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Contagious Prejudice: The Marocchinate

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Abstract

During World War II, Moroccan soldiers serving in the French army committed widespread acts of sexual violence against the Italian population, known in Italy as the Marocchinate. We demonstrate that these events led to contagion in prejudice: They triggered a pronounced shift toward the far right following the recent large influx of migrants from Syria, the Middle East, and North Africa. Survey results identify similarity-based activation of collective memory as a likely channel. We thus provide the first real-world evidence that selective recall operates on collective memory and can extend prejudice to unrelated out-groups.

JEL classification

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Keywords

collective memory, contagion, WWII, associative recall

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1 Introduction

As of 2025, the far right enjoyed greater support in Europe and much of the Western World than ever before (The Economist, 2025). Much of this support appears fueled by anti-immigrant sentiment (Rydgren, 2008) amid increasing flows of migrants and refugees. Research in economics, psychology, sociology, and political science has sought to better understand how exposure to specific out-groups affects attitudes toward them and how those attitudes persist over time (Voigtländer and Voth, 2012; Schindler and Westcott, 2021; Bursztyn et al., 2024). Yet the persistence of such attitudes need not imply ever-present animosity, as recent work demonstrates. Contemporary events can instead reactivate latent collective memory and reignite intergroup animosities (Cantoni et al., 2019; Fouka and Voth, 2023; Ochsner and Roesel, 2024). Memory, however, is not a neutral archive: When people confront novel events, the memories that come to mind depend on the cues those events provide. Such selective memory retrieval can, in principle, bias beliefs and lead to stereotype formation, even towards groups absent from the retrieved memories (Bordalo et al., 2025; Gennaioli and Shleifer, 2010; Bordalo et al., 2020; Mullainathan, 2002). Large-scale, real-world evidence for similarity-based memory activation remains elusive, and it has yet to be established whether it can lead to attitudinal contagion; that is, whether the behavior of one out-group affects attitudes toward *another* out-group decades later.

This paper uses a unique historical event to establish contagion of prejudice as a likely consequence of selective recall of collective memory. During World War II (WWII), colonial troops, mostly from Morocco but also from Algeria and Tunisia, served in the French Expeditionary Corps (FEC), which took part in the Allied campaign to liberate Italy from Nazi occupation. As the FEC advanced through Italy, some of its soldiers committed widespread acts of violence against civilians, including sexual violence primarily targeting local women. Historical estimates suggest that between 3,000 and 12,000 women were raped (Le Gac, 2013; Baris, 2007), although some sources report even higher figures. Because Italians commonly referred to the corps' North African soldiers as Moroccans, these atrocities became known as the Marocchinate ("Moroccan deeds") (Baris, 2007). The Marocchinate are deeply enshrined in the collective memory of local communities and were later depicted in the Academy Award-winning 1960 movie *Two Women*, which propelled Sophia Loren to worldwide fame.

We leverage these traumatic events using a difference-in-differences framework to test whether historical exposure to the Marocchinate increased far-right voting in response to contemporary migration. In the cross-section, we compare municipalities that hosted FEC soldiers (whose residents could thus witness atrocities) with municipalities that hosted only American soldiers. Our temporal variation stems from the unprecedented increase in migrant arrivals in Italy from Syria, the Middle East, and North Africa, beginning with the 2011 Arab Spring and intensifying during the mid-2010s European Refugee Crisis. We find that municipalities with historical FEC exposure shift sharply toward the far right in elections after 2011, coinciding with increased migrant arrivals to Italy. The estimated effects imply an additional 3.6 percentage-point vote share, approximately 10% of the overall far-right vote share in the 2022 elections. These findings withstand a range of robustness checks, including standard error adjustments, accounting for spatial persistence, fixed effects, data aggregation, sample splits, alternative treatments, and sample compositions, leaving us confident that the effects of historical atrocities on present-day voting imply a causal relationship.

We then show that the estimated effect is specific to this migration wave. The first major migration wave to post-war Italy, a country previously characterized primarily by emigration, occurred in the 1990s, when a large number of migrants arrived from Albania and former Yugoslavia. Using this earlier wave as temporal variation, we detect only negligible effects on far-right voting that are highly sensitive to the chosen specification. These results underscore that contagion of prejudice is not ubiquitous. Instead, they suggest that perceived similarities between groups may be a key driver of contagion (Fouka and Tabellini, 2022). We remain agnostic about the relevant dimensions of similarity, with visual appearance, religion, and cultural practices arguably among the most salient possibilities. Subsequently, we examine whether historical exposure to a visibly distinct out-group, without a comparable legacy of violence (O'Connell, 2021), is sufficient to generate a later shift in voting. By exploiting variation in the deployment of African American units during the Italian Campaign, we demonstrate that municipalities exposed to them, relative to those exposed to only white US units, did not experience a similar shift towards the far right. If anything, they voted less often for far-right parties after 2011, consistent with evidence on the contact theory (Schindler and Westcott, 2021). This result therefore weighs against mere historical exposure to a visibly distinct

out-group as an explanation for the contagion of prejudice we document, indicating that the FEC atrocities are key.

To better understand why and how prejudice extends to other groups, we conducted two pre-registered surveys among the Italian population in the affected regions. In both, we elicited respondents' ancestral municipalities (similar in spirit to Becker et al., 2020) to identify those who both live in and descend from FEC-exposed municipalities. In the first survey, we then asked respondents to agree or disagree with several statements about migrants from Albania and Syria, which we use as representative nationalities for those who arrived during the first migration wave in the 1990s and the most recent migration wave, respectively. FEC-exposed respondents are more likely than unexposed respondents to agree with statements that Syrians take jobs from Italians, can never become truly Italian, damage the economy, commit crimes, do not enrich Italian culture, and harass Italian women. The same statements about Albanians show no significant differences between FEC-exposed and unexposed municipalities. Respondents from affected areas thus report more negative attitudes toward Syrians, but not Albanians, driven by economic and cultural concerns. They also report greater concern about sexual misconduct, as reflected in the significant coefficient on the harassment question, which, albeit only slightly, is the largest point estimate among the questions. This pattern is consistent with attitudes shaped by the historical experience with FEC soldiers.[1]

Collective memory has recently been established as a powerful mechanism that can rekindle prejudice (Fouka and Voth, 2023; Ochsner and Roesel, 2024), whereby later events reactivate dormant memories, leading to renewed animosity against the original outgroup. Advances in behavioral economics have also highlighted the role of selective recall (Gennaioli and Shleifer, 2010; Bordalo et al., 2020; Mullainathan, 2002). For example, Bordalo et al. (2025) postulate that individuals draw on memories to simulate a novel event, but that the likelihood of recalling a given memory depends on its similarity to that event. As recall is limited, this similarity-based activation can crowd out the retrieval of more relevant memories, potentially leading to biased beliefs. Although models of selective recall do not specify whether such selectivity is confined to personal memory or also extends to collective memory, they suggest an explanation for the far-right voting effects: The post-2011 refugee crisis confronted Italians with an unprecedented

[1] We find it important to note that neither Albanians nor Syrians in Italy are differentially often recorded as suspects in reported sexual-offense data, as shown in Appendix Figure A.16.

and highly salient migration wave from Syria and the Middle East, whose members may have been perceived as sharing salient features with the FEC troops. Such perceived similarity could have made the memory of the Marocchinate more likely to be recalled and used to form beliefs about contemporary migrants, particularly in communities where this historical collective memory remained available.

