Kurdish-majority city, is invariably presumed Kurdish, demonstrating how geographical origin becomes a de facto ethnic marker. Although family origin continues to signal ethnic identity almost unmistakably, sustained internal migration has brought Kurdish populations into cities across western Türkiye. Today, Kurds and Turks often live side by side as neighbors, coworkers, and classmates, especially in urban areas.

In 1984, the Kurdish issue escalated significantly when the PKK (Partiya Karkaren Kurdistan - Kurdistan Workers' Party) launched an armed insurgency aiming to establish an independent Kurdish state in southeastern Türkiye (Tezcür, 2015). Outmatched by the Turkish security forces, the PKK relied on hit-and-run attacks, while the state's response, such as mass detentions and village evacuations, further radicalized large segments of the Kurdish population. Since the early 1980s, the conflict has claimed over 40,000 lives, including more than 8,000 soldiers and police officers.

⁴The only exception is non-Muslim citizens, whose minority status was formally recognized and protected under the Treaty of Lausanne.

Responding to the PKK insurgency, the government declared a state of emergency (*Olağanüstü hal*, OHAL hereafter) across 13 southeastern provinces in 1987. This declaration expanded military authority in the region, enabling sweeping security measures that effectively formalized the OHAL zone as the official conflict area (Öztañ and Bezci, 2015). Under OHAL regulations, all public personnel—including soldiers, police, judges, prosecutors, doctors, teachers, and civil servants—were required to complete fixed-term hardship tours, incentivized by special pay and benefits. With the PKK targeting not only combatants but also state bureaucrats and public servants like teachers and doctors as well as their families, these provinces carried a significantly higher risk of victimization. With Türkiye’s approximately five million public sector employees and their extensive social networks, this mandatory service greatly reinforced the out-group stigma associated with the region.

Until June 2019,⁵ Türkiye maintained a strict universal conscription policy, mandating every healthy male citizen to serve in the army upon reaching the designated age. Each year, nearly half a million young men were drafted within this system to serve at bases nationwide, and given the prolonged PKK conflict and extensive military deployment, many conscripts were assigned to bases in the conflict zone. And due to a "no service at home" policy, nearly all of those assigned to conflict areas came from other parts of the country. Moreover, because police and military officers are subject to a rotating assignments system, the professional security personnel in the conflict zone have been predominantly non-local as well. Consequently, the vast majority of the nearly 8,000 security force casualties of this prolonged conflict are individuals from the Turkish-majority regions outside the conflict zone (Kibris, 2011).

Figure 1 summarizes all these contextual details in three maps. The upper map delineates provinces placed under the State of Emergency (OHAL) from 1987 through the late

⁵Legal changes made on 25 June 2019 in the military service law allowed male citizens to fulfill their military service obligation through payment of monetary compensation followed by a three-week basic training program - <https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2019/06/20190626-1.htm>

2000s (indicated by diamond symbols) and provides 1990 estimates of each province's Kurdish population share. These provinces largely coincide with those experiencing the highest conflict intensity as depicted by the distribution of cumulative Turkish security force (TSF) combat fatalities in the middle map. Finally, the lower map illustrates the locations of funerals for these TSF victims. Mainly in line with the population distribution across the country and therefore showing concentration in highly populated provinces such as Istanbul, Ankara, or Izmir, the map of funerals underscore the geographically random distribution of the hometowns of the soldiers and police officers whose lives the conflict claimed.

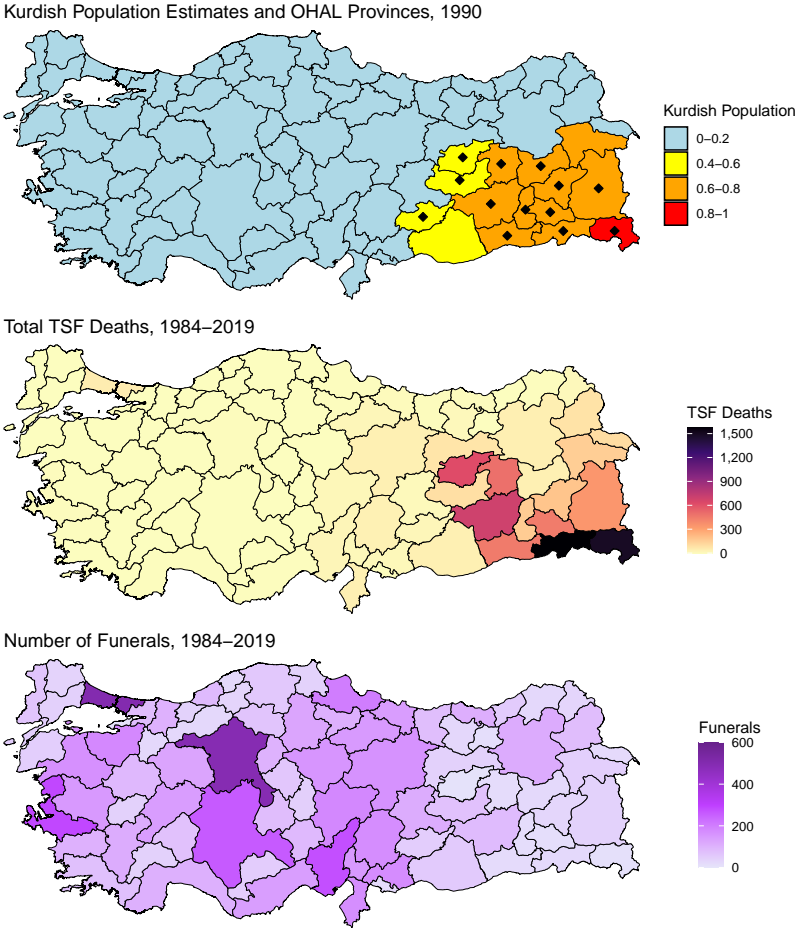


Figure 1: Ethnic diversity, OHAL Provinces, TSF deaths, and TSF funerals.

Funerals for fallen soldiers and police officers are deeply significant public ceremonies that bring together politicians, bureaucrats, army officers, and local communities. As soon as communication regarding the death of a hometown soldier or police officer reaches local government offices, a multi-agency protocol is set in motion: local bureaucrats, military commanders, religious leaders, health workers, and social service personnel coordinate to inform the family. Medical staff accompany the team delivering the news in case of emergencies, and support personnel are assigned to the family until the funeral ends. Preparations begin with a military escort and a flag-draped coffin. The family’s home is marked with a Turkish flag. These steps reflect a collective effort to honor the deceased as a national martyr (*şehit*) and to publicly acknowledge their sacrifice. These losses and the ceremonies that follow reshape both the physical space and the emotional atmosphere of the local community. Streets are lined with flags, announcements are broadcast from minarets, and local governments make sure every symbolic detail is covered, from temporary mourning spaces where people gather to offer condolences (*taziye çadırı*), to logistics for moving the body and transporting mourners. The ceremony is attended by high level government representatives (at least at the ministerial level), high ranking military officers, and the prayer is usually led by the province’s highest-ranking religious official (*müftü*). Residents often line the streets to witness the procession and join the burial. After the religious ceremony which is usually conducted at the central mosque in town, a cortege of thousands follows the coffin through the town’s main streets toward the cemetery. Local newspapers, TV stations, and social media devote sustained attention to the martyr and their family, running banners like “We have a martyr — Trabzon in mourning” (“*Trabzon yasta – Şehidimiz var*”)⁶, while national outlets cover the story with an emphasis on the local center of the pain, “Fire has fallen on Trabzon” (“*Trabzon’a ateş düştü*”)⁷. Coverage often focuses on intimate and emotional

⁶Example from a local Trabzon newspaper: <https://www.trabzonx.com/turkiye-yasta-sehidimiz-var/21541/>

⁷Example: <https://haberglobal.com.tr/gundem/trabzona-sehit-atesi-dustu-440519>

details, such as images of grieving family members, or photos of a young son or a daughter dressed in military uniforms standing beside the coffin, deepening its emotional impact on the public.

In smaller towns, these funerals are often the largest public gatherings and the most significant piece of local news, reinforcing communal bonds through shared grief and pride. Importantly, because the conflict is geographically concentrated, for communities outside the conflict-torn southeast Türkiye, these funerals often become their most immediate, costly, and emotional encounter with the war, bringing it home only when a local soldier or police officer is killed, triggering a wave of mourning, anger, and patriotic ritual (Kibris, 2011; Mater, 1998). Martyrs often become permanently embedded in local memory, with streets, schools, hospitals, or police stations named after them in their hometowns.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that the shadow of the ethnic conflict extends to the encounters between Turkish and Kurdish teams on the soccer field. This is unsurprising given that the same crowds who line the streets at martyr funerals, typically young men steeped in nationalist symbols and chants, also gather in stadiums, another arena where intense group identity meets performative passion. Anger fueled by the conflict is frequently revived and redirected toward the perceived “enemy,” identified by the ethnic cues in team names flashing on team jerseys.

In October 2018, for example, a soccer game in Türkiye turned violent when players from Amedspor, a team from Diyarbakır, a Kurdish-majority southeastern province, were attacked by home-team spectators in a game in Western Turkey. During the incident, stadium videoboards broadcast images of Turkish military operations against the PKK, accompanied by popular nationalist chants. Amedspor players faced similar hostility again in 2023, with home-team spectators chanting discriminatory slogans and displaying racist banners. Teams from other Kurdish-populated provinces have endured comparable hostility—so severe that a third-division club from Şırnak withdrew from the league in 2020. In an interview, the

team’s coach detailed how they had faced violence from spectators and discrimination from referees, who unfairly associated them with the PKK solely because the team originated from a Kurdish-majority province . The club’s president, Maruf Sefinç, described the situation as follows:

“Unfortunately... our club has faced pressure beyond sporting boundaries through biased and ill-intentioned referee decisions and attitudes. Official appeals have previously been submitted to the federation regarding games where Cizre Sports Club suffered from refereeing mistakes and racist attacks; yet these negative incidents have continued without remedy.” (Evrensel, 2020)

3.2 Data

Naturally Occurring Data from Soccer Fields

Ideally, to study the effects of ethnic conflict on ethnic harassment and the moderating effects of contextual factors one needs a natural “laboratory” satisfying several critical conditions: (1) interactions between individuals from different ethnic backgrounds occur in ways that are effectively random, (2) conflict-related shocks happen independently of these interactions, (3) the setting includes effectively random assignment to in-group- or out-group-dominated areas, (4) interactions are monitored by identifiable officials—such as referees or record-keepers—with different and observable ethnic identities, and (5) actual behaviors are observable, thereby avoiding social-desirability bias common in self-reported willingness to engage in ethnic harassment or perceptions of having experienced it (Muñoz, Falcó-Gimeno and Hernández, 2020).

The Turkish Third Soccer League provides an empirical setting that fulfills these criteria. Specifically, it offers real-world in-group-out-group interactions, exogenous scheduling relative to conflict events, random assignment of games to in-group or out-group venues,

identifiable referees who enforce rules, and direct observation of naturally occurring behaviors rather than experimental elicitation or reliance on self-reported intentions.

To exploit this ideal setting, we compiled an original dataset covering all the 40,803 games played in the Turkish Soccer Federation (TFF) Third League across the 29 seasons from 1990 to 2019 by retrieving information from the TFF’s online archives. Our hypotheses primarily concern discrimination and harassment against teams from predominantly Kurdish-populated provinces (hereafter referred to as Kurdish teams). Specifically, we focus on games involving at least one team from predominantly Turkish-populated provinces (Turkish teams), resulting in 71,595 team-game observations.

Our analysis centers on red cards as our dependent variable, since the aggressive behaviors they penalize—such as violent conduct, intentional foul play, biting, spitting, or using excessive force against opponents—closely mirror harassment in everyday contexts. Like harassment, these actions constitute unmistakable violations of accepted norms and should result in immediate sanctions when referees enforce rules impartially. Players can receive a red card directly for a single severe infraction or indirectly by accumulating two yellow cards during a game. Both direct and double-yellow red cards lead to identical disciplinary outcomes in the Turkish league: immediate expulsion and suspension, clearly marking a threshold of unacceptable aggression. Single yellow cards, by contrast, typically sanction less severe, often tactical infractions (such as time-wasting or dissent) that do not necessarily reflect deliberate aggression or harassment.⁸

Examining lower-league games has several advantages. Unlike teams in higher-level leagues, third-league teams cannot recruit foreign players; making all players inherently familiar with the domestic conflict context. Players in these leagues are semi-professional,

⁸Additionally, the TFF did not distinguish between these two types of red cards until the 2002–2003 season. Consequently, relying solely on direct red cards would omit critical data from earlier periods, especially during the most intense years of the Kurdish insurgency. For completeness, we replicate our analysis using total card counts (red and yellow combined) in Table D12 and D13 of Appendix B.4.

reducing the stakes and the incentives to strategically protect lucrative contracts typically observed in higher leagues. Furthermore, given the low profile of third-league teams, limited media exposure, and infrequent matchups between teams, players and coaches generally lack familiarity with their opponents, further decreasing strategic biases or anticipatory aggression. Relatedly, referee decisions in these lower-profile games escape extensive public scrutiny, enhancing the naturalness of observed behaviors. Finally, referee assignments—although determined by the Federation—are based solely on referee level and availability, making systematic selection biases unlikely.⁹

Ethnic Diversity and Conflict Data

To construct our main independent variable, which is the perceived identity of a soccer team, we rely on provincial estimates of Kurdish population shares from the 1990s as official census figures on Kurdish populations are unavailable (Mutlu, 1995). These estimates were calculated using the proportion of native Kurdish speakers identified in the 1965 census which was the last census that collected ethnicity information, adjusted with subsequent population growth and migration data, to classify geographic areas according to ethnic diversity.¹⁰

We should clarify the assumptions underlying our arguments about the perceived ethnicity of opponents. Given these are professional soccer games, we do not assume that teams from predominantly Kurdish provinces consist overwhelmingly of Kurdish players. Indeed, the absence of distinctive ethnic markers in Turkish names and surnames makes it practically impossible for players or referees to reliably discern each other’s ethnicity during fast-paced

⁹Given the league hierarchy and constraints, it would also be costly and logistically burdensome for the Federation to systematically bias referee assignments.

¹⁰This classification method aligns closely with perceptions held by the Turkish state and its citizens about core Kurdish regions. For instance, provinces such as Bingöl, Bitlis, Elazığ, and Van—all characterized by Kurdish-speaking majorities exceeding 50% according to earlier censuses—were included in the OHAL zone despite experiencing relatively low levels of violence from 1982 to 1987. Conversely, provinces with comparable violence intensity but smaller Kurdish-speaking populations were excluded from the emergency measures (Belge, 2016). Such administrative decisions underscore how historical linguistic compositions—particularly Kurdish language prevalence—rather than violence alone, shaped state policies and reinforced public perceptions of Kurdish-speaking areas as distinctly out-group regions needing stricter state control.

games. Instead, we argue that team names, and therefore team jerseys, act as powerful ethnic cues, shaping perceptions of players’ ethnic identities. All teams in the Turkish professional leagues include district or province identifiers in their names, clearly signaling their geographical origins. Jerseys explicitly indicating Kurdish provinces serve as ethnic identity markers, leading players wearing them to be perceived as Kurdish. Similar to how uniforms distinguish sides in battle, jerseys with geographic identifiers strongly influence perceptions of ethnicity—even if individual identities remain unknown.¹¹

To generate our moderating variable, which is a conflict-related identity-saliency trigger, we use an original dataset documenting the date of death and the location of funeral ceremony for all the 7,572 soldiers and police officers killed in the conflict from its onset in August 1984 through December 2019 (Kibris, 2011, 2021). Our dataset is closely related to the Turkish State-PKK Conflict Event Dataset (Kibris, 2021) which lists the date, location, and combatant casualties of conflict events over the course of the conflict. Our data tracks the details of those casualties. We report the summary statistics in Table A1 in the Appendix.

3.3 Empirical Strategy

As outlined in our theory section, we are interested in interethnic relations, specifically outgroup harassment, and how institutional actors and other contextual factors intervene in these interactions amidst the dynamic fluctuations in the intensity and relevance of an ongoing ethnic conflict. Although our primary interest lies in how ethnic harassment evolves with the dynamics of the conflict, we first establish a baseline by examining violence in inter-ethnic games absent any immediate conflict-related trigger. To do so, we focus on routine games where Team A is from a Turkish region and plays against either a Turkish or

¹¹Player-level data from the 2017–18 season confirm that the majority of players on Kurdish-zone teams are, in fact, from predominantly Turkish regions (highest ratio of Kurdish-zone player in a given team is 29%). Thus, Kurdish-zone teams and Turkish-zone teams have similar ethnic distributions among their players.

a Kurdish team, excluding games where both teams are Kurdish.

Formally, we estimate:

$$Y_{at} = \beta_1 \text{Kurdish}_{bt} + \beta_2 \text{TurkishRef}_t + \beta_3 \text{Home}_{at} + \beta_4 \gamma_{at} + \beta_5 \nu_{bt} + \theta_a + \lambda_t + \epsilon_{at} \quad (1)$$

where our dependent variable Y_{at} is a binary indicator of Team A, a team from a predominantly Turkish region, receiving a red card at game t .

Kurdish_{bt} indicates the perceived ethnic affiliation of Team B. We employ two operationalizations. First, we use a binary indicator that equals 1 if the estimated percentage of the Kurdish population in the team’s home province exceeds 40%, and 0 otherwise. Second, we use the percentage of the Kurdish population across provinces as a continuous measure of perceived ethnic identity. Consequently, β_1 captures whether Turkish teams, on average, receive more or less red cards toward perceived Kurdish opponents. We also control for the ethnic group of the lead referee with a similarly constructed binary indicator, TurkishRef_t , that takes the value of 1 if the referee was born in a Turkish-dominated province, and zero otherwise. Home_{at} controls for home games and takes the value 1 if the game is played in the home of Team A (and 0 otherwise). Additionally, γ_{at} and ν_{bt} refer to the cumulative points earned by Team A ($\text{CumulativePoints}_A$) and Team B ($\text{CumulativePoints}_B$) in the league up until game t .

θ_a , λ_t represent vectors of Team A and time fixed effects, respectively. We account for time fixed effects by controlling for the league season, the week of the league season, and the weekday of the game. Team A fixed effects also include province fixed effects, accounting for any remaining heterogeneity across teams, provinces, and time that might influence the relationship between playing against a Kurdish team and the probability of receiving a red card. Thus, we exploit within-Team A variation over time for Turkish teams, net of potential time-invariant team characteristics and time-specific factors at the province level. Finally,

ϵ_{at} is the error term, which we cluster by Team A. In the Appendix Section B.2, we also replicate these analyses using Province A fixed effects and clustering standard errors at the Province A level.

We then enrich our baseline specification to account for the ongoing ethnic conflict in the country and to test our hypotheses on the effects of conflict events on ethnic relations. To test our first hypothesis on aggression against Kurdish teams (H1), we estimate the parameters of the following equation:

$$Y_{at} = \beta_1 F_{a(t-k)} + \beta_2 Kurd_{bt} + \beta_3 F_{a(t-k)} * Kurd_{bt} + \beta_4 TurkRef_t + \beta_5 Home_{at} + \beta_6 \gamma_{at} + \beta_7 v_{bt} + \theta_a + \lambda_t + \epsilon_{at} \quad (2)$$

where we define $F_{a(t-k)}$ as a binary variable indicating whether there was a local security force casualty from Team A's province within k days from the game (1 if yes, 0 otherwise). For most analyses, our primary treatment variable indicates whether a loss occurred within two days prior to the game. Because our dataset records the date of death rather than the funeral date, we treat the death as the initial point of exposure, marking when the news of the loss first reaches the local community. Typically, funerals occur one day after death, consistent with Islamic burial practices requiring prompt interment. Thus, by defining the treatment window at $k = 2$, we capture both the news spreading through the province (day 0) and the funeral ceremony itself (day 1), which likely generates the broadest public awareness and emotional response. In later sections, we show our results remain robust across various alternative specifications and timing windows for this treatment.

The quasi-experimental nature of our setting hinges on two key aspects of how the league operates. First, game schedules are determined through a lottery system conducted by the TFF before the start of each season in August. This ensures randomness in the matching of the teams, and the timing and location of the games. Second, referee assignments fol-

low a standardized matching procedure based solely on the technical level and availability of licensed referees, further minimizing potential selection biases. Additionally, soldier and police casualties, their date of death and location of funeral ceremonies, are inherently exogenous to the scheduling of third-league soccer games. Indeed, league regulations explicitly restrict game postponements to situations involving severe weather or poor stadium conditions. Empirical evidence on the lack of such selective (re)scheduling comes from our own dataset: Table B2 in the Appendix confirms there is no evidence of games involving Kurdish teams, Turkish referees, or home games being rescheduled or canceled following local security-force fatalities. Moreover, given prevailing Turkish cultural norms, it's practically inconceivable that a martyr funeral would ever be scheduled around a third-league soccer game. Furthermore, Appendix Figure A1 demonstrates the absence of pre-trends in the coefficients prior to the death of Turkish security force members, further supporting the validity of our assumption that funerals constitute an exogenous treatment.

Finally, to test our hypothesis on the moderating role of the referee (H2) we introduce to the model in *Equation (2)* an additional control for the interaction between conflict events, the identity of the opponent, and referee's ethnic identity. Similarly, to test the moderating role of spectators (H3), we include two additional interactions: one between the conflict event, opponent identity, and whether Team A is playing at home; and another between the conflict event, opponent identity, and the vote share of nationalist parties in the game venue (measured at county level).

4 Results

We begin our analysis by examining whether aggression during games is associated with the perceived ethnic identity of opponents. Figure 2 presents descriptive evidence on the likelihood of a Turkish team receiving a red card when playing against Turkish versus Kur-

dish opponents. In both game types, the probability of receiving a red card is roughly 14%, indicating that red cards are relatively uncommon. Furthermore, differences in red-card incidence based on opponent identity are minimal and statistically insignificant. This suggests that ethnic identity alone does not systematically influence patterns of ethnic harassment.

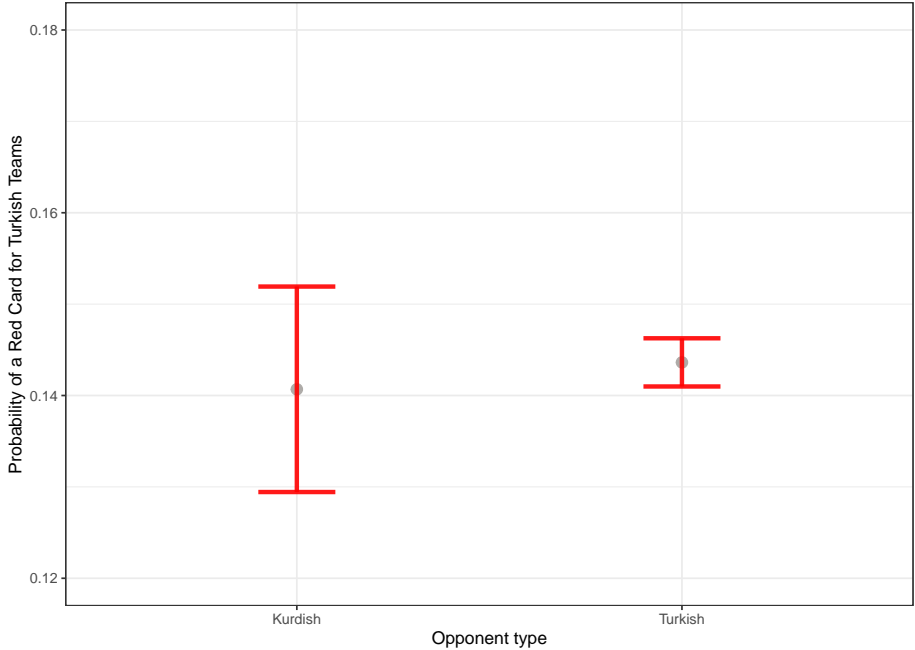


Figure 2: Probability of a red card for Turkish teams, by opponent type. Red bars show 95% confidence intervals.

To examine this more systematically, in Table 1, we report the results we obtain from our baseline model and its extensions with interaction terms across different specifications of time fixed effects and opponents ethnic identity. Similarly, results do not suggest any elevated harassment patterns. If anything, we find playing against a Kurdish team to be associated with a small and marginally significant decrease in Team A’s probability of receiving a red card. Similarly, estimated coefficients on the interaction terms in Columns (4)-(7) do not provide any evidence of conditional effects that depend on the ethnic identity of the referee or the spectators, either.

Dependent variable: Team A's Probability of Receiving a Red Card							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Prov B: Kurd Maj	-0.01 ⁺ (0.01)	-0.01 ⁺ (0.01)		-0.03 ⁺ (0.02)	-0.02 ⁺ (0.01)		
Prov B: Kurd %			-0.03 ^{**} (0.01)			-0.04 (0.03)	-0.03 ^{**} (0.01)
Turk Ref	-0.005 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.005 (0.01)
Team A Home	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.002 (0.003)
B Kurd Maj × Turk Ref				0.02 (0.02)			
B Kurd Maj × A Home					0.005 (0.01)		
B Kurd % × Turk Ref						0.02 (0.03)	
B Kurd % × A Home							0.02 (0.02)
Soccer Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Team A FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Season FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Week FE		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Weekday FE		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clustered SEs	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A
Mean of DV	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14
Observations	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595
R ²	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Adjusted R ²	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01

⁺p<0.1; ^{**}p<0.05; ^{***}p<0.01

Notes: Standard errors are reported in parentheses and are clustered by Team A.

Table 1: Effect of playing against a Kurdish team on probability of receiving a red card (regression estimates). Full regression results are reported in the Online Appendix, Table B3.

4.1 Ethnic Conflict, Local Funerals, and Red Cards

Next, we test our hypotheses to see whether a different picture emerges when ethnic identities become more salient with conflict events.

	Dependent variable: Team A's Likelihood of Receiving a Red Card					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Prov B: Kurd Maj	-0.01 ⁺ (0.01)		-0.01 ⁺ (0.01)		-0.02** (0.01)	
Prov B: Kurd %		-0.03** (0.01)		-0.03** (0.01)		-0.03*** (0.01)
Funeral in Team A Prov	0.0001 (0.01)	0.0001 (0.01)	0.002 (0.01)	0.002 (0.01)	-0.001 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
B Kurd Maj × Funeral					0.13*** (0.04)	
B Kurd % × Funeral						0.16** (0.07)
Soccer Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Team A FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Season FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Week FE			✓	✓	✓	✓
Weekday FE			✓	✓	✓	✓
Clustered SEs	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A
Mean of DV	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14
Observations	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595
R ²	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Adjusted R ²	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01

⁺p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Notes: All models include season, week, and day fixed effects. Standard errors are clustered at the Team A level.

Table 2: Effect of local "martyr" loss and funeral on the probability of receiving a red card (regression estimates). Full regression results are reported in the Online Appendix, Table B4.

We first begin by testing H1 by examining whether the likelihood that a Turkish team receives a red card against a Kurdish opponent is moderated by conflict events, proxied by the occurrence of a state funeral ceremony for a fallen soldier or police officer in Team A's province. Table 2 presents the results. Columns 1–4 corroborate earlier findings and indicate

a small decline in the likelihood of red cards for Turkish teams when they are playing against Kurdish opponents.

Columns 5–6 introduce interaction terms between the opponent identity and a binary indicator for the presence of a funeral in the province of Team A within the period of analysis. The main effects for funerals alone are consistently small and statistically insignificant, suggesting that they do not affect aggression and punishments in the games in general. However, the positive and statistically significant coefficient estimates on the interaction terms indicate that a martyr funeral in the Turkish team’s province right before the game substantially increases the likelihood of a red card for the team when playing against a Kurdish opponent.

This sizable increase in the likelihood of a red card cannot be easily explained by a sudden change in referees’ standards or greater sensitivity to aggression. Instead, it is more plausibly driven by changes in player behavior: the funeral may heighten emotions, reinforce in-group solidarity, and/or amplify out-group hostility among Turkish players, making them more likely to act aggressively on the field. Even with potential referee leniency which we will test next, this surge in aggressive behavior could cross the threshold into sanctionable conduct, resulting in more red cards.

Figure 3 visualizes the results from Table 2 using marginal effects plots, offering a more intuitive interpretation of the interaction terms and capturing both the magnitude and timing of conflict-related impacts. We define the treatment variable using several alternative time windows, represented explicitly by the following day labels: "Funeral Day," "Funeral within past 1 day," "Funeral within past 2 days," "Funeral within past 3 days," "Funeral within past 4 days," "Funeral within past 6 days," and "Funeral within past 9 days." Each definition varies slightly in its substantive meaning by extending or narrowing the exposure window, allowing us to examine how quickly news and emotional reactions associated with funerals spread and influence behaviors.