We designed the second survey to shed light on the role of selective recall of collective memory as a driver of our results.[2] We implemented an information intervention priming respondents with either the European Refugee Crisis (treatment) or contemporaneous extreme weather events in Italy (control), and then asked whether they knew what the Marocchinate was. Respondents from FEC-exposed municipalities are more likely to recall the term correctly, indicating the existence of local collective memory. Receiving the European Refugee Crisis treatment also increases recall of the Marocchinate. This shows that recall of collective memory, just like personal memory, can be selective and triggered by shifting attention to an out-group unrelated to the initial events.

The interaction between historical FEC exposure and the information treatment, however, is not significantly different from zero. This indicates that selective recall of collective memory, by itself, cannot explain the differential far-right shift in FEC-exposed areas. We therefore conduct a sentiment analysis of respondents' descriptions of how the Marocchinate were recounted to them, focusing on the emotions conveyed by the storytellers. Respondents from FEC-exposed areas describe this with substantially more negative sentiment than their unexposed counterparts under the treatment, but not under the control. This suggests that, while recall of collective memory is universally selective, the emotions of respondents whose ancestors had first-hand experience may have been the conduit in biasing beliefs and ultimately shifting votes toward the far right.

Our paper adds to four distinct strands of literature. First, we present the first study to causally establish the contemporary contagion of racial prejudice from historical events in a large-scale setting, spanning vast areas of a highly populated European country. Correlational work and small-scale experiments in psychology use the term "Secondary Transfer Effect" to refer to prejudice contagion (e.g., Tausch et al., 2010; Vezzali et al., 2021). Sociologists, in turn, have conceptualized prejudice as a result of relative group positioning (e.g., Blumer, 1958; Quillian, 1995), whereby, in cases involving multiple groups,

[2]The second survey also offers some insight into intergenerational transmission of attitudes (Bisin and Verdier, 2001). We find little support for it and report these results in Appendix A.5.

spillovers are possible. Within economics, McConnell and Rasul (2021) establish contagion in the criminal justice system, but focus on contemporary events over a short time horizon. The closest to our study are probably Fouka et al. (2022) and Fouka and Tabellini (2022), which investigate shifts in prejudice following the arrival of different groups. However, these papers examine changes in historical prejudice due to the arrival of new out-groups. Our paper, in contrast, examines how historical and temporary interactions with an out-group affect contemporary prejudice towards a new out-group that did not exist in the local context at the time. Beyond allowing us to disentangle persistence from reactivation, this approach also lets us establish whether prejudice spills over to previously unaffected groups, rather than merely being redirected from one group to another. Furthermore, while Fouka et al. (2022) and Fouka and Tabellini (2022) examine how new out-groups dampen prejudice toward existing out-groups, our study examines the opposite by focusing on contagion of prejudice, whereby adverse interactions with one group selectively transfer into hatred of other groups.

Second, we contribute to the growing behavioral economics literature on the role of selective memory by providing the first large-scale, real-world test of similarity-based memory activation (Bordalo et al., 2020, 2025; Gennaioli and Shleifer, 2010; Mullainathan, 2002), showing that it operates on collective, not only personal, memory. Drawing on insights from neuroscience (Kahana, 2012), economists have recently explicitly incorporated memory, particularly imperfect recall, into formal models of human behavior. The importance of selective memory has been documented for financial decision-making (Enke et al., 2024), and theories building on associative memory have been used to explain a wide variety of puzzles in human behavior (Graeber et al., 2024; Bordalo et al., 2020). Findings from our second survey provide evidence consistent with this literature: recall of Marocchinate increases when primed with the influx of Syrian refugees. This implicitly extends the selectiveness of memory to collective memory, rather than only personal memory. Yet we also provide suggestive evidence that selective recall of collective memory alone may be insufficient to elicit strong belief updating. Instead, the emotions attached to a memory are a likely channel mediating the effect, consistent with recent work on emotions as mediators of attention (Bolte and Raymond, 2025).[3]

[3]Emotions are not necessarily obvious mediators, as negative emotions may also prevent recall, as argued by Conlon (2025).

Third, we contribute to a large body of literature that attempts to distinguish pure persistence from reactivation. While earlier work has shown attitudes to persist (Voigtländer and Voth, 2012) and that interventions can persistently change trajectories in attitudes (Schindler and Westcott, 2021; Bursztyn et al., 2024), recent contributions stress the nonlinearities in persistence (Rozenas and Zhukov, 2019; Cantoni et al., 2019), possibly through triggering collective memory (Fouka and Voth, 2023; Ochsner and Roesel, 2024). We contribute to this literature by uncovering, in a case where collective memory exists (Lemoli and Gennaro, 2025), the micro-foundations of the activation mechanism through the selective recall of historical atrocities. This complements recent discussions (Fouka and Tabellini, 2025) of whether ideology is transmitted directly or evolves only from altered, deeper primitives (such as beliefs). Our survey evidence highlights fear of sexual violence as a major primitive that translates into shifts in political preferences.

Fourth, we add to the literature on identifying the roots and causes of support for the far right. Much of the historical literature has focused on explaining persistent far-right support by emphasizing extremists or political alienation (Vlachos, 2022; Ochsner and Roesel, 2020; Wang, 2021). Our paper, in turn, presents an additional source for far-right support: Historical atrocities perpetrated by members of an ethnoracial out-group and their interactions with extraordinary, contemporary migration flows.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 presents the historical background. We discuss the data and empirical strategy in Section 3 and present results in Section 4. Section 5 concludes.

2 Background

2.1 The Italian Campaign

The Italian Campaign comprised a series of Allied land, air, and naval operations conducted between 1943 and 1945. It aimed at removing Italy, regarded by Winston Churchill as the "soft underbelly" of the Axis, from the Axis alliance while securing the central Mediterranean and diverting German resources from other European fronts.

The campaign began with the Allied invasion of Sicily on July 10, 1943; the rapid Allied successes hastened the fall of Benito Mussolini's regime and led to the Armistice of Cassibile on September 3, which formalized Italy's unconditional surrender to the Allies

(Ginsborg, 1990). Rather than ending hostilities, the armistice prompted German forces to occupy much of the peninsula and establish a sequence of defensive lines designed to delay the Allied advance through a strategic fighting withdrawal toward northern Italy, exploiting the country's mountainous terrain (Short and Taylor, 2006). These defenses imposed a slow, infantry-intensive campaign.

In central Italy, the Allied advance stalled along the Gustav Line, a heavily fortified east–west defensive system blocking the direct route to Rome. The battle for Monte Cassino, a critical stronghold of the Gustav Line, lasted from January to May 1944 and involved repeated assaults under difficult conditions, generating extensive destruction, displacement, and civilian exposure to military operations (Holland, 2024).

Rome was liberated on June 4, 1944. However, German forces withdrew to the Gothic Line in the northern Apennines, where fighting continued until the spring of 1945. Throughout much of the campaign, the slow pace of advance and the reliance on ground forces operating in rural and mountainous areas produced frequent contact between Allied troops and local civilian populations (Simonetti, 2025).

2.2 The French Expeditionary Corps

The FEC joined the Italian Campaign in late November and December 1943. It comprised four divisions and approximately 112,000 soldiers, drawing substantial manpower from Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia. Two of these divisions were Moroccan, and the corps also included about 12,000 Moroccan *goumiers* (Gaujac, 2004; Baris, 2007).[4] It operated across Campania, Lazio, Molise, Umbria, and Tuscany and was regarded as particularly effective in rugged and mountainous terrain (Gaujac, 2004). Its most consequential contribution to the Allied breakthrough of the Gustav Line came in May 1944, when FEC units, especially Moroccan *goumiers*, advanced through the Aurunci Mountains and outflanked German positions (Gaujac, 2004). The FEC continued operations northward after the liberation of Rome and was then redeployed ahead of the Allied landings in southern France in August 1944.