**Marginal Effect of Local Funerals on Team A's Probability of a Red Card
Alternative Operationalizations of Local Loss and Funeral Treatment**

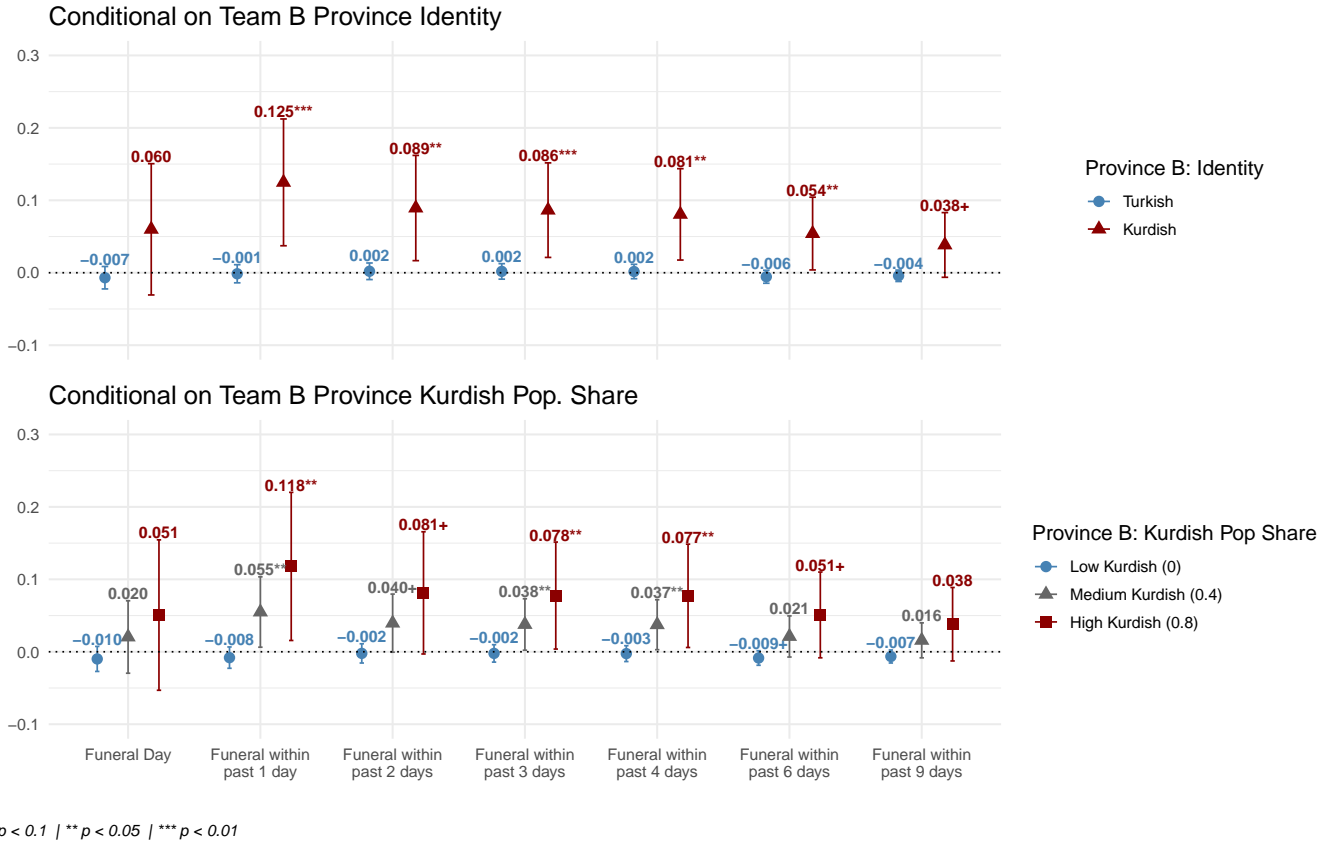


Figure 3: Marginal effect of local funerals on Team A's probability of receiving a red card by opponent types and different operationalizations of the funeral treatment. Bars show 95% confidence intervals. Regression tables including all covariates are shown in Tables B5 and B6 in the Appendix

The top panel of Figure 3 presents the marginal effects of alternative operationalizations of local funerals in Team A's province on the likelihood of Team A receiving a red card, conditional on whether Team B's province has a Kurdish or Turkish majority. When Turkish teams face Kurdish opponents, a statistically significant increase in red-card probability emerges clearly starting from the "Funeral within past 1 day" window and remains elevated through subsequent intervals. However, extending the treatment window further (to "Funeral within past 6 days") results in the loss of statistical significance, indicating that the effects are transient and diminish quickly over time. In contrast, games against Turkish-majority

teams show no significant change in red-card likelihood across all defined exposure windows, with estimates consistently near zero. The delayed emergence of significant effects, occurring only after the funeral day itself, likely reflects the practical timing of funerals and the time required for news and related emotional responses to fully diffuse within the local community.

The bottom panel refines this analysis further by using a continuous measure of ethnic identity: the Kurdish population share in Team B's province. The overall pattern remains consistent, with red-card probabilities rising significantly and persistently when Turkish teams face opponents from provinces with higher Kurdish population shares. The effect becomes statistically significant starting at the "Funeral within past 1 day" window and remains elevated up to "Funeral within past 6 days," after which significance diminishes. Games against teams from provinces with smaller Kurdish populations yield weaker, inconsistent, or insignificant results. Collectively, these findings robustly support our hypothesis that increased ethnic out-group salience, combined with local conflict events, significantly heightens aggressive behavior among Turkish teams—an effect robust across alternative exposure windows, though notably transient in duration.

4.2 Moderating Role of Referees and Game Venue

Next we explore whether the effects of conflict are moderated by contextual factors. Specifically, we explore whether the group identities of the referee and the spectators amplify or diminish the effects. We therefore continue our analyses by examining whether our findings are moderated by referee ethnicity and game location as stated by our second and third hypothesis.

Figure 4 highlights how referee ethnicity shapes disciplinary outcomes in the immediate aftermath of conflict events. In the lack of conflict events, the presence of a Turkish referee has essentially no significant effect on red card probability for a Turkish team regardless of the opponent's ethnic identity. However, following a TSF funeral in Turkish team province,

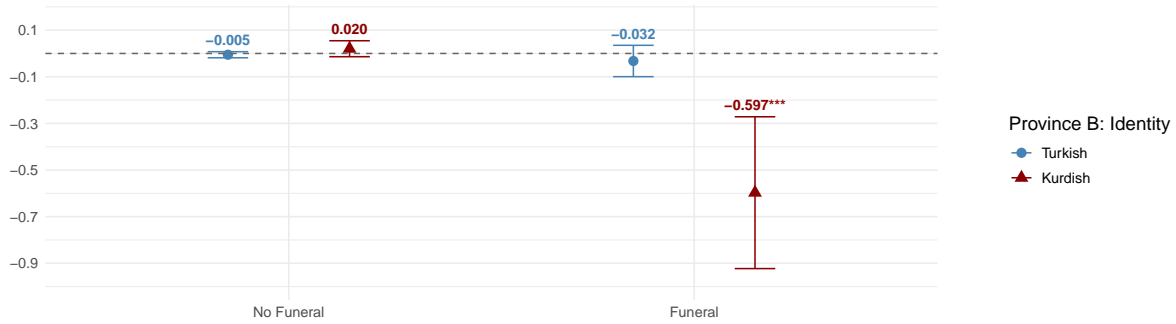
a dramatic reversal emerges: Turkish referees become substantially less likely to issue red cards to Turkish teams specifically when facing Kurdish opponents. For instance, the top panel reveals a sharp decrease of 60%-points in red card probability when playing against a Kurdish-majority team two days after a funeral. Similarly, the bottom panel confirms that this protective effect increases markedly with the ethnic salience of the opponent, reaching 0.7 for opponents from high Kurdish population share provinces. These findings suggest that conflict exposure triggers ethnically-biased officiating exacerbating discrimination and aggression in this competitive setting and support the more general argument that ethnic biases are intensified when ethnic identities become salient, politically charged and emotionally resonant.

Similarly, Figure 5 explores whether home-field advantage modifies the relationship between conflict events and red card outcomes. The results indicate no statistically significant impact of playing at home on the likelihood that Turkish teams receive a red card even in periods marked by heightened ethnic tension following local funerals. While point estimates for games against Kurdish opponents are positive, they are insignificant at conventional levels. Thus, we find that playing at home does not necessarily appear to have a meaningful role in moderating the effects of conflict events.¹²

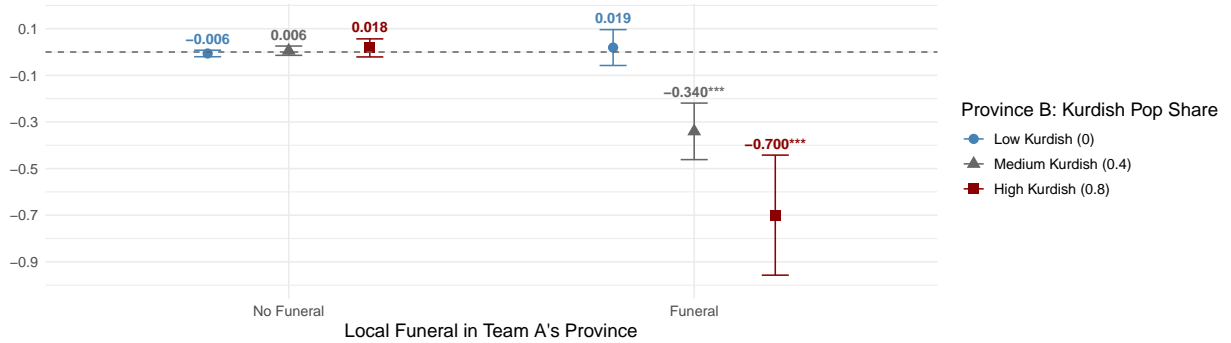
There might be various reasons behind this null finding. To begin with, our sample consists of lower-league games, and so teams have significantly lower number of supporters compared to those in higher leagues, therefore spectator effects are expected to be lower. In addition, lower-league games are usually played in smaller neighborhood stadiums, which have low attendance capacity. Furthermore, given the quality of games, lower league games do not attract much attention from the general soccer audience, either. Having all these in mind, home-team advantage might not have much of an effect on players and referees to

¹²In Table C10 and C11 of Appendix B.3, we replicate our main analysis by incorporating Province A fixed effects and clustering standard errors at the Province A level. The results presented in above remain robust under these alternative modeling choices.

Marginal Effect of Turkish Referee on Team A's Probability of Receiving a Red Card
 Conditional on (1) Local Funeral and (2) Team B Province Identity



Conditional on (1) Local Funeral and (2) Team B Province Kurdish Pop. Share



+ $p < 0.1$ | ** $p < 0.05$ | *** $p < 0.01$

Figure 4: Marginal Effect of Turkish Referees on Team A's probability of receiving a red card. Bars show 95% confidence intervals. Regression table including all covariates are shown in Appendix Table B7.

Marginal Effect of Playing Home Game on Team A's Probability of Receiving a Red Card

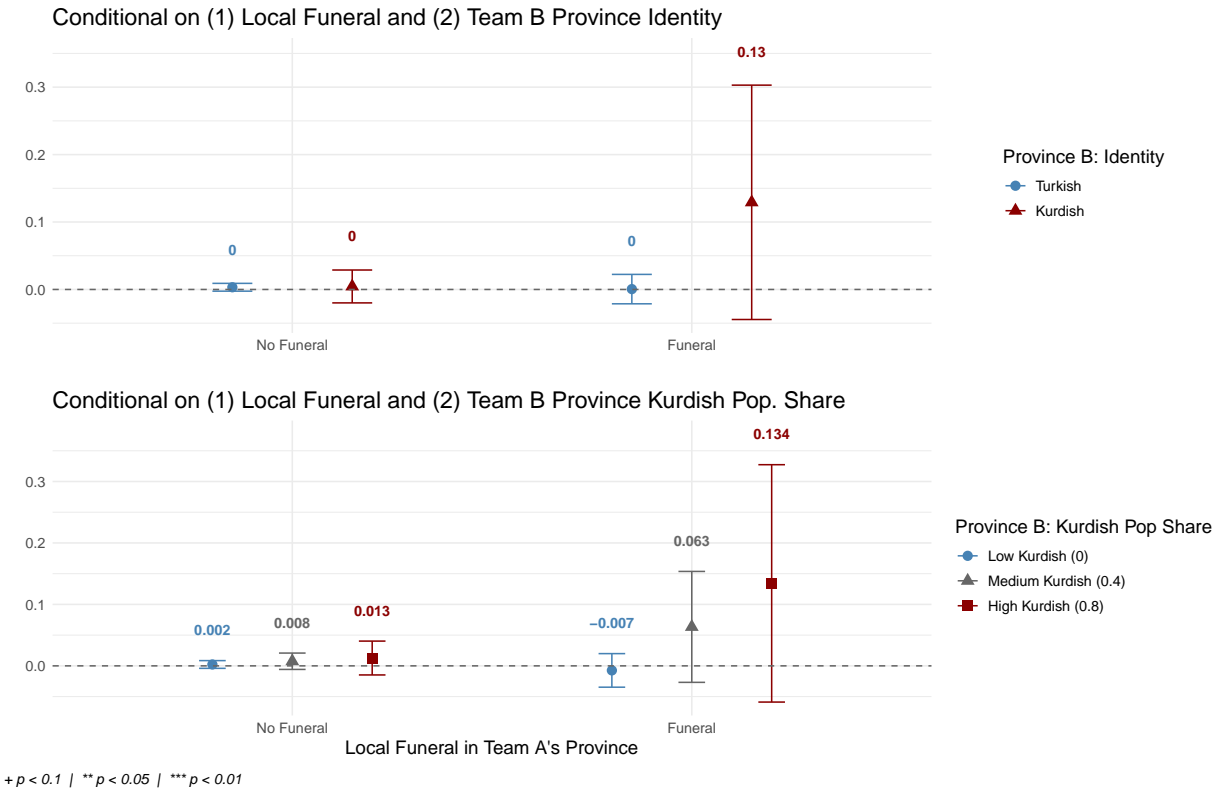


Figure 5: Marginal Effect of Home Advantage on Team A’s Probability of Receiving a Red Card. Bars show 95% confidence intervals. Regression table including all covariates are shown in Appendix Table B8.

significantly modify the effects we observe.

Having said that, one must also consider that the essence of a home advantage is not about the location of the game but the spectator support that comes with it. It therefore follows that whether this advantage reflects upon the aggression we observe on the pitch is likely to depend on the extent such behaviors are supported by the spectators. Accordingly, rather than simply assuming all home environments identical in terms of the advantage they offer, we shift to a more sophisticated depiction that accounts for the potential variation to further probe H3. Specifically, we investigate how nationalist party vote shares in the most recent general election in the county where the game is played, expected to reflect the ideological composition of the home team spectators, moderate the effect of local funerals

on ethnic harassment toward Kurdish teams. This is crucial not only for clarifying the mechanisms linking conflicts to inter-group attitudes but also for understanding how political coalitions promoting out-group hostility might form after critical events. For this purpose, we run a regression including a triple interaction between funeral occurrence, nationalist vote share in the game location at the county level, and facing a Kurdish team.¹³

In Figure 6, we present the predicted probability of Team A receiving a red card, conditional on a local funeral occurring in Province A, Province B's ethnic identity, and the Turkish nationalist vote share at game location. The top panel operationalizes Province B's identity using a binary measure (Turkish-majority vs. Kurdish-majority), while the bottom panel uses a continuous measure based on Kurdish population share. The x-axis represents the nationalist vote share at various percentiles (10th percentile, median, and 90th percentile) from the most recent election preceding each game.

Both panels reveal a similar baseline pattern: in games not preceded by a local funeral, the predicted probability of Team A receiving a red card remains just under 10%, with no meaningful differences between games against Turkish or Kurdish opponents across varying levels of nationalist support. However, this pattern shifts markedly following a local funeral. In contexts with relatively low nationalist support, we see no significant difference in aggression, measured by red-card probability, between Turkish and Kurdish opponents. Yet, as nationalist inclinations intensify, a pronounced disparity emerges. In highly nationalist counties (around the 90th percentile), the likelihood of Team A receiving a red card against Kurdish opponents rises sharply, approaching approximately 40%, while the probability against Turkish teams remains near baseline, no-funeral levels.

¹³We use county level vote shares to reflect the potential ideological composition of the spectators more accurately.

Team A's Predicted Probability of Receiving a Red Card

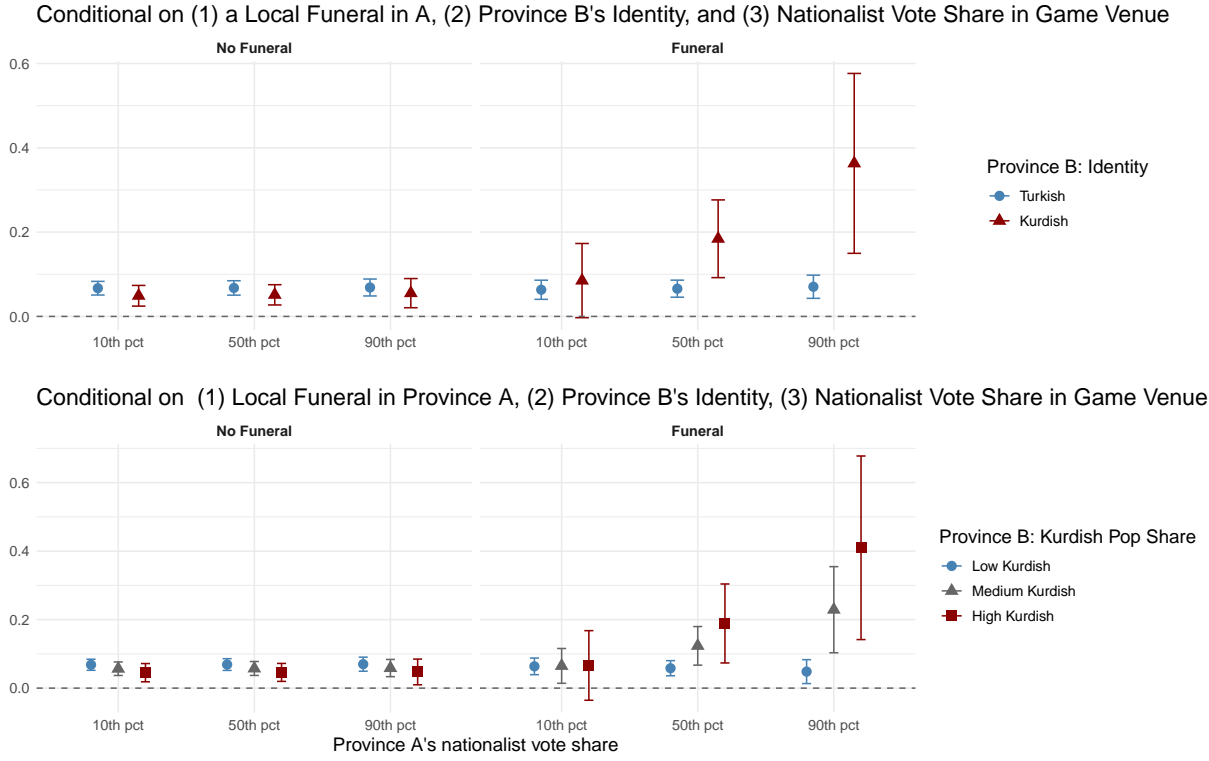


Figure 6: Team’s A predicted probability of receiving a red card conditional on a local funeral in Province A, opponent identity, and game venue’s nationalist vote share in the last elections. Bars show 95% confidence intervals. Regression table including all covariates are shown in Appendix Table B9.

5 Discussion: Ruling out Strategic Manipulation

The existing literature emphasizes how majority groups typically experience positive discrimination and favoritism especially in competitive contexts (Michelitch, 2015). Translating this logic into soccer, one plausible alternative explanation for our findings is that Turkish referees strategically issue red cards to favor Turkish teams independently of player behavior. From this perspective, martyr funerals might represent another context in which referees strategically amplify their majoritarian bias to increase Turkish teams’ likelihood of winning. Note that our finding that Turkish teams actually receive more red cards in the aftermath of local funerals does not support this explanation. Nevertheless, we conduct further empirical inves-

tigation. Specifically, we search for a general majority group favoritism in regular games as theoretically expected and test whether this advantage is strategically intensified by referees during episodes of heightened ethnic conflict.

Table A14 in the Appendix investigates whether majority-group advantages in scoring and game outcomes also characterize our setting, and whether these advantages are shaped by referee identity and home-field context. Across all specifications, Turkish teams benefit significantly from playing at home and being officiated by Turkish referees. In columns (1) and (4), the baseline specification shows that playing against a Kurdish team is associated with a 0.06 point increase in both score and winning probability suggesting a majority-group advantage in inter-ethnic games. Turkish referees are also marginally more likely to boost Turkish team performance: the coefficient on *Turkish Referee* is positive and weakly significant across models, which is also consistent with in-group favoritism.

While these results are consistent with Turkish teams benefiting from majority-group advantages especially when playing at home or officiated by Turkish referees, conflict events do not appear to amplify these patterns in ways that would suggest coordinated favoritism. Figures B7 and C8 in the Appendix present the marginal effect of local funerals on Team A's probability of winning and score, respectively, using different operationalizations of the funeral treatment in inter and intra-ethnic games. Across both figures, the marginal effects of funeral exposure conditional on opponent identity are statistically indistinguishable from zero. Similarly, Figures D9 and D10 show that Turkish referees do not moderate the relationship between local funerals and win probability or Team A's total score.

This lack of systematic change suggests that funerals do not function as moments in which in-group favoritism is strategically extended either by referees or players to secure game outcomes. Instead, these results reinforce the interpretation that conflict-driven behavioral changes, such as the increase in red cards issued to Turkish teams, are not instrumental, but rather reflect emotional reactions triggered by symbolic reminders of conflict. In other

words, while our findings align with a broader literature that links inter-group biases to enhanced economic, political, and social outcomes, the absence of performance-related gains in the aftermath of TSF casualties suggests that what we are observing is not strategic manipulation of the game, but genuine emotional spillover into aggressive behavior on the field.

6 Conclusion

In this paper, we investigate the ramifications of an ongoing ethnic conflict on everyday social interactions of citizens through naturally occurring data that allows us to observe instances of ethnic harassment, which, despite being a strong indicator of social cohesion, has so far proved hard-to-measure and study empirically. We overcome that challenge by focusing on sports games. We argue that sports fields, which are in fact modern arenas where social groups embodied in players and spectators express their identities and confront the out-group symbolically through competition with referees arbitrating the encounter, offer an ideal laboratory to study ethnic tensions and harassment. Exploiting this natural setup in the context of soccer, we examine whether conflict-related identities of actors, as signaled by their home locations, reflect on game measures, and specifically on punishments in terms of red cards shown to players.

Drawing on an original dataset of over 40,000 professional soccer games across three decades in Türkiye, we demonstrate that proximate reminders of the costs and horrors of the conflict, operationalized through funeral ceremonies of local Turkish Security Force casualties, intensify aggression and harassment by teams from predominantly Turkish-populated areas against Kurdish opponents in the immediate aftermath of these local conflict events. Additionally, we find that Turkish referees are likely to be lenient on this increased aggression by Turkish teams. Results suggest conflict-triggered inter-group biases as the most likely

explanation, and as such indicate the serious consequences of the long running ethnic conflict in the country on ethnic group relations and social cohesion.

We contribute to the literature in several important ways. To begin with, we extend the scope of analysis on social effects of armed conflicts to societal level identity-motivated aggression and harassment and show that the damage on social cohesion extends even to mundane and ostensibly apolitical everyday interactions. Our findings not only speak to the conflict literature, but also contribute to the literature on race and ethnicity politics, and social movements.

Second, we also challenge some longstanding practices and claims in these literatures. By conceptualizing conflict exposure as a dynamic, group-level experience shaped by highly salient communal rituals like funerals, rather than static individual traumas, we show that even interactions designed specifically to foster friendly conduct may fail to shield against inter-group hostility, and instead fuel it further. Importantly, we demonstrate the significant role institutional actors and contextual factors can play in facilitating such hostility.

Finally, and very importantly, our results clearly convey that it is not the preexisting identity cleavages *per se*, but conflict-triggered identity salience that is responsible for heightened inter-group biases in everyday practices of individuals. Therefore, these findings hint at the importance of maintaining peace, as the impact of funerals on the aggressiveness of players, and referee bias fades away over time, when the salience of identity diminishes. Hence, one can argue, there is always hope that a society can recover from the *homo homini lupus* condition once the violence ends.

We argue that our conclusions are highly generalizable. Most civil conflicts are ethnic conflicts. Given that our main theoretical mechanism operates through conflict-triggered inter-group biases, we argue that our findings speak to those other ethno-religious conflict contexts. We highlight the extent of the damage these conflicts are inflicting on the social fabric and bring to light how a significant part of that damage may remain covert and

unrecorded.

Another aspect that contributes to the generalizability of our findings is our examination of ethnic harassment specifically at the group level, focusing on contexts where the targeted group's ethnic identity is inferred primarily through geographic origin and subtle contextual cues rather than explicit markers such as racial attributes or distinct religious attire. We thus capture harassment driven by perceived ethnic differences in group-level interactions rather than at the level of explicit individual identification. Importantly, this setting closely mirrors real-world ethnic harassment, particularly the transient, rapid, and spontaneous behaviors arising from emotional reactions and anger following conflict events. In such scenarios, individuals rarely have absolute certainty about the ethnic identities of others but instead rely on indirect indicators and contextual signals. Furthermore, because the ethnic distinctions in our context are subtle and inferred rather than explicit and clearly visible, our analysis represents a conservative test. Thus, observing significant harassment effects under these subtle conditions suggests that such behaviors could be even more pronounced in settings where identities are more explicitly revealed.

The lab-in-the-field environment of soccer games further enhances the generalizability of our results. Sporting events create ideal settings for observing genuine group-driven behaviors while ensuring the exogeneity of conflict-related events. Crucially, these results are not driven solely by Türkiye-specific conditions; similar dynamics occur in various conflict contexts worldwide. For example, ethnic tensions between Serbian and Albanian communities have repeatedly spilled into soccer games in the Balkans, as notably exemplified during the Serbia-Albania game in 2014, when a drone carrying nationalist symbols ignited violence among players and fans.¹⁴ Similarly, sectarian and political divisions in Northern Ireland have frequently manifested as aggressive interactions surrounding soccer games, particularly

¹⁴<https://www.cnn.com/2014/10/14/sport/football/serbia-albania-game-abandoned>

in rivalries involving Belfast-based clubs such as Linfield and Cliftonville.¹⁵ Therefore, future research could leverage similar naturally exogenous settings to further investigate the societal impacts of conflicts. Indeed, as Orwell (2018) famously argued, “[a nationalist] will generally claim superiority [...] not only in military power and political virtue, but in art, literature, sport, structure of the language, the physical beauty of the inhabitants, and perhaps even in climate, scenery and cooking.” Thus, extending the study of conflict’s ramifications beyond conventional political domains into everyday interactions promises to deepen our understanding of ethnic conflict and its broader social consequences.

¹⁵<https://www.nytimes.com/athletic/5460062/2024/05/02/cliftonville-linfield-belfast-final/>

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Appendix

Ethnic Cues and Conflict-Triggered Harassment: Evidence from Soccer Fields

ONLINE APPENDIX

Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Ethnic Identity, Conflict, and Harassment	5
3	Research Design	12
3.1	Turkish Case: Ethnic Conflict, Military Response, and Funerals	12
3.2	Data	18
3.3	Empirical Strategy	21
4	Results	24
4.1	Ethnic Conflict, Local Funerals, and Red Cards	27
4.2	Moderating Role of Referees and Game Venue	30
5	Discussion: Ruling out Strategic Manipulation	35
6	Conclusion	37
A	Summary Tables & Descriptive Evidence	4
A	Summary Table	4
B	Covariate Balance Before and After the Local Funeral Treatment	6
B	Robustness Checks	8
A	Pre-Trends	8
B	Full Regression Tables Corresponding to the Analyses in the Main Text	9
C	Replication of Main Analyses with the Team A Province Fixed Effects	16
D	Replication of Main Analyses with the Number of Total Cards as the Dependent Variable	20

C	Additional Analyses	26
A	Effect of exposure to a Kurdish team on Team A’s probability of winning and number of goals scored	26
B	Interaction of funeral events with exposure to a Kurdish team on the probability of winning (Team A FE)	27
C	Interaction of funeral events with exposure to a Kurdish team on the number of goals scored (Team A FE)	29
D	Moderating Effect of Referees and Funerals on Team A’s Score and Win Probability	31

A Summary Tables & Descriptive Evidence

A Summary Table

Table A1: Descriptive statistics of matches, opponent characteristics, and referee identity immediately before and after a local soldier or police officer fatality.