[4]More precisely, the FEC included the 1st Free French Division (1re DFL, which saw limited engagement in Italy), the 2nd Moroccan Infantry Division (2e DIM), the 3rd Algerian Infantry Division (3e DIA), the 4th Moroccan Mountain Division (4e DMM), and additional attached units, including Moroccan tabors (GTM), under the command of General Alphonse Juin.

The advance of the FEC was accompanied by violence against civilians, including sexual violence, murder, and looting. Known in Italy as the Marocchinate, these episodes are documented in contemporaneous reports and postwar investigations and are generally associated with the immediate aftermath of combat operations, when troops advanced rapidly through rural areas and military control was limited. Estimates of the number of victims vary widely across sources. Approximately 20,000 compensation claims were submitted for pillage and material damage, while French authorities authorized compensation for 1,488 victims of sexual violence (di Colloredo Mels, 2018). Victims' associations report substantially higher figures, including claims of 60,000 women raped and approximately 180,000 acts of sexual violence (Associazione Nazionale Vittime delle "Marocchinate", 2023). More moderate estimates place the number of rapes between about 3,000–4,000 (Le Gac, 2013) and up to 12,000 (Baris, 2007).

2.3 The Collective Memory of Marocchinate

Nationally, the Marocchinate occupy a marginal place in institutionalized public memory: no national day of remembrance commemorates them, and the events are not explicitly included in the national school curriculum. Their most prominent representations in national popular culture are Alberto Moravia's 1957 novel *La Ciociara* and Vittorio De Sica's 1960 film adaptation, *Two Women*.

In contrast, the Marocchinate are deeply embedded in the *local* collective memory of municipalities exposed to FEC troop movements. According to our own search, at least 26 municipalities house commemorative plaques and monuments, or hold memorial activities organized by victims' associations.[5] These include public parks, such as the "Giardino della memoria" in Esperia, and statues, such as the "Monumento alla Mamma Ciociara" in Castro dei Volsci. A stone sculpture at Polleca, the site of the most brutal episodes in Esperia, was commissioned by the municipality and the regional government from sketches drawn by local schoolchildren. In Pontecorvo, a stele honoring fallen Moroccan soldiers was vandalized and destroyed, and subsequently reconstructed and then repurposed to commemorate the atrocities they had committed. Several municipalities hold wreath-laying ceremonies (e.g., Mondragone on May 18) or memorial events at churches (e.g., Vallecorsa). Where national recognition exists, it has been granted to individual

[5]This amounts to 16% of all municipalities with FEC troop exposure, slightly higher than the approximately 13% reported by Ochsner and Roesel (2024) for the Turkish sieges of Vienna.

municipalities rather than to the episode as a whole: Esperia displays on its "gonfalone" (ceremonial banner) the Gold Medal for Civil Merit awarded by the Italian President in recognition of the suffering inflicted by FEC troops.

To establish how far this memory extends beyond such markers, we contacted local historians, libraries, museums, and civic and cultural associations across municipalities with documented atrocities, asking about monuments and sites of memory, commemorations and public initiatives, local publications and oral testimony, and transmission to younger generations.[6] Respondents report active memory work even where no public marker exists. For instance, one association, in a municipality where "no monuments, plaques, memorial stones, or sites of memory linked to these events" are present, describes fifteen years of conferences, a volume of collected war testimony, and a 2024 documentary movie, all "aimed at ensuring that these events are remembered and transmitted to younger generations." Consistent with the results of our outreach, 67% of respondents from affected areas in our Survey II (see Section 3.6) who correctly recalled the Marocchinate report having learned about these episodes through local organizations, local media, interpersonal networks, or schools.

Notably, replies to our outreach specify whom the memory holds responsible. It attaches to the perpetrators' ethnicity rather than to the army in which they served. Though the FEC was a French formation, one respondent describes a local population that distinguishes sharply among the corps' ethnic components, assigning "all cases of violence, abuse, pillage, and theft to the Moroccan *goumiers*." A respondent in a different region makes the same correction unprompted, writing of violence committed by the French troops, "or rather, by the *goumiers*." Official commemoration seems to follow the same logic: the municipal panel at Polleca records that the North African troops advanced under French command, yet ascribes the rapes to the "North African liberators."

In terms of inclusion in education, publicly available school records suggest that classroom coverage of these events is scattered and locally initiated. For example, students in the municipality of Gaeta produced a short film on the FEC advance and its aftermath (Istituto Comprensivo "Principe Amedeo", Gaeta, 2018), while classes at a school

[6] In July 2026, we searched for a local institution or local historian in each of the 93 municipalities with documented atrocities and wrote to the 59 for which we could retrieve an email address, of which 45 messages were successfully delivered. Sixteen institutions replied, covering 17 municipalities in four regions. Having assured the respondents of confidentiality, we report their accounts without attribution. Translations are our own.

serving the Maenza and Priverno municipalities attended a theatrical production on the Marocchinate (I.S.I.S.S. "Teodosio Rossi", Priverno, 2026). Some schools explicitly include the Marocchinate in their history syllabi, as in Velletri and Livorno (I.T.I.S. "G. Vallauri", Velletri, 2025; Liceo Statale "F. Enriques", Livorno, 2026). The episodes may also reach classrooms indirectly, through in-class readings of Moravia's *La Ciociara* and screenings of its movie adaptation (e.g., Liceo Statale "Socrate", Roma, 2021).

2.4 The Italian Far Right Post WWII

After the fall of Mussolini, Italy's political landscape transformed profoundly with the extension of women's suffrage in 1945, the establishment of the Republic in 1946, and the entry into force of a new constitution in 1948. Early postwar politics were dominated by Christian Democrats, Socialists, and Communists, but the far right persisted with the founding of the Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI) in 1946. Drawing largely on former Fascist sympathizers, the MSI positioned itself as the principal institutional heir to Fascist ideology, with an appeal centered on nationalism, order, and anti-communism (Ginsborg, 1990). From 1953 onward, it won between 4 and 9% of the vote, but it remained outside national government until its more moderate successor, Alleanza Nazionale (AN), joined Silvio Berlusconi's first cabinet in 1994.

Immigration became a salient political issue in the early 1990s, most visibly with the mass arrival of Albanians by sea in 1991 and of refugees from the wars in the former Yugoslavia. Sustained migration flows continued during the late 1990s and the 2000s, predominantly from Eastern Europe (e.g., refugees from Kosovo and Romanians following their country's EU accession). As immigration grew more prominent, far-right parties, including AN and Lega Nord (now simply Lega), increasingly focused on anti-immigration rhetoric.

The European Refugee Crisis of the 2010s marked a turning point, bringing immigration to the forefront of national political debate and fueling a rise in far-right rhetoric that framed the issue in terms of national identity, security, and sovereignty. Lega capitalized on public discontent regarding the European Union's handling of the migration crisis and economic austerity measures. In the 2018 elections, and more notably by 2022, Fratelli d'Italia (FdI), a party with neo-Fascist roots, gained substantial ground, and its leader, Giorgia Meloni, was appointed as prime minister. These parties have positioned

themselves firmly against immigration, advocating for stricter controls and framing immigration as a threat to national security and cultural identity. Appendix Figure A.1 uses Manifesto Project data to plot the percentage of far-right parties' manifesto content coded as anti-multiculturalism/assimilation (Lehmann et al., 2025). It shows that this theme accounts for essentially 0% of far-right manifesto content until the early 1990s, but becomes increasingly salient thereafter, rising sharply in the post-refugee-crisis period and reaching about 4% at its peak.