Statistic	N	Mean	St. Dev.	Min	Max
Red card	71,595	0.14	0.35	0	1
Total cards	71,595	2.49	1.66	0	15
Province B identity (Kurdish = 1)	71,595	0.05	0.22	0	1
Province B Kurdish pop share	71,595	0.08	0.15	0.00	0.89
Local funeral day	71,595	0.03	0.18	0	1
Local funeral within past 1 day	71,595	0.05	0.22	0	1
Local funeral within past 2 days	71,595	0.06	0.24	0	1
Local funeral within past 3 days	71,595	0.08	0.27	0	1
Local funeral within past 4 days	71,595	0.09	0.29	0	1
Local funeral within past 6 days	71,595	0.11	0.32	0	1
Local funeral within past 9 days	71,595	0.15	0.36	0	1
Nationalist vote share in game venue	71,595	12.89	8.52	0.00	53.60
Home game	71,595	0.50	0.50	0	1
Turkish referee	71,595	0.95	0.23	0	1
Lagged total score, Team A	71,595	30.40	19.22	0	113
Lagged total score, Team B	71,595	30.33	19.19	0	116
Score, Team A	71,594	1.28	1.28	0	16
Win, Team A	71,595	0.37	0.48	0	1

Table A1 presents summary statistics for key variables across our sample of 71,595 matches, specifically focusing on games where Team A is from a predominantly Turkish province. The table provides valuable insights into games the Turkish Soccer League from 1990 to 2019. The first two rows summarize disciplinary outcomes: on average, Team A received at least one red card in about 14.3 percent of matches, while the total card count—defined as yellow cards plus twice the number of red cards—averaged approximately 2.49 per game.

The next two rows show that Turkish teams face Kurdish opponents in approximately

5 percent of games. Moreover, the opponents of Turkish teams, on average, come from provinces with an 8 percent Kurdish population share.

The next rows list the seven “funeral-day” indicators for Province A: on the exact funeral day (mean = 0.03), one day after (mean = 0.05), two days (mean = 0.06), three days (mean = 0.08), four days (mean = 0.09), six days (mean = 0.11, and nine days (mean = 0.15). These frequencies indicate that games occurring exactly on a funeral day are rare (2.6 %), but roughly 15 % of matches occur nine days of a local security-force funeral.

“Home game (Team A)” is exactly balanced (mean = 0.5), and “Turkish referee” appears in the majority of games (mean = 0.95). Overall, Table A1 confirms the large sample size, the rarity of local funeral treatment, and wide variation in both political-attitude variables and disciplinary outcomes.

B Covariate Balance Before and After the Local Funeral Treatment

Our identification strategy hinges on the assumption that funerals do not affect key game characteristics such as the identity of opponents, referee assignments, or match venues. Specifically, we assume games are neither rescheduled nor adjusted in anticipation of local funerals. This assumption is particularly credible in our context because funerals are unexpected, and key game elements (team pairings and venues) are randomly determined by lottery before each season starts in August. Thus, games occurring immediately before and after funerals should be comparable in terms of their unobserved potential outcomes, enabling us to treat funeral occurrences as plausibly exogenous shocks

We show this more systematically in Table B2, where we examine covariate balance around six different “funeral-day” windows in Province A. For each time window (the exact day of the funeral, one day after, two days after, etc.), columns report the mean of each key covariate immediately before (i.e., during the corresponding window immediately preceding the funeral event) and immediately after (once the indicator switches to 1), as well as the difference between these means and the associated two-sample t-test p-value for statistical significance.

In every window, none of the mean differences exceeds 0.01, and all p-values exceed 0.10. For example, on the exact funeral day, “Home game” is 0.5 before vs. 0.5 after (difference = 0, $p = 0.96$), “Nationalist vote share” is 12.3 % vs. 12.5 % (difference = 0.24, $p = 0.42$), and “Province B Kurdish share” is 0.06 vs. 0.06 (difference = 0, $p = 0.996$).

This pattern of insignificance across all windows confirms that scheduling, opponent identity, and referee assignment remain comparable before and after each funeral indicator: games and referees do not systematically shift around casualties, supporting the exogeneity of the “funeral day” treatment.

Table B2: Descriptive statistics of matches, opponent characteristics, and referee identity immediately before and after a local soldier or police officer fatality.

FuneralDay	Variable	Before	After	Difference	P-value
Death day ± 1	Home game (Team A)	0.503	0.504	0.001	0.956
	Nationalist vote share in game venue	12.298	12.541	0.243	0.422
	Prov B identity (Kurdish = 1)	0.026	0.027	0.001	0.854
	Province B Kurdish pop. share	0.064	0.064	-0.000	0.996
	Turkish referee	0.964	0.971	0.006	0.312
Funeral day ± 1	Home game (Team A)	0.498	0.503	0.005	0.682
	Nationalist vote share in game venue	12.772	12.804	0.031	0.894
	Prov B identity (Kurdish = 1)	0.030	0.029	-0.002	0.665
	Province B Kurdish pop. share	0.066	0.066	0.000	0.937
	Turkish referee	0.965	0.967	0.002	0.652
Funeral day ± 2	Home game (Team A)	0.498	0.503	0.005	0.676
	Nationalist vote share in game venue	13.035	12.985	-0.050	0.805
	Prov B identity (Kurdish = 1)	0.029	0.028	-0.001	0.888
	Province B Kurdish pop. share	0.065	0.066	0.001	0.684
	Turkish referee	0.962	0.968	0.006	0.179
Funeral day ± 3	Home game (Team A)	0.497	0.501	0.004	0.678
	Nationalist vote share in game venue	12.940	13.066	0.125	0.483
	Prov B identity (Kurdish = 1)	0.027	0.027	0.000	0.985
	Province B Kurdish pop. share	0.064	0.066	0.001	0.482
	Turkish referee	0.962	0.967	0.005	0.224
Funeral day ± 4	Home game (Team A)	0.498	0.500	0.003	0.757
	Nationalist vote share in game venue	12.902	12.914	0.012	0.941
	Prov B identity (Kurdish = 1)	0.028	0.027	-0.001	0.807
	Province B Kurdish pop. share	0.065	0.066	0.000	0.825
	Turkish referee	0.962	0.967	0.004	0.205
Funeral day ± 6	Home game (Team A)	0.498	0.500	0.002	0.812
	Nationalist vote share in game venue	12.572	12.672	0.100	0.480
	Prov B identity (Kurdish = 1)	0.027	0.028	0.001	0.727
	Province B Kurdish pop. share	0.065	0.065	0.001	0.701
	Turkish referee	0.964	0.967	0.002	0.461
Funeral day ± 9	Home game (Team A)	0.496	0.498	0.002	0.728
	Nationalist vote share in game venue	12.523	12.680	0.157	0.203
	Prov B identity (Kurdish = 1)	0.027	0.028	0.001	0.636
	Province B Kurdish pop. share	0.065	0.065	0.001	0.619
	Turkish referee	0.961	0.965	0.004	0.114

B Robustness Checks

A Pre-Trends

We also verify that funerals did not influence match outcomes prior to their occurrence by plotting coefficients for local funerals, as well as local funerals and playing against a Kurdish team, on the probability of receiving a red card from seven days before to six days after each funeral event. Figure A1 shows that the coefficients for games played before the day of the funeral event are consistently close to zero and statistically insignificant. After the funeral event, however, there is a clear and sustained increase in the probability of receiving a red card when Team A faces a Kurdish opponent. These findings further confirm the robustness of our main results and strengthen our confidence in treating funerals as exogenous shocks.

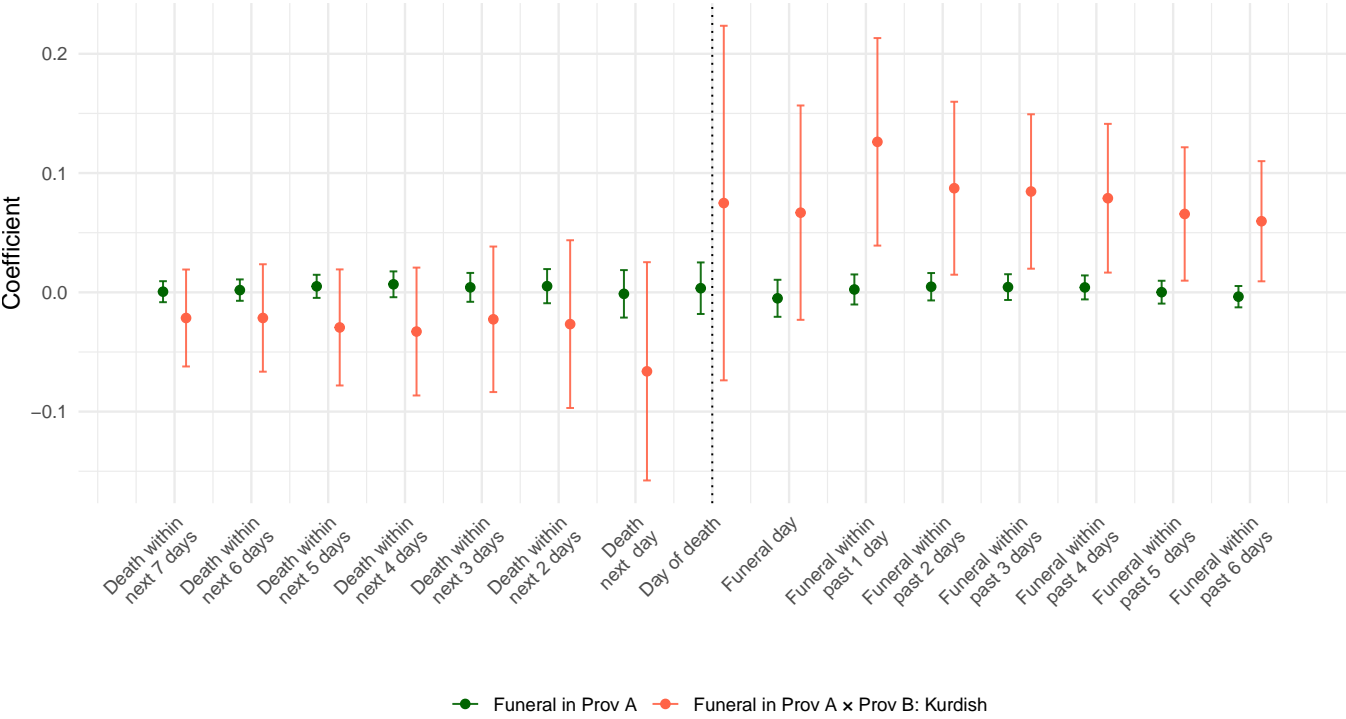


Figure A1: Marginal effect of playing home games on the probability of a red card for Team A (Team A Province FE).

B Full Regression Tables Corresponding to the Analyses in the Main Text

Table B3: Full regression results corresponding to the analysis presented in Table 1.

	Dependent variable: Team A's Probability of Receiving a Red Card						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Prov B: Kurd Maj	-0.01 ⁺ (0.01)	-0.01 ⁺ (0.01)		-0.03 ⁺ (0.02)	-0.02 ⁺ (0.01)		
Prov B: Kurd %			-0.03 ^{**} (0.01)			-0.04 (0.03)	-0.03 ^{**} (0.01)
Turkish Referee	-0.005 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.005 (0.01)
Home A	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.002 (0.003)
Points A	-0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)	-0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)	-0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)	-0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)	-0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)	-0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)	-0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)
Points B	0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)	0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)	0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)	0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)	0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)	0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)	0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)
Prov B: Kurd Maj:Turkish Referee				0.02 (0.02)			
Prov B: Kurd Maj:Home A					0.005 (0.01)		
Prov B: Kurd %:Turkish Referee						0.02 (0.03)	
Prov B: Kurd %:Home A							0.02 (0.02)
Team A FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Season FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Week FE		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Weekday FE		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clustered SEs	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A
Mean of DV	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14
Observations	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595
R ²	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Adjusted R ²	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01

⁺p<0.1; ^{**}p<0.05; ^{***}p<0.01

Notes: Standard errors are clustered by Team A Province.

Table B4: Full regression results corresponding to the analysis presented in Table 2.

	Dependent variable: Team A's Likelihood of Receiving a Red Card					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Prov B: Kurd Maj	-0.01 ⁺ (0.01)		-0.01 ⁺ (0.01)		-0.02 ^{**} (0.01)	
Prov B: Kurd %		-0.02 ^{**} (0.01)		-0.02 ^{**} (0.01)		-0.03 ^{**} (0.01)
Funeral	0.0002 (0.01)	0.0002 (0.01)	0.003 (0.01)	0.003 (0.01)	-0.001 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
Turk Referee	-0.005 (0.01)	-0.005 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.005 (0.01)	-0.005 (0.01)
Home A	0.01 ⁺ (0.003)	0.01 ⁺ (0.003)	0.005 ⁺ (0.003)	0.005 ⁺ (0.003)	0.01 ⁺ (0.003)	0.01 ⁺ (0.003)
Points Team A	-0.002 ^{***} (0.0001)	-0.002 ^{***} (0.0001)	-0.002 ^{***} (0.0002)	-0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)	-0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)	-0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)
Points Team B	0.001 ^{***} (0.0001)	0.001 ^{***} (0.0001)	0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)	0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)	0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)	0.001 ^{***} (0.0002)
Prov B: Kurd Maj X Funeral					0.13 ^{***} (0.04)	
Prov B: Kurd %:Funeral						0.16 ^{**} (0.07)
Team A FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Season FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Week FE			✓	✓	✓	✓
Weekday FE			✓	✓	✓	✓
Clustered SEs	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A
Mean of DV	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14
Observations	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595
R ²	0.01	0.01	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Adjusted R ²	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Residual Std. Error	0.35 (df = 71106)	0.35 (df = 71106)	0.35 (df = 71066)	0.35 (df = 71066)	0.35 (df = 71065)	0.35 (df = 71065)

⁺p<0.1; ^{**}p<0.05; ^{***}p<0.01

Notes: Standard errors are clustered by Team A Province.

Table B5: Full regression tables corresponding to the marginal effects presented in Figure 3 (top panel).

	Red Card Indicator (Team A)						
	Funeral Day	Past 1 day	Past 2 days	Past 3 days	Past 4 days	Past 6 days	Past 9 days
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Prov B: Kurd	-0.01** (0.01)	-0.02** (0.01)	-0.02** (0.01)	-0.02** (0.01)	-0.02** (0.01)	-0.02** (0.01)	-0.02** (0.01)
Funeral Day	-0.01 (0.01)						
Funeral past 1 day		-0.001 (0.01)					
Funeral past 2 days			0.002 (0.01)				
Funeral past 3 days				0.002 (0.01)			
Funeral past 4 days					0.002 (0.01)		
Funeral past 6 days						-0.01 (0.005)	
Funeral past 9 days							-0.004 (0.004)
Turkish Referee1	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.005 (0.01)	-0.005 (0.01)	-0.005 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)
Home Game	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)
Cumulative Points A	-0.001*** (0.0002)	-0.001*** (0.0002)	-0.001*** (0.0002)	-0.001*** (0.0002)	-0.001*** (0.0002)	-0.001*** (0.0002)	-0.001*** (0.0002)
Cumulative Points B	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)
Prov B: Kurd:Funeral Day	0.07 (0.05)						
Prov B: Kurd:Funeral past 1 day		0.13*** (0.04)					
Prov B: Kurd:Funeral past 2 days			0.09** (0.04)				
Prov B: Kurd:Funeral past 3 days				0.08** (0.03)			
Prov B: Kurd:Funeral past 4 days					0.08** (0.03)		
Prov B: Kurd:Funeral past 6 days						0.06** (0.03)	
Prov B: Kurd:Funeral past 9 days							0.04* (0.02)
Observations	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Notes: Standard errors are clustered by Team A Province. All models include Team A, season, week, and weekday fixed effects.

Table B6: Full regression tables corresponding to the marginal effects presented in Figure 3 (bottom panel).

	Team A's probability of receiving a red card						
	Funeral Day (1)	Past 1 day (2)	Past 2 days (3)	Past 3 days (4)	Past 4 days (5)	Past 6 days (6)	Past 9 days (7)
Prov B: Kurd %	-0.03** (0.01)	-0.03*** (0.01)	-0.03*** (0.01)	-0.03*** (0.01)	-0.03*** (0.01)	-0.03*** (0.01)	-0.03*** (0.01)
Funeral Day	-0.01 (0.01)						
Funeral past 1 day		-0.01 (0.01)					
Funeral past 2 days			-0.002 (0.01)				
Funeral past 3 days				-0.002 (0.01)			
Funeral past 4 days					-0.003 (0.01)		
Funeral past 6 days						-0.01* (0.01)	
Funeral past 9 days							-0.01 (0.005)
Turkish Referee1	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.005 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)
Home Game	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)
Cumulative Points A	-0.001*** (0.0002)	-0.001*** (0.0002)	-0.001*** (0.0002)	-0.001*** (0.0002)	-0.001*** (0.0002)	-0.001*** (0.0002)	-0.001*** (0.0002)
Cumulative Points B	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)	0.001*** (0.0002)
Prov B: Kurd %:Funeral Day	0.08 (0.07)						
Prov B: Kurd %:Funeral past 1 day		0.16** (0.07)					
Prov B: Kurd %:Funeral past 2 days			0.10* (0.06)				
Prov B: Kurd %:Funeral past 3 days				0.10** (0.05)			
Prov B: Kurd %:Funeral past 4 days					0.10** (0.05)		
Prov B: Kurd %:Funeral past 6 days						0.07* (0.04)	
Prov B: Kurd %:Funeral past 9 days							0.06 (0.03)
Observations	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Notes: Standard errors are clustered by Team A Province. All models include Team A, season, week, and weekday fixed effects.

Table B7: Full regression tables corresponding to the marginal effects presented in Figure 4.

Dependent Variable: Model:	Team A's Probability of Receiving a Red Card	
	(1)	(2)
Prov B: Kurdish Maj	-0.0398** (0.0173)	
Turk referee	-0.0054 (0.0067)	-0.0062 (0.0071)
Prov B: Kurdish Maj \times Funeral	0.6863*** (0.1719)	
Prov B: Kurdish Maj \times Turk referee	0.0258 (0.0178)	
Funeral \times Turk referee	-0.0268 (0.0353)	0.0254 (0.0405)
Prov B: Kurdish Maj \times Funeral \times Turk referee	-0.5907*** (0.1745)	
Prov B: Kurdish % \times Turk referee		0.0299 (0.0272)
Prov B: Kurdish % \times Funeral \times Turk referee		-0.9284*** (0.1886)
<i>Fixed-effects</i>		
Team A	Yes	Yes
Season	Yes	Yes
Week	Yes	Yes
Weekday	Yes	Yes
<i>Fit statistics</i>		
Observations	71,595	71,595
R ²	0.01429	0.01426

Clustered (team_a) standard-errors in parentheses

*Signif. Codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1*

Notes: Standard errors are clustered by Team A.

Table B8: Full regression tables corresponding to the marginal effects presented in Figure 5.

Dependent Variable: Model:	Team A's Probability of Receiving a Red Card	
	(1)	(2)
Prov B: Kurdish Maj	-0.0174* (0.0089)	
Funeral	-3.18×10^{-5} (0.0083)	-0.0033 (0.0097)
Home A	0.0033 (0.0030)	0.0022 (0.0032)
Turk referee	-0.0046 (0.0063)	-0.0047 (0.0063)
Points A	-0.0013*** (0.0002)	-0.0013*** (0.0002)
Points B	0.0011*** (0.0002)	0.0011*** (0.0002)
Prov B: Kurdish Maj \times Funeral	0.0642 (0.0510)	
Prov B: Kurdish Maj \times Home A	0.0012 (0.0128)	
Funeral \times Home A	-0.0027 (0.0115)	-0.0096 (0.0143)
Prov B: Kurdish Maj \times Funeral \times home_a	0.1275 (0.0911)	
Prov B: Kurdish %		-0.0360*** (0.0136)
Prov B: Kurdish % \times Funeral		0.0779 (0.0804)
Prov B: Kurdish % \times Home A		0.0131 (0.0190)
Prov B: Kurdish % \times Funeral \times Home A		0.1639 (0.1352)
<i>Fixed-effects</i>		
Team A	Yes	Yes
Season	Yes	Yes
Week	Yes	Yes
Weekday	Yes	Yes
<i>Fit statistics</i>		
Observations	71,595	71,595
R ²	0.01412	0.01408

Clustered (team_a) standard-errors in parentheses

*Signif. Codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1*

Notes: Standard errors are clustered by Team A. 14

Table B9: Full regression tables corresponding to the marginal effects presented in Figure 6.

Dependent Variable: Model:	Team A's Probability of Receiving a Red Card	
	(1)	(2)
<i>Variables</i>		
Prov B: Kurdish Maj	-0.0187* (0.0104)	
Funeral	-0.0046 (0.0100)	-0.0018 (0.0116)
natvote	7.96×10^{-5} (0.0002)	7.9×10^{-5} (0.0002)
Home A	0.0031 (0.0028)	0.0032 (0.0028)
Turkish referee	-0.0045 (0.0063)	-0.0044 (0.0063)
Prov B: Kurdish Maj \times Funeral	-0.0041 (0.0584)	
Prov B: Kurdish Maj \times natvote	0.0002 (0.0008)	
Funeral \times natvote	0.0003 (0.0007)	-0.0008 (0.0009)
Prov B: Kurdish Maj \times Funeral \times natvote	0.0125** (0.0060)	
Prov B: Kurdish %		-0.0290* (0.0149)
Prov B: Kurdish % \times Funeral		-0.0415 (0.0874)
Prov B: Kurdish % \times natvote		2.55×10^{-5} (0.0011)
Prov B: Kurdish % \times Funeral \times natvote		0.0210** (0.0098)
<i>Fixed-effects</i>		
Team A	Yes	Yes
Season	Yes	Yes
Week	Yes	Yes
Weekday	Yes	Yes
<i>Fit statistics</i>		
Observations	71,595	71,595
R ²	0.01422	0.01418

Clustered (team_a) standard-errors in parentheses
*Signif. Codes: ***: 0.01, **: 0.05, *: 0.1*

Notes: Standard errors are clustered by Team A.

C Replication of Main Analyses with the Team A Province Fixed Effects

In this section, we replicate our main analysis by incorporating Province A fixed effects and clustering standard errors at the Province A level. The results presented in the main text remain robust under these alternative modeling choices.

Table C10: Effect of exposure to a Kurdish team on the probability of receiving a red card (Team A Province FE).

	Dependent variable: Team A's Probability of Receiving a Red Card						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Prov B: Kurd Maj	-0.01 ⁺ (0.01)	-0.01 ⁺ (0.01)		-0.03 (0.02)	-0.02 ⁺ (0.01)		
Prov B: Kurd %			-0.03 ^{**} (0.01)			-0.04 (0.03)	-0.03 ^{**} (0.01)
Turk Ref	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.004 (0.01)
Team A Home	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	0.002 (0.003)
B Kurd Maj × Turk Ref				0.02 (0.02)			
B Kurd Maj × A Home					0.005 (0.01)		
B Kurd % × Turk Ref						0.01 (0.03)	
B Kurd % × A Home							0.02 (0.02)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Prov A FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Season FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Week FE		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Weekday FE		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clustered SEs	Prov A	Prov A	Prov A	Prov A	Prov A	Prov A	Prov A
Mean of DV	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14
Observations	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595
R ²	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Adjusted R ²	0.005	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01

⁺p<0.1; ^{**}p<0.05; ^{***}p<0.01

Notes: Standard errors are clustered by Team A Province.

Table C11: Interaction of funeral events with exposure to a Kurdish team on the probability of receiving a red card (Team A Province FE).

	Dependent variable: Team A's Likelihood of Receiving a Red Card					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Prov B: Kurd Maj	-0.01 ⁺ (0.01)		-0.01 ⁺ (0.01)		-0.02** (0.01)	
Prov B: Kurd %		-0.02** (0.01)		-0.02** (0.01)		-0.03** (0.01)
Funeral in Team A Prov	0.001 (0.01)	0.001 (0.01)	0.003 (0.01)	0.003 (0.01)	-0.001 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
B Kurd Maj × Funeral					0.12*** (0.05)	
B Kurd % × Funeral						0.15** (0.06)
Soccer Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Prov A FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Season FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Week FE			✓	✓	✓	✓
Weekday FE			✓	✓	✓	✓
Clustered SEs	Prov A	Prov A	Prov A	Prov A	Prov A	Prov A
Mean of DV	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14
Observations	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595
R ²	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01
Adjusted R ²	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01

⁺p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Notes: Standard errors are clustered by Team A Province.

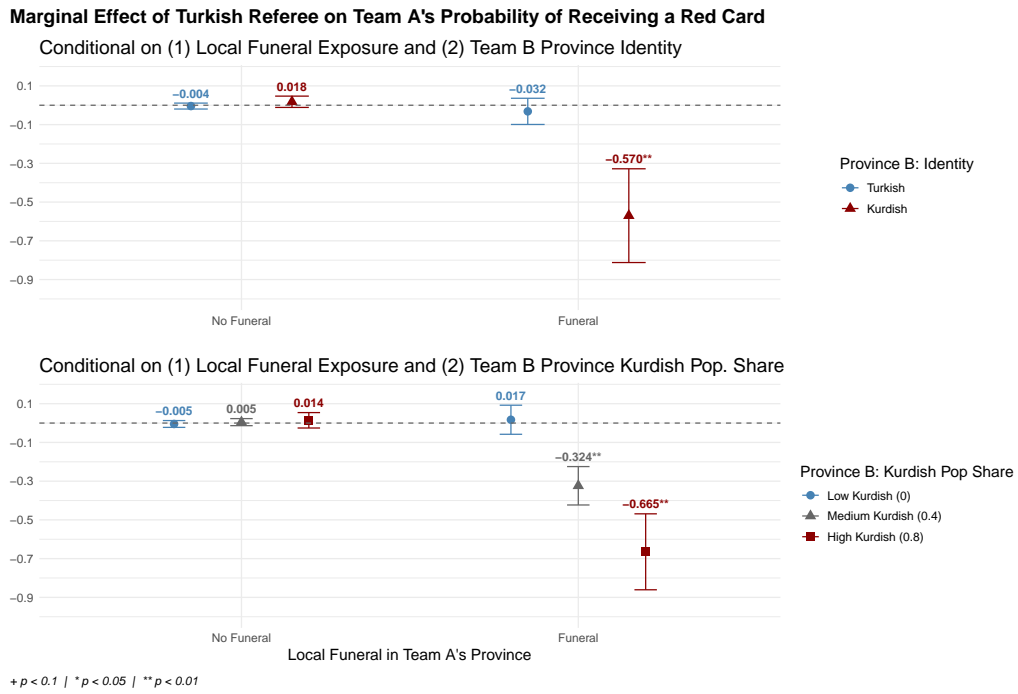


Figure C2: Marginal effect of having a Turkish referee on the probability of a red card for Team A (Team A Province FE).

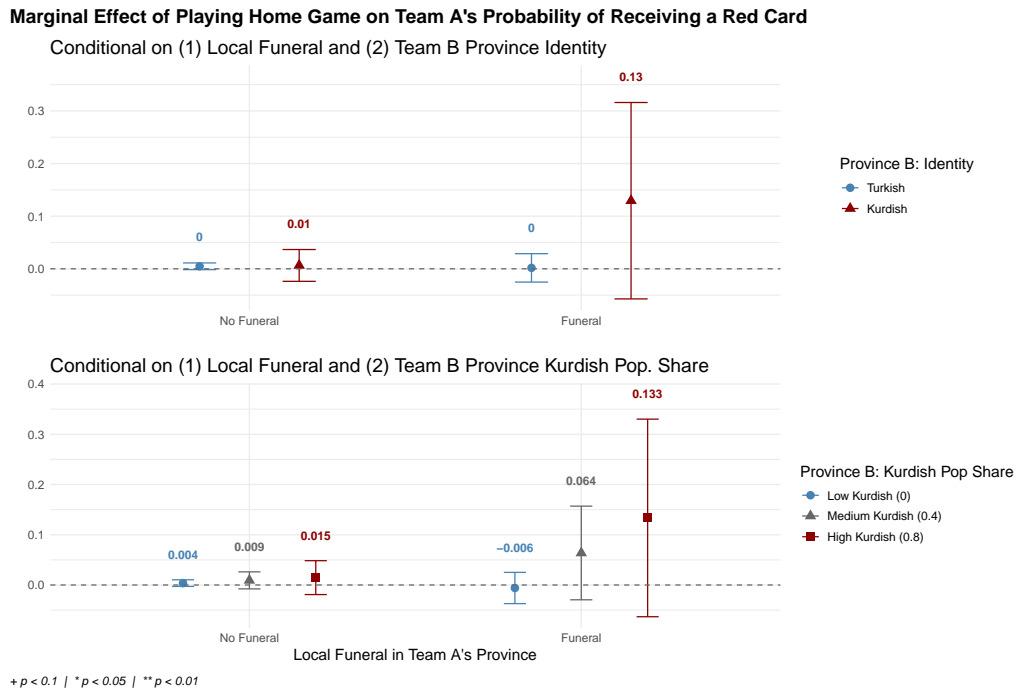


Figure C3: Marginal effect of playing home games on the probability of a red card for Team A (Team A Province FE).

D Replication of Main Analyses with the Number of Total Cards as the Dependent Variable

In this section, we replicate our main analysis using an alternative dependent variable: the total number of cards received by Team A. Following standard soccer regulations, we calculate the total number of cards by counting each yellow card as one and each red card as two, thus defining our total card variable as: $Total\ Cards = Yellow\ Cards + 2 * Red\ Cards$

Table D12 reports these results, focusing on games where Team A originates from predominantly Turkish provinces. Consistent with our primary findings, playing against a Kurdish opponent significantly decreases the total number of cards awarded to Team A. However, in this specification, the estimated effect is larger in magnitude, more negative, and highly statistically significant.