In the empirical analyses, we use the PopuList 3.0 dataset (Rooduijn et al., 2023a,b) as our main source for classifying Italian far-right parties. The dataset covers parties that won at least one seat or at least 2% of the vote in a national parliamentary election since 1989. PopuList follows the definition of the far right proposed by Mudde (2007), classifying parties as far right if their core ideological profile combines nativism, i.e., the view that the state should be inhabited exclusively by members of the native group and that non-native elements are threatening, and authoritarianism, defined as support for a strictly ordered society in which infringements of authority are punished severely. These criteria are applied through an expert-informed qualitative comparative classification procedure, in which national and cross-national experts assess parties' overall ideological profiles based on qualitative evidence. PopuList classifications can change over time, but all seven Italian parties it codes as far right keep that classification throughout 1989–2022. We match each of them to its electoral lists in our data, including renamed and joint lists, and extend the classification of the MSI and MSI–Destra Nazionale backward to elections before 1989. Table 1 reports these lists included in our far-right vote measure and the elections years to which they apply.

Table 1: Italian Far-Right Parties

Electoral list	Years classified as far right	Notes
Movimento Sociale Italiano (MSI)	1948–1968	Postwar neo-fascist party
MSI–Destra Nazionale (MSI-DN)	1972–1992	MSI merged with monarchists
Alleanza Nazionale (AN)	1994–2006	Successor to MSI–DN; gradual ideological moderation
Lega d'Azione Meridionale	1992	Southern regionalist, anti-immigration party
Lega Nord	1992–2013	Northern regionalist party, later nationally oriented
Lega	2018	Electoral label reflecting Lega Nord's national turn
Lega per Salvini Premier	2022	Lega electoral label emphasizing Salvini's leadership
Fiamma Tricolore	2001, 2006, 2013, 2018	Neo-fascist splinter opposing MSI's transformation into AN
La Destra–Fiamma Tricolore	2008	Joint list of Fiamma Tricolore and La Destra
La Destra	2013, 2018	Splinter from AN
Fratelli d'Italia (FdI)	2013	Nationalist, socially conservative; MSI–AN lineage
Fratelli d'Italia con Giorgia Meloni	2018, 2022	FdI electoral label emphasizing Meloni's leadership

Notes: Classifications are based on the PopuList 3.0 dataset. The table reports all Italian parties coded as far right in PopuList 3.0 that received at least one seat or at least 2% of the vote in national parliamentary elections since 1989.

3 Data & Empirical Strategy

3.1 Estimation Strategy

To estimate the effects of FEC troop presence (i.e., the increased likelihood of being subjected to atrocities) on far-right voting, we pursue a difference-in-differences (DiD) strategy. In the cross-section, we compare voting outcomes in municipalities exposed to FEC troops with those in municipalities not exposed to FEC troops. In the time dimension, we compare elections before and after the onset of large-scale migration waves from Syria, the Middle East, and North Africa, which began with the Arab Spring in 2011 and intensified over the subsequent years.[7] We will later also contrast this with the effects of the country's first salient immigration wave in the 1990s.

For our difference-in-differences analyses, we will estimate

$$y_{i,t} = \alpha + \beta \text{FEC Troops}_i \cdot \text{Post Migration}_t + \gamma_i + \delta_t + \delta_t \cdot \nu_{i/r} + \epsilon_{i,t} \tag{1}$$

where $y_{i,t}$ denotes the vote share for the far right in municipality i in election year t. FEC Troops_i denotes a dummy for whether a municipality hosted FEC troops during the Italian Campaign, and Post Migration_t is a dummy for elections after 2011.[8] γ_i denotes municipality fixed effects, and δ_t denotes election year fixed effects. In some robustness checks, we also include predetermined control variables ν_i or region fixed effects ν_r, each

[7] Appendix Figure A.2 shows the annual number of asylum requests submitted in Italy over time (data obtained from Commissione Nazionale per il Diritto d'Asilo, 2020).

[8] When contrasting it with the first migration wave during the 1990s, that dummy will take the value one for election years after 1990.

interacted with election-year fixed effects. We cluster standard errors at the municipality level.

The necessary assumption for interpreting our estimates as causal is the classical parallel trends assumption: absent the large migration shock after 2011, far-right vote shares in municipalities with and without FEC troops would have evolved similarly. Municipalities that did or did not host combat troops during WWII might have differed markedly (Schindler and Westcott, 2021). Therefore, we restrict our sample to municipalities that experienced either American or FEC forces.[9]

Appendix Table A.1 presents the coefficients of regressing FEC troop presence on all of our control variables.[10] p-values are calculated using randomization inference as suggested by Kerwin et al. (2024) to avoid an over-rejection of the null. Columns 1 and 2 use a baseline set of geographic and demographic covariates, whereas Columns 3 and 4 use a broader set of covariates, which are available only for a subset of municipalities. Columns 2 and 4 include fixed effects for the five regions of Italy that are in our sample. Because some distances are heavily skewed, we apply the natural logarithm to all distance controls.[11] Despite the standard error corrections, a few variables still predict FEC troop placement when using fewer controls: the (logarithmic) distance to Naples, the literate population share in 1921, and the malaria index remain significant predictors even when including region fixed effects.[12] However, when including the full set of controls, no variable can significantly predict FEC troop locations.

That very few variables correlate with troop locations suggests that FEC troops were primarily deployed according to military requirements, rather than to accommodate potential local preferences. Given the uncertainty surrounding wartime outcomes and the high costs of strategic mistakes, it seems plausible that military leadership sought to de-

[9] American forces serve as a useful counterfactual as there is no evidence that they systematically committed war crimes apart from two isolated incidents on Sicily (Atkinson, 2007), which is not included in our sample. On the contrary, accounts suggest that witnessing the atrocities committed by FEC soldiers severely affected the morale and willingness to fight of American soldiers (Atkinson, 2007, p. 557). Running our analysis on an unrestricted sample instead, i.e., including all municipalities, yields qualitatively similar, highly significant effects.

[10] Details on how the control variables are collected can be found in Section 3.4.

[11] To avoid dropping zeroes, we apply the natural logarithm to $1 + x$. A balance table with non-transformed distances can be found in Appendix Table A.2.

[12] The malaria index was derived from a file with an original resolution of 0.5×0.5 degrees, much larger than many of the small municipalities in our sample. To make it usable, the original raster was "resampled" by creating sub-pixels. As a limitation, this creates a strong spatial correlation in the data, rendering its use as a control variable in cross-sectional analyses suboptimal.

ploy troops primarily to achieve military goals. This has also been demonstrated for American soldiers in the United Kingdom by Schindler and Westcott (2021).

Since our identification strategy performs a DiD analysis rather than relying solely on cross-sectional variation, we do not need the strong assumption that FEC troop deployment, conditional on any troop deployment, is as good as random. Instead, differences in control variables can influence voting outcomes only if they have a *differential* impact before and after the influx of migrants. To ensure this is not the case and that our estimates can be interpreted causally, we present evidence from event studies and show that our results are robust to any control variable interacted with year fixed effects in Section 4.

3.2 Troop Location Data

Historical locations of the FEC units at a disaggregated level are not readily available. Most available sources describe the locations of entire divisions which encompassed more than 15,000 soldiers (e.g., Le Gac, 2013; Jackson, 1967). Because of the sheer size of the divisions, using only division-level data would underestimate the extent of troops' exposure to municipalities and forgo important geospatial variation. Therefore, we combine several sources to create a novel dataset that measures municipal-level exposure to FEC troops based on regiments (much smaller units with a strength of approximately 1,000 soldiers each). We manually browsed through translated versions of Gaujac (2004) and Goutard (1947), as well as official US Army records reported in United States Army (1944a,b,c,d,e,f, 1945a,b) and extracted troop locations from the text. This information is supplemented with the official marching journal of the French Expeditionary Corps as a whole (Service Historique de la Défense, 1998c), as well as the marching journals of the 3rd Algerian Infantry Division (Service Historique de la Défense, 1998b), and the 4th Moroccan Mountain Division (Service Historique de la Défense, 1998a).[13] We collected these marching journals from the French Military Archives in Vincennes and subsequently digitized and translated these (partly handwritten) documents. Many locations across all sources are given as the names of municipalities, villages, or even nearby mountains, and these rarely carry unique names across Italy (or even the broader region). To ensure

[13]Marching journals of the 1st Free French Division (which was only posted to Italy very briefly) and the 2nd Moroccan Infantry Division, the other two divisions of the FEC, were not available in the French Archives, but receive extensive coverage in the other aforementioned sources.

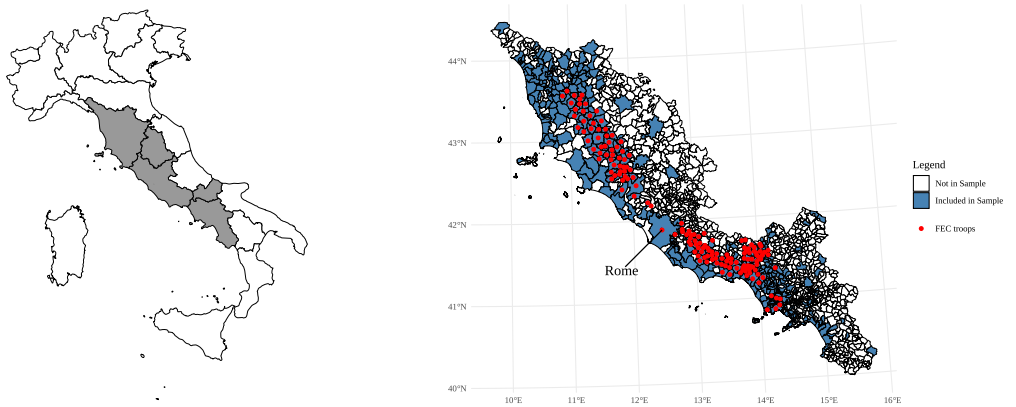
locational accuracy, we manually cross-referenced all locations against the FEC's general divisional movements. After determining the GPS coordinates of each location, we are thus able to establish the historical presence of units of the FEC within the 2011 and 2021 municipal boundaries (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, 2024a).[14]

We identify the locations of American troops following the approach in Schindler and Westcott (2021). The US Army produced biweekly station lists detailing the locations of all troops in the North African Theater of Operations, to which Italy was assigned. We photographed and digitized 32 surviving station lists dated between October 16, 1943, and November 26, 1944, at the National Archives in College Park, Maryland (U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, 1953). Each of the more than 1,400 unique locations is listed with a four-digit coordinate indicating its approximate location on a 10 × 10 km grid. We then manually identified the precise GPS coordinates of each location by cross-referencing Google Maps and assigned it to the corresponding municipality (using the 2011 and 2021 municipal boundaries; Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, 2024a). These data also contain information on the racial composition of each unit: African American units are specifically marked as such, allowing us to compute the number of African American units ever stationed in each municipality in our sample.

3.3 Voting and Other Outcomes

Municipal-level voting data is freely available for all elections from the Italian Ministry of the Interior, Central Directorate for Electoral Service (2023). We downloaded all results for the Chamber of Deputies' elections since the end of WWII (1948-2022), and matched them to the 2011 and 2021 municipal boundaries. To account for changes in the composition of municipalities, we track the merging, creating, renaming, splitting, and dissolving of municipalities using the information provided by D'Emilio (2004). For each year and municipality, we subsequently calculate the vote share for far-right parties as defined by the PopuList 3.0 (Rooduijn et al., 2023b,a). For auxiliary analyses, we calculate the vote shares for far-left, center-left, center, and center-right parties, using the OpenAI

[14]Our empirical strategy seeks to account for time-invariant municipality-specific confounders through the use of fixed effects. Therefore, we determine troop locations using the 2011 boundaries, supplemented by the 2021 boundaries for new municipalities created since then. We start with the 2011 boundaries, as the boundary data contains additional information about the municipality, such as altitude and area.



(a) Italian Regions Included in the Sample (b) Municipalities with FEC Troops

Figure 1: Map of Italy and Municipalities in the Sample

Responses API (GPT-5.2) to classify parties.[15] Since FEC troops only passed through the Italian regions of Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria, we restrict our sample for voting and other outcomes to these regions.

Figure 1 visualizes our sample. The left plot shows a map of Italy, highlighting the included regions in dark grey. The right plot zooms in on these regions only and marks municipalities that are in our sample in steel blue, and municipalities that we exclude from the sample in white.[16] Municipalities that encountered FEC troops are marked with a red dot. Appendix Table A.3 reports municipality-level summary statistics by region for the estimation sample.

To establish that FEC troop presence actually increased the propensity for experiencing sexual violence, we collected data from two sources. As discussed in Section 2.2, historical sources disagree on the extent of the Marocchinate, likely leading to both over- and underestimates. We compile the small number of locations listed in Lucioli and Sabatini (1998) into a set of municipalities and match it to the 2011 and 2021 municipal boundaries. Associazione Nazionale Vittime delle "Marocchinate" (2023), in turn, lists many more municipalities affected by FEC atrocities and additionally includes multiple offenses per municipality. We scrape this data and also match it to municipal boundaries. We consider it possible that the former source underestimates and the latter overesti-

[15]PopuList 3.0 does not cover moderate parties. We manually corrected Lega from center-right to the far right in accordance with the PopuList 3.0, and La Margherita to center-left as the party only ever participated in center-left coalitions.

[16]Inclusion in the sample is limited to municipalities that encountered either American or FEC troops or both.

mates the extent of the atrocities. Therefore, we will use them only to demonstrate that FEC troop deployments predict atrocities, according to *either* source. This exercise should not be interpreted as an endorsement of the accuracy of either source.

In robustness checks, we also demonstrate that our treatment did not affect differential in-migration. For this purpose, we use data from Istituto Nazionale di Statistica (2024c), which provide municipal-level population by nationality for the years 2002 to 2022. Data on the locations of refugee centers in 2017 were kindly shared with us by Campo et al. (2025).

For auxiliary analyses presented in the appendix, we utilize country-wide numbers of police-recorded cases of sexual violence broken down by nationality for the years 2007-2023 (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, 2026). These are subsequently divided by the number of residents of that respective nationality in Italy in that same year (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, 2024c) to obtain a rate. We also download all Italian newspaper articles containing the word Marocchinate for the period 2000-2025 (Factiva, 2026), and all Italian newspaper articles for the same period, to calculate the share of newspaper articles mentioning the Marocchinate over time.