Table D13 presents results examining the impact of funerals on total card incidence as a function of opponent identity. Unlike our main findings with direct red cards, the interaction between funerals and Kurdish opponents here is not statistically significant. The reason for this becomes clearer upon examining Figure D5. Turkish referees significantly reduce the number of total cards awarded to Turkish teams playing against Kurdish opponents in the aftermath of local funerals, offsetting potential increases in card counts driven by aggressive behavior.

We suggest this discrepancy arises due to the inclusion of yellow cards—which sanction more minor infractions—in our total-card measure. This provides referees more discretion to exhibit leniency or forgiveness toward Turkish teams without overtly violating professional standards or risking career repercussions. In cases of minor misconduct, referees can subtly express in-group favoritism by refraining from issuing yellow cards. However, when behavior clearly crosses into red-card territory—such as physical violence or explicit aggression—referees have limited flexibility, making it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to

Table D12: Effect of exposure to a Kurdish team on the number of total cards (Team A FE).

	Dependent variable: Team A's Number of Total Cards						
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)
Prov B: Kurd Maj	-0.20*** (0.03)	-0.20*** (0.03)		-0.19** (0.08)	-0.25*** (0.04)		
Prov B: Kurd %			-0.32*** (0.05)			-0.33*** (0.13)	-0.44*** (0.06)
Turk Ref	-0.06** (0.03)	-0.07** (0.03)	-0.07** (0.03)	-0.06** (0.03)	-0.07*** (0.03)	-0.07** (0.03)	-0.07*** (0.03)
Team A Home	0.29*** (0.01)	0.29*** (0.01)	0.29*** (0.01)	0.29*** (0.01)	0.29*** (0.01)	0.29*** (0.01)	0.28*** (0.02)
B Kurd Maj × Turk Ref				-0.01 (0.08)			
B Kurd Maj × A Home					0.10+ (0.06)		
B Kurd % × Turk Ref						0.01 (0.12)	
B Kurd % × A Home							0.23*** (0.09)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Team A FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Season FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Week FE		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Weekday FE		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clustered SEs	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A
Mean of DV	2.33	2.33	2.33	2.33	2.33	2.33	2.33
Observations	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595
R ²	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09
Adjusted R ²	0.08	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09

+p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Notes: Standard errors are clustered by Team A.

ignore such offenses without professional consequence.

Table D13: Interaction of funeral events with exposure to a Kurdish team on the number of total cards (Team A FE).

	Dependent variable: Team A's Number of Total Cards					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Prov B: Kurd Maj	-0.20*** (0.03)		-0.20*** (0.03)		-0.21*** (0.03)	
Prov B: Kurd %		-0.32*** (0.05)		-0.32*** (0.05)		-0.33*** (0.05)
Funeral in Team A Prov	0.04 (0.03)	0.04 (0.03)	0.06** (0.03)	0.06** (0.03)	0.05+ (0.03)	0.03 (0.03)
B Kurd Maj \times Funeral					0.33+ (0.17)	
B Kurd % \times Funeral						0.41 (0.28)
Soccer Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Team A FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Season FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Week FE			✓	✓	✓	✓
Weekday FE			✓	✓	✓	✓
Clustered SEs	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A
Mean of DV	2.33	2.33	2.33	2.33	2.33	2.33
Observations	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595
R ²	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09
Adjusted R ²	0.08	0.08	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09

+p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Notes: Standard errors are clustered by Team A.

Marginal Effect of Local Funeral on Team A's Number of Total Cards

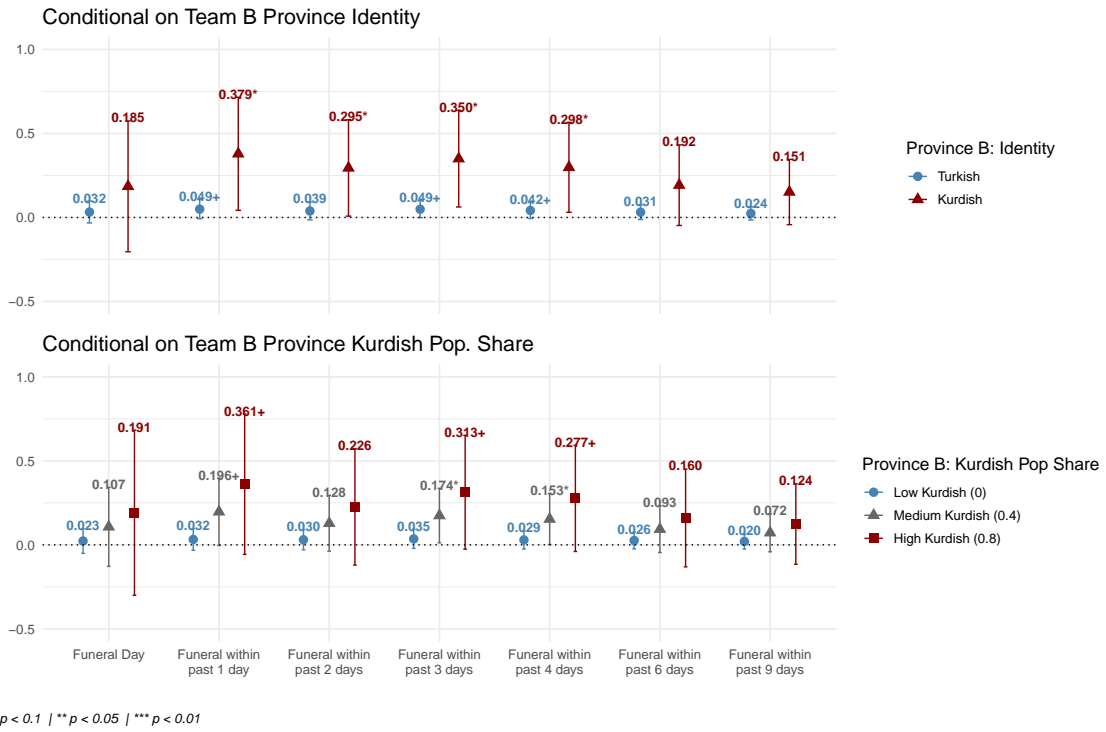


Figure D4: Marginal effect of a local funeral event on the number of total cards for Team A (Team A FE).

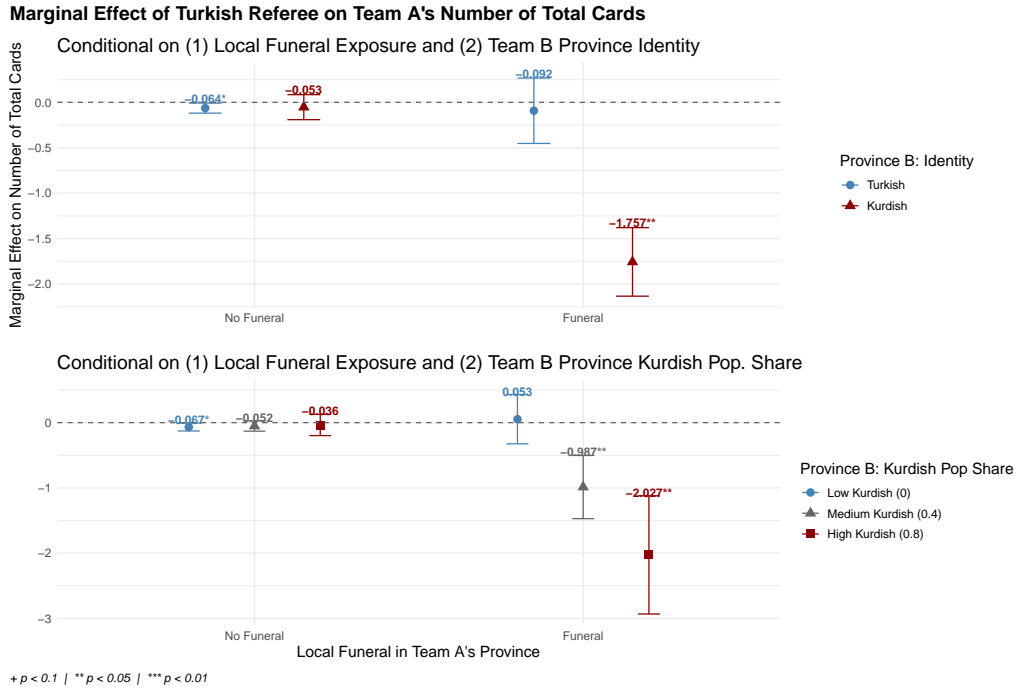


Figure D5: Marginal effect of having a Turkish referee on the number of total cards for Team A (Team A FE).

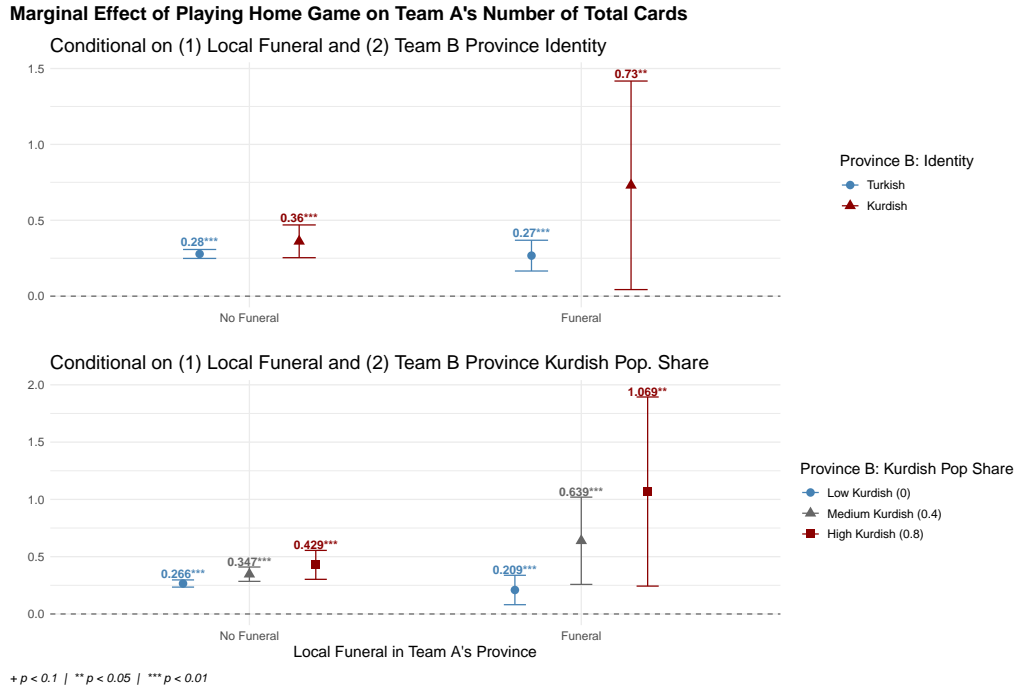


Figure D6: Marginal effect of playing home games on the number of total cards for Team A (Team A FE).

C Additional Analyses

A Effect of exposure to a Kurdish team on Team A's probability of winning and number of goals scored

Table A14: Effect of exposure to a Kurdish team on Team A's probability of winning and number of goals scored

	Team A's Score			Team A's Win Probability		
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Prov B: Kurd Maj	0.06** (0.02)	-0.04 (0.06)	-0.02 (0.03)	0.06** (0.02)	-0.04 (0.06)	-0.02 (0.03)
Turkish Referee	0.04+ (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	0.04+ (0.02)	0.04+ (0.02)	0.03 (0.02)	0.04+ (0.02)
Team A Home	0.52** (0.01)	0.52** (0.01)	0.51** (0.01)	0.52** (0.01)	0.52** (0.01)	0.51** (0.01)
B Kurd Maj \times Turkish Referee		0.11+ (0.07)			0.11+ (0.07)	
B Kurd Maj \times Team A Home			0.17** (0.06)			0.17** (0.06)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Team A FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Season FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Week FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Weekday FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Clustered SEs	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A
Mean of DV	1.28	1.28	1.28	0.37	0.37	0.37
Observations	71,594	71,594	71,594	71,594	71,594	71,594
Observations	71,594	71,594	71,594	71,594	71,594	71,594
R ²	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16	0.16
Adjusted R ²	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15

+p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Notes: Standard errors are clustered by Team A.

B Interaction of funeral events with exposure to a Kurdish team on the probability of winning (Team A FE)

Table B15: Interaction of funeral events with exposure to a Kurdish team on the probability of winning (Team A FE).

	Dependent variable: Team A's Win Probability					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Prov B: Kurd Maj	0.01 (0.01)		0.01 (0.01)		0.01 (0.01)	
Prov B: Kurd %		0.02 (0.01)		0.02 (0.01)		0.02 (0.01)
Funeral in Team A Prov	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)	0.003 (0.01)	0.003 (0.01)	0.003 (0.01)	0.0001 (0.01)
B Kurd Maj \times Funeral					0.01 (0.05)	
B Kurd % \times Funeral						0.05 (0.08)
Soccer Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Team A FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Season FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Week FE			✓	✓	✓	✓
Weekday FE			✓	✓	✓	✓
Clustered SEs	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A
Mean of DV	2.33	2.33	2.33	2.33	2.33	2.33
Observations	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595	71,595
R ²	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21
Adjusted R ²	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.20

⁺p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Notes: Standard errors are clustered by Team A.

Marginal Effect of Local Funeral on Team A's Probability of Winning
Alternative Operationalizations of Local Loss Treatment

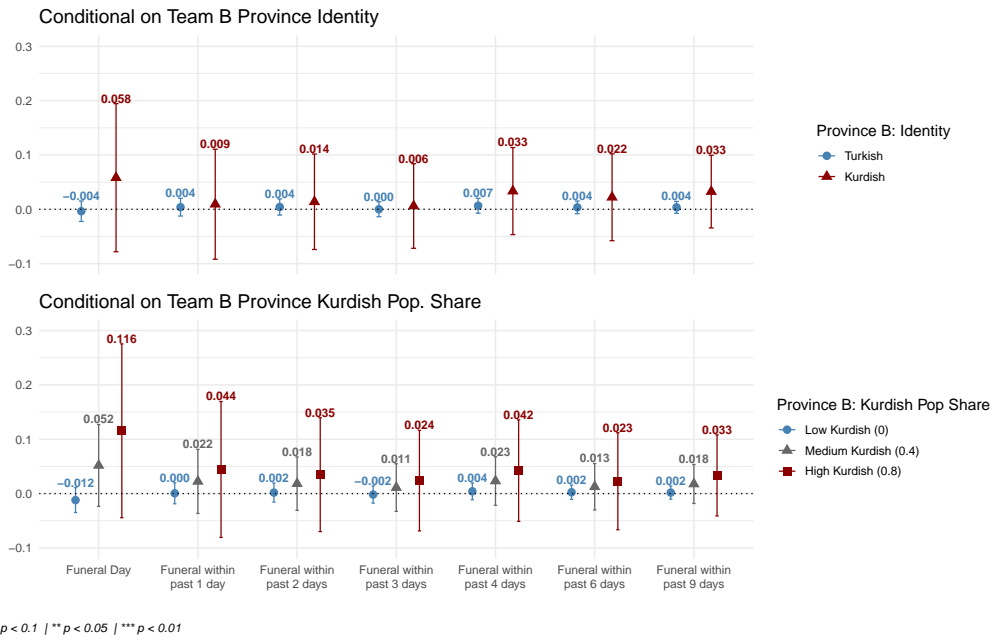


Figure B7: Marginal Effect of a funeral on Team A's probability of winning

C Interaction of funeral events with exposure to a Kurdish team on the number of goals scored (Team A FE)

Table C16: Interaction of funeral events with exposure to a Kurdish team on the number of goals scored (Team A FE).