3.4 Control Variables

We collect several pre-WWII control variables to create Appendix Table A.1, and we use them in robustness checks by interacting them with year fixed effects. Using the 2011 and 2021 municipal boundaries (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, 2024a), we calculate each municipality's distance to Rome and Naples, as well as to the nearest provincial capital. We digitized a 1943 road and railroad map (United States Army Map Service, 1943a,b,c) to compute distances to the nearest main road and the nearest railroad. Distance to the coast is calculated using the coastline shapefile from Istituto Nazionale di Statistica (2013). We compute distance to the nearest major port using the main pre-WWII port cities, Genoa, Livorno, Messina, Naples, Palermo, Savona, Venice, Brindisi, Chioggia, and Ancona, as listed in Cafarelli (2009). Distance to the nearest large river is calculated using data from Lehner and Grill (2013). McCormick et al. (2013) provides data on the network of Roman roads. Finally, we compute distances to the nearest "Fascistville", defined as a new town built under the Mussolini regime (Carillo, 2022), and to the Gothic Line, digitized from Short and Taylor (2006). From the 2011 municipality boundary shapefile (Istituto

Nazionale di Statistica, 2024a), we obtain each municipality's area (in km^2) and its mean altitude. Data on terrain ruggedness are taken from Durante et al. (2019). We digitize the 1911 Census, from which we obtain municipality-level population data, and the 1921 Census, from which we obtain population, number of families, the share of the population aged six and above, the share of the literate population, and the share of foreigners. A municipality-level malaria index is derived from Kiszewski et al. (2004) and was kindly provided to us by Buonanno et al. (2020). Data on the Fascist vote share in 1924, the Socialist vote share in 1913, the presence of a Fascist branch in 1921, Fascist violence in 1920–22, and the Socialist and Communist vote share in 1924 for a subsample of municipalities come from Acemoglu et al. (2022). We further obtain municipality-level data on Nazi violence, including indicators for at least one violent episode, the number of episodes, years of Nazi occupation, and the presence of a violent Nazi division, from INSMLI (nd). Finally, Nicola Fontana kindly shared data collected for Fontana et al. (2023, 2024), including the number of livestock in 1929, the number of businesses and employees in 1927, the number of full-time and part-time agricultural workers in 1927, and the number of agricultural holdings in 1929. As with the data on Fascist activity, these variables are not available for all municipalities.

3.5 Pre-registered Survey I

In May 2024, we implemented a first survey among approximately 2,000 adult respondents residing in the Italian regions of Abruzzo, Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria, administered through the market research company Cint.[17] The survey was designed to examine whether historical exposure to FEC troops is associated with persistent differences in attitudes toward contemporary migrant groups.

At the beginning of the survey, we collected information on respondents' country of birth, municipality of residence, and the municipalities of residence of their parents and grandparents, as well as year of birth, gender, education level, and employment status.[18] To avoid priming respondents about the historical events of interest, we then asked general questions about Italian politics and public affairs (e.g., whether they think the econ-

[17] Survey I pre-registration can be found at `https://aspredicted.org/zr28mx.pdf`. The full questionnaire is reported in Appendix A.1. We recruited in Abruzzo because we initially misidentified FEC units as being located there. No respondents from Abruzzo remain in the sample after conditioning on municipalities with either American or FEC troops.

[18] Appendix Table A.4 reports summary statistics for all respondents in Survey I in Column 1.

omy has improved over the last 10 years or whether Italy should be part of the European Union). Next, we elicited respondents' attitudes toward several immigrant groups with feeling thermometers ranging from 1 (very negative) to 7 (very positive). The immigrant groups were presented in randomized order and included French, Romanians, Moroccans, Albanians, Chinese, Syrians, Algerians, Pakistanis, Eritreans, Ukrainians, and Germans. These groups were selected to reflect major immigrant communities in Italy.

Subsequently, respondents were asked to indicate their agreement, again on a 7-point Likert scale from 1 (totally disagree) to 7 (totally agree), with ten statements about Syrian or African immigrants and ten analogous statements about Albanian immigrants. To avoid order effects, these statements were presented in two separate blocks, with block order randomized across respondents and question order randomized within each block. The statements covered economic, cultural, and security-related perceptions, including labor market competition, integration, crime, cultural enrichment, and, importantly, sexual harassment. By comparing responses between municipalities that were exposed to FEC troops and those that were not, we can identify the different drivers of negative attitudes toward Syrian immigrants, relative to Albanian immigrants. The survey concluded with a brief factual description of the Marocchinate, followed by a question asking respondents whether they were familiar with these events. In accordance with the preregistered exclusion criteria, we excluded respondents who completed the survey in less than two minutes, who did not reside in one of the target regions, or who were not born in Italy.

3.6 Pre-registered Survey II

In October 2025, we conducted a second survey with the market research company Bilendi to uncover the role of selective collective memory.[19] We surveyed approximately 3,000 adult respondents from the five regions of interest.[20] As in Survey I, in addition to standard socio-demographic characteristics, we elicited respondents' municipality of res-

[19]The full pre-analysis plan, as well as the English translation of Survey II, are available at `https://www.socialscienceregistry.org/trials/15633`.

[20]As in Survey I, we also recruited respondents from a sixth region, Abruzzo, because we initially believed some FEC units to have been located there. Consequently, and not contained in the preregistration, we remove all survey respondents from Abruzzo from our sample. Keeping these respondents does not qualitatively affect the results.

idence and the municipalities of residence for two generations of ancestors.[21] To assess the role of selective memory, half of the respondents were randomly assigned to read a short text describing the large inflow of migrants into Italy during the European Refugee Crisis, emphasizing arrivals from Syria and Northern Africa in 2015 (treatment group). The other half, instead, read about extreme weather events in Italy in the same year (control group).[22] After reading the respective text, respondents answered a factual question about it to ensure they paid attention. They could not proceed until they provided the correct answer.

All respondents were subsequently asked whether they were aware of the Marocchinate, and we recorded their response times. Building on the combined body of work on selective recall (e.g., Bordalo et al., 2020, 2025; Gennaioli and Shleifer, 2010), we hypothesize that, particularly among respondents in FEC-exposed municipalities, reminders of the Refugee Crisis would facilitate recall of the Marocchinate, resulting in a higher share of affirmative responses and faster response times. Those who answered affirmatively then provided open-ended descriptions of the events, which we use to identify respondents with misconceptions. Respondents also reported how the Marocchinate were described to them and identified the channels through which they acquired this knowledge (e.g., family, local community, schools, local or national media). This allows us to investigate how collective memory is transmitted, i.e., within families, through local social networks, or via national sources. The open-ended responses on how the Marocchinate were described to respondents are also suitable for sentiment analysis, enabling us to explore the role of emotions in the transmission of memory.

Following these questions, respondents were confronted with questions aimed at eliciting the intergenerational transmission of attitudes. As we only discuss the results in Appendix Section A.5, we relegate the description of this part of the survey to the same section. We also ask respondents about the primary motive determining their voting choice in the last election, with options including: the economy, inflation, immigration, pensions, the management of public services, national security and crime, climate change and the environment, and other. Finally, we collected retrospective voting behavior in

[21] Appendix Table A.4 shows descriptives of participants in Survey II and reports significant differences from t-tests comparing the information treatment and control group. Only 2 out of 25 variables show an imbalance at the 5% level. Our analyses in Section 4 include all sociodemographic variables as controls.

[22] Treatment and control texts were highly comparable in length and used a similar emotional tone. Both texts are reproduced in Appendix A.2.

national elections by asking respondents to report the party they voted for in the 2008, 2013, 2018, and 2022 elections.[23]

Our pre-registration defines several exclusion criteria. Respondents who completed the survey in less than three minutes were excluded. We also excluded respondents who were not born in Italy, had at least one migrant parent or two migrant grandparents, did not reside in one of the target regions, or provided invalid or non-interpretable information on the municipality of origin of their ancestors. We preregistered our estimation sample to include only respondents who either reside in FEC-exposed areas and whose ancestors all hail from FEC-exposed areas, or reside in unexposed areas and whose ancestors all hail from unexposed areas.[24] This restriction allows us to focus on respondents for whom the chance of spillover effects or selective migration is comparatively low.

4 Results

4.1 FEC Presence Predicts Atrocities

Before demonstrating the effect of FEC troop presence on far-right voting, we need to establish that FEC troop presence is predictive of sexual violence. Given that we observe FEC troop presence and atrocities with some degree of imperfection, we expect any resulting misclassification to bias our estimates downward.

Table 2 reports coefficients from linear regressions to demonstrate that troop locations are highly predictive of sexual violence. Odd columns include no additional fixed effects, while even columns include region fixed effects and hence restrict identification to within-region variation. Columns 1 and 2 use a dummy for each municipality in which Lucioli and Sabatini (1998) report rapes to have occurred. Columns 3 and 4 repeat these analyses but now utilize a dummy for municipalities in which rapes were reported by Associazione Nazionale Vittime delle "Marocchinate" (2023). Columns 5 and 6 exploit

[23]Since respondents could select only the top six parties by vote share in each election, along with an "Other" and an "I did not vote" option, we failed to include La Destra, which never ranked among the top parties nationally, although its leader, Francesco Storace, born in Cassino, obtained significant support in Lazio and Campania. This caveat restricts the usefulness of this question. We therefore use the 2013 Italian National Elections Study (Associazione ITANES, 2013) instead, in which respondents were asked who they voted for in the 2008 and 2013 elections.

[24]In the preregistration, we specify that if this definition does not allow for a sufficient sample size, we would consider a weaker version requiring only a majority of ancestors to hail from exposed/unexposed municipalities. The difference in sample size is modest (1,221 versus 1,528), so we apply the stricter definition.

Table 2: FEC Troops Predict Victimization

	Rape Dummy (Conservative)		Rape Dummy (Optimistic)		Rape Count (Optimistic)	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Dummy FEC troops	0.0823***	0.0857***	0.4966***	0.4021***	18.6604***	11.6745***
	(0.0219)	(0.0247)	(0.0423)	(0.0524)	(4.1613)	(2.6942)
Region FEs		✓		✓		✓
Observations	473	473	473	473	473	473
R^2	0.06	0.06	0.30	0.34	0.08	0.12
Mean in Control	0.00	0.00	0.08	0.08	0.32	0.32
Effect in SDs	.	.	1.83	1.49	7.85	4.91

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is a dummy for rapes as reported in Lucioli and Sabatini (1998) in Columns 1 and 2, a dummy for rapes as reported in Associazione Nazionale Vittime delle "Marocchinate" (2023) in Columns 3 and 4, and the number of rapes as reported in Associazione Nazionale Vittime delle "Marocchinate" (2023) in Columns 5 and 6. The main independent variable is a dummy for FEC troop presence. Region fixed effects are included as indicated. The level of analysis is the municipality. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

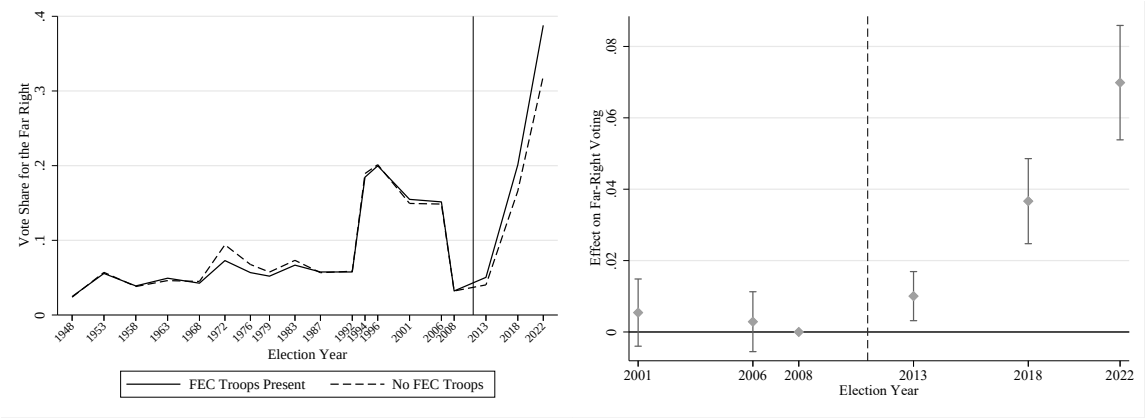
the fact that, with data from the same source, we can calculate an intensive margin measure of rape victimization by counting the total number of rapes reported in a municipality. Across all specifications, estimates are highly significant, even when restricting to within-region variation. Overall, these results paint a clear picture: despite potential under- and overreporting across sources, areas where we record FEC troop presence were much more likely to have been victimized.[25]

4.2 Voting for the Far Right

Figure 2a shows the evolution of the raw vote share for the far right separately for Italian municipalities in which FEC troops were recorded and those where they were not. Apart from some differences in the 1970s and 1980s, which coincide with the "Anni di Piombo" (Years of Lead), a turbulent period of social and political unrest marked by far-right and far-left terrorism, FEC-exposed and non-exposed municipalities voted similarly for the far right in most post-war elections. Starting with the 2013 elections, however, an increasing divergence emerges, which is precisely what our estimation strategy is designed to capture.

Figure 2b displays the event study graph estimating the annual effects of FEC exposure corresponding to Equation 1. The reference category is 2008, the last election year before the increase in migration inflows from Syria, the Middle East, and North

[25] Appendix Table A.5 furthermore shows that both troop locations and documented atrocities strongly predict the locations of memorials and commemorative activities.



(a) Raw Data: Vote Share for the Far Right (b) Event Study: Vote Share for the Far Right

Figure 2: Raw Data and Event Study

Africa into Italy beginning in 2011.[26] While far-right voting did not differ systematically between FEC-exposed and non-exposed municipalities before 2011, a positive and statistically significant effect emerges thereafter and grows over time.

Column 1 of Table 3 shows the results of estimating Equation 1 for the large migration wave after 2011. The implied effect size is economically significant: FEC troop presence raises far-right voting after 2011 by approximately 3.59 percentage points (relative to a mean of around 14%), or 0.32 standard deviations.[27]

In subsequent columns, we add control variables that we interact with year fixed effects to allow for a time-varying impact (and to avoid collinearity with the municipality fixed effects). As these interactions quickly increase the number of covariates, we limit ourselves to five control variables per category. In selecting these variables, we predominantly chose those that tend to predict troop placement, as shown in Appendix Table A.1. For demographic controls in Column 2, we use (the log of) the number of families in 1921, (the log of) the population in 1921, as well as the share of the 1921 population over the age of 6, the share of the 1921 population that can read, and the share of foreigners in the 1921 population. Geographic controls in Column 3 encompass several distances, all expressed in logs: the distance to Naples, to the nearest Roman road, to the nearest

[26] Appendix Figure A.3 shows the event study with a longer pre-period time horizon, in which the reference period is set to 1948.

[27] Appendix Table A.6 shows the analogous two-stage least squares results. Independent of which measure for victimization we use, instrumented atrocities shift far-right votes upward after 2011. We prefer to report the reduced form results throughout the paper, because the 2SLS estimates rescale the reduced form by a first stage that depends on how completely atrocities entered the historical record.

Table 3: Difference-in-Differences: Controls

	No Controls	Demographic	Geographic	Economic	Political
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
FEC troops × Post 2011	0.0359***	0.0338***	0.0142***	0.0166**	0.0219***
	(0.0042)	(0.0044)	(0.0044)	(0.0066)	(0.0059)
Municipality FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	2,818	2,648	2,624	1,046	1,016
R^2	0.87	0.89	0.93	0.92	0.93
Mean in Control	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.15	0.14
Effect in SDs	0.32	0.31	0.13	0.15	0.20

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is the share of votes for the far right. The main independent variable is a dummy for FEC troop presence interacted with a dummy for years after 2011. Column 1 does not include controls. Column 2 includes the (log of) families and of the population in the 1921 Census, the share over the age of 6, who can read, and of foreigners in the 1921 population. Column 3 includes the (log of the) distance to Naples, to the nearest Roman road, to the nearest provincial capital, and the nearest main road in 1943, as well as the malaria index. Column 4 includes (the log of) 1927 business, employees, main agricultural employees, secondary agricultural employees, and 1929 agricultural holdings over the 1921 population. Column 5 includes Fascist violence in 1920-22, the presence of a Fascist branch in 1921, the Fascist vote share in 1924, years of Nazi occupation, and the socialist and communist vote share in 1924. All controls are interacted with election-year fixed effects. The level of analysis is the municipality. The sample is restricted to the election years 2001-2022. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. Municipality and year fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

provincial capital, and to the nearest main road in 1943. We also include the malaria index. Column 4 introduces economic controls: (the log of) businesses, employees, main agricultural employees, and secondary agricultural employees in 1927 over the 1921 population, as well as (the log of) the number of agricultural holdings in 1929 over the 1921 population. Column 5 includes political controls: the occurrence of Fascist violence in 1920–1922, the presence of a Fascist branch in 1921, the Fascist vote share in 1924, years of Nazi occupation, and the socialist and communist vote share in 1924.

Across all specifications, the effect of the FEC-troops dummy after 2011 is positive and highly significant. Including geographic, economic, or political controls reduces the estimated effect by almost half, to between 0.13 and 0.20 standard deviations, but it remains highly statistically significant.

Appendix Table A.7 reports results for other groups of parties across the political spectrum. While the far right saw the largest gain, center-right parties also increased

their vote share. These gains seem to have come at the expense of centrist parties, which lost substantial support.

4.3 Voting for the Far Right: Robustness Checks

To verify that our results are robust to several challenges to our identification strategy, we provide a range of robustness checks in the appendix. Appendix Table A.8 addresses issues of across-municipality spillovers. We demonstrate that our estimates remain highly significant, albeit with lower magnitudes, by including region-by-year fixed effects, thereby effectively comparing effects over time only between municipalities within the same Italian region. When including province-by-year fixed effects, to use only time-varying within-province variation to identify causal effects, the estimates barely miss statistical significance ($p = 0.183$), but, reassuringly, the coefficient remains of similar magnitude to the case with region-by-year fixed effects. The loss of precision reflects a substantial reduction in identifying variation: province-by-year fixed effects render the treatment perfectly collinear with the fixed effects in 13 of 24 provinces. Appendix Figure A.5 provides complementary evidence that the loss of significance reflects reduced precision. The figure reports treatment effects while progressively expanding the maximum distance between unexposed municipalities and the nearest FEC-exposed municipality. Estimates are large and statistically significant when the comparison group is restricted to municipalities bordering FEC-exposed municipalities, and remain remarkably stable as we include more distant municipalities. To account for spillovers of troop exposure across neighboring municipalities, the last two columns of Appendix Table A.8 also show that our results hold when aggregating data at the province level, defining exposure either as the average of municipality-level FEC exposure indicators within a province or the number of municipalities in the province that ever hosted FEC troops. Appendix Figure A.6 explores whether the effect depends on the interaction of American troop presence with FEC troop presence. The resulting estimates show that FEC exposure has sizable, statistically significant effects, regardless of whether the municipality also hosted American troops, although American troop presence seems to attenuate the effect's magnitude somewhat.

To address concerns that the strong nationwide shift in far-right voting after 2011 mechanically increases the treatment effect, Appendix Figure A.7 plots the event study

using the natural logarithm of far-right voting as the dependent variable. The resulting pattern is very similar. Appendix Figure A.8 shows that the three far-right parties that contested elections both before and after 2011, Lega, Fiamma Tricolore, and La Destra, all individually gain vote share in FEC-exposed municipalities after 2011. These gains, even for minor parties, are consistent with a broad shift in far-right sentiment rather than voters merely updating their beliefs about how many others will vote far right.

Recent work by Conley and Kelly (2025) has challenged the interpretation of many persistence studies due to the high spatial correlation of treatment measures. We address this criticism in three ways. First, Appendix Table A.9 presents results using Conley standard errors (Conley, 1999) with cutoffs of 10 km, 20 km, 50 km, and 100 km. Although standard errors increase with higher cutoffs, the estimates remain highly significant even at 100 km. Second, we perform tests for spatial unit roots following Müller and Watson (2024); Becker et al. (2026). We reject that our independent variable is I(0) ($p = 0.030$) and I(1) ($p = 0.086$): spatially differencing the variables and using SCPC inference does not affect the significance level or direction of the estimated effect (Column 6 of Appendix Table A.9). Third, we present two spatial-noise synthetic outcome exercises following Conley and Kelly (2025) in Appendix Table A.10. Our dataset contains two spatial measures relative to a fixed point: the distance to Rome and the distance to Naples. As these contain potential spatial correlation that we already control for, we provide one synthetic outcome exercise for each. Reassuringly, the low Moran statistic indicates that the correlation between each residual and its nearest neighbor is close to zero, ruling out substantial local spatial noise. The low R^2 indicates limited explanatory power of simple smooth spatial trends. The column labeled "Synth p" indicates that we reject the null hypothesis that the treatment effect is attributable to spatial noise for all cluster sizes when including distance to Naples, and for most clusters when including distance to Rome (highest p-value = 0.127). Employing BCH cluster corrections with any number of clusters (Bester et al., 2011) still yields highly significant treatment estimates (Column labeled "Est p") for the distance to Naples, although confidence intervals widen. For distance to Rome, using 5 or 6 clusters yields confidence intervals that narrowly miss statistical significance ($p = 0.139$ and $p = 0.109$). Overall, these results indicate that the observed spatial dependence is largely captured by our controls and that our findings are robust to spatial noise and spatial unit roots.

Appendix Table A.11 demonstrates in "leave-one-out" regressions that no single Italian region is driving our results. Appendix Table A.12 further shows that the effects are not driven by locations close to major Italian Campaign sites (Rome, Naples, or Cassino) by removing municipalities within a 30 km radius.

To assuage remaining concerns regarding the slight imbalance of control variables reported in the balance table, we proceed in two steps. First, Appendix Table A.13 performs horse races between the FEC troop dummy and other covariates that appeared significant in the first two columns of the balance table. Across all specifications, the FEC troop dummy remains highly significant, although its magnitude is sometimes reduced. Second, Appendix Figure A.9 reports horse race regressions as reported in Appendix Table A.13, but for all control variables. Most control variables do not materially affect the estimated difference-in-differences coefficient, and even when they do, the coefficient remains significantly different from zero.[28]

Another worry may concern selective migration, both internally and in residential choices of immigrants. Appendix Table A.14 presents heterogeneity results by population-share quintiles in 2011 for those who moved into the municipality that year. The effect is similar and significant across all specifications. Appendix Figure A.11 illustrates an event study of immigration patterns of various nationalities in FEC-exposed versus non-exposed municipalities. As the graph shows, some nationalities exhibit upward or downward trends over time, but migrants from Syria and Northern Africa are not more or less likely to settle in FEC-exposed areas. Appendix Figure A.12 shows that the effects do not vary starkly in municipalities that had a refugee reception center in 2017. Appendix Table A.15 shows smaller, yet statistically significant, estimated effect sizes in the top half of municipalities in terms of the 2011 share of Moroccans or Syrians of the total population (versus the bottom half). The significant results across all columns emphasize that the migration shock was truly nationwide (through perceptions shaped by media coverage), rather than limited to municipalities where the inflow actually occurred. The reduced effect sizes are also consistent with lower far-right potential due to greater scope for intergroup contact (see, for instance, Achard et al., 2025), but could also arise in a framework of selective recall like Bordalo et al. (2025), where the need to

[28] Appendix Figure A.10 repeats the same exercise but without log-transforming any control variables. Doing so does not qualitatively affect the results.

simulate immigrants