	Dependent variable: Team A's Score					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Prov B: Kurd Maj	0.10*** (0.02)		0.09*** (0.02)		0.09*** (0.02)	
Prov B: Kurd %		0.13*** (0.04)		0.13*** (0.04)		0.13*** (0.04)
Funeral in Team A Prov	0.01 (0.02)	0.01 (0.02)	-0.001 (0.02)	-0.001 (0.02)	-0.0003 (0.02)	-0.004 (0.02)
B Kurd Maj × Funeral					-0.01 (0.12)	
B Kurd % × Funeral						0.05 (0.19)
Soccer Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Team A FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Season FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Week FE			✓	✓	✓	✓
Weekday FE			✓	✓	✓	✓
Clustered SEs	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A	Team A
Mean of DV	2.33	2.33	2.33	2.33	2.33	2.33
Observations	71,594	71,594	71,594	71,594	71,594	71,594
R ²	0.10	0.10	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11
Adjusted R ²	0.09	0.09	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.10

+p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Notes: Standard errors are clustered by Team A.

Marginal Effect of Local Funerals on Team A's Score
Alternative Operationalizations of Local Loss and Funeral Treatment

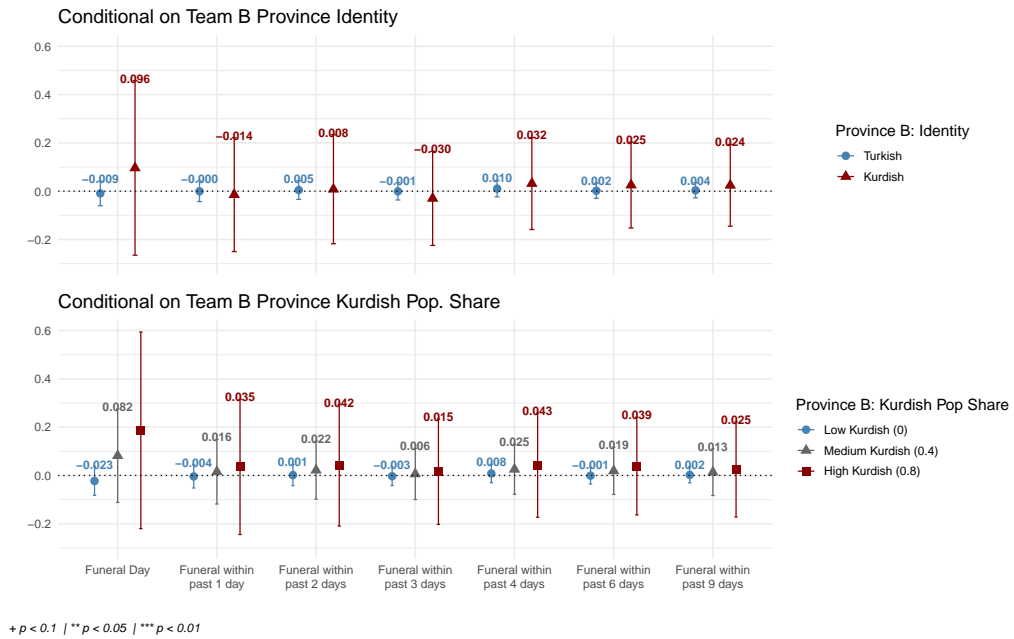
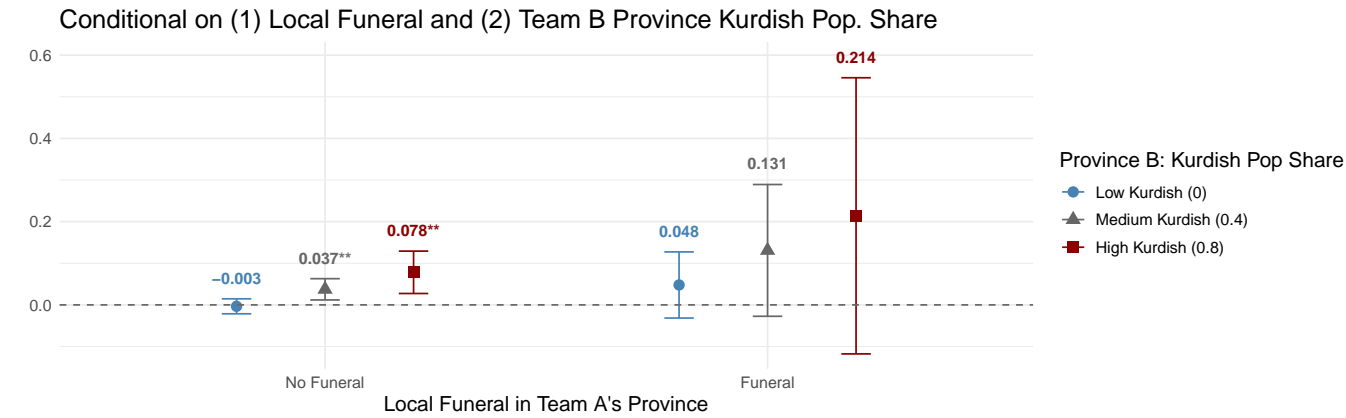
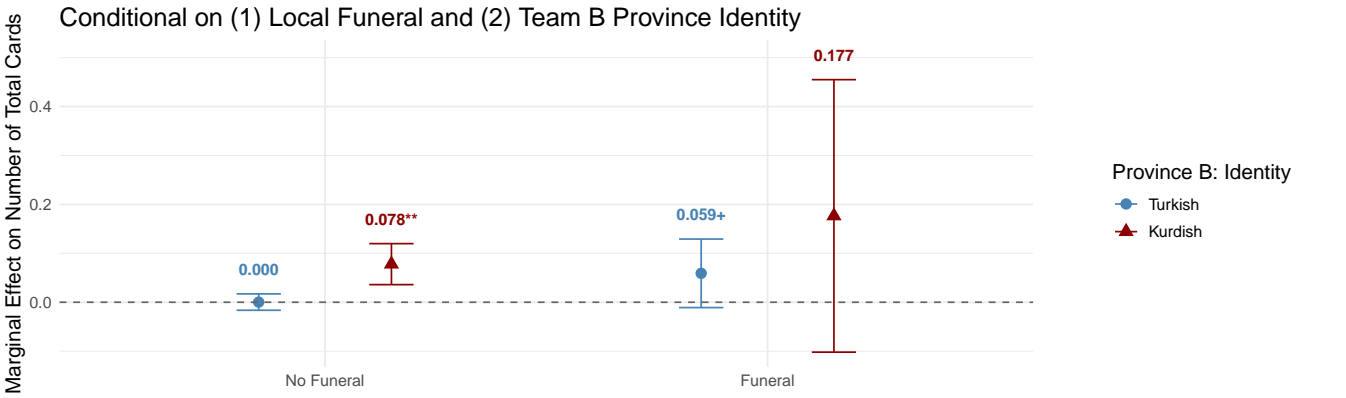


Figure C8: Marginal Effect of a funeral on Team A's game score

D Moderating Effect of Referees and Funerals on Team A's Score and Win Probability

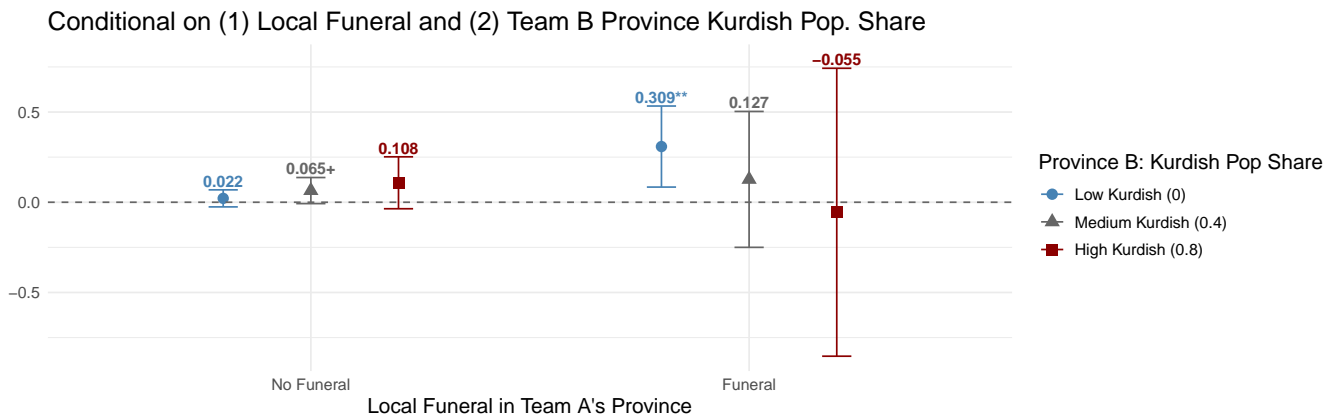
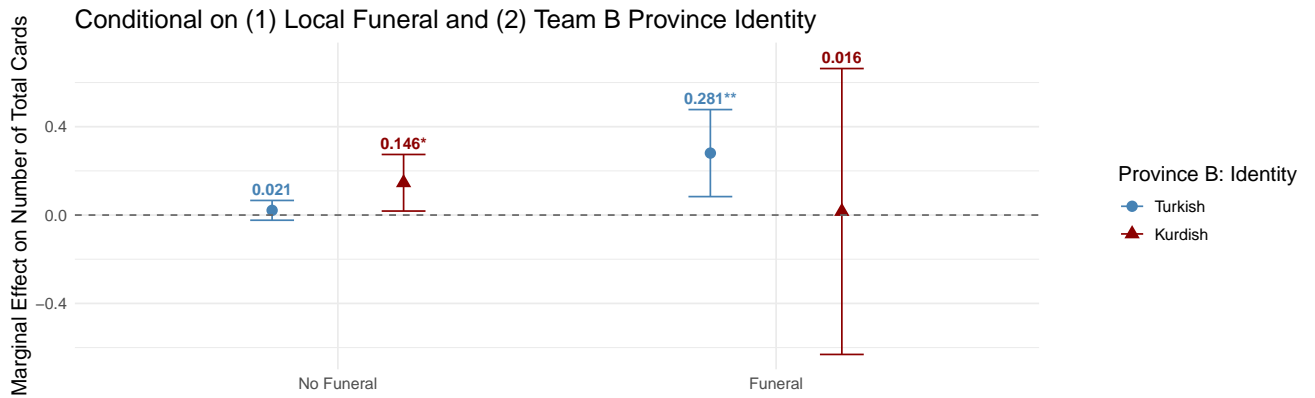
Marginal Effect of Turkish Referee on Team A's Probability of Winning



+ $p < 0.1$ | ** $p < 0.05$ | *** $p < 0.01$

Figure D9: Marginal effect of having a Turkish referee on the probability of winning for Team A (Team A FE).

Marginal Effect of Turkish Referee on Team A's Score



+ $p < 0.1$ | ** $p < 0.05$ | *** $p < 0.01$

Figure D10: Marginal effect of having a Turkish referee on the number of goals scored by Team A (Team A FE).

Dependent Variable: Model:	Probability of Team A Winning	
	(1)	(2)
Prov B: Kurd Maj	-0.06** (0.02)	
Funeral	-0.05 (0.04)	-0.05 (0.04)
Turk Referee	0.0003 (0.009)	-0.003 (0.009)
Home A	0.25*** (0.005)	0.25*** (0.005)
Team A Points	0.01*** (0.0002)	0.01*** (0.0002)
Team B Points	-0.01*** (0.0002)	-0.01*** (0.0002)
Prov B: Kurd Maj \times Funeral	-0.04 (0.13)	
Prov B: Kurd Maj \times Turk Referee	0.08*** (0.02)	
Funeral \times Turk Referee	0.06 (0.04)	0.05 (0.04)
Prov B: Kurd Maj \times Funeral \times Turk Referee	0.04 (0.14)	
Prov B: Kurd Share		-0.08* (0.03)
Prov B: Kurd Share \times Funeral		-0.05 (0.21)
Prov B: Kurd Share \times Turk Referee		0.10** (0.04)
Prov B: Kurd Share \times Funeral \times Turk Referee		0.11 (0.23)
<i>Fixed-effects</i>		
Team A	Yes	Yes
Season	Yes	Yes
Week	Yes	Yes
Weekday	Yes	Yes
Observations	71,595	71,595
R ²	0.20935	0.20933

*Clustered (Team A) standard-errors in parentheses, ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1*

Table D17: Full regression tables of estimations of Figure D9.

Table D18: Full regression tables of estimations in Figure D10.

Dependent Variable:	Score A	
Model:	(1)	(2)
Prov B: Kurd Maj	-0.05 (0.06)	
Funeral	-0.25* (0.10)	-0.28* (0.11)
Turk Referee	0.02 (0.02)	0.02 (0.02)
Home A	0.52*** (0.01)	0.52*** (0.01)
Team A Points	0.03*** (0.0008)	0.03*** (0.0008)
Team B Points	-0.04*** (0.0007)	-0.04*** (0.0007)
Prov B: Kurd Maj \times Funeral	0.35 (0.32)	
Prov B: Kurd Maj \times Turk Referee	0.12+ (0.07)	
Funeral \times Turk Referee	0.26* (0.10)	0.29* (0.12)
Prov B: Kurd Maj \times Funeral \times Turk Referee	-0.39 (0.35)	
Prov B: Kurd Share		-0.007 (0.09)
Prov B: Kurd Share \times Funeral		0.57 (0.53)
Prov B: Kurd Share \times Turk Referee		0.11 (0.10)
Prov B: Kurd Share \times Funeral \times Turk Referee		-0.56 (0.58)
<i>Fixed-effects</i>		
Team A	Yes	Yes
Season	Yes	Yes
Week	Yes	Yes
Weekday	Yes	Yes
Observations	71,594	71,594
R ²	0.15567	0.15564

*Clustered (Team A) standard-errors in parentheses, ***: 0.001, **: 0.01, *: 0.05, +: 0.1*

Table D19: Full regression tables of estimations in Figure D10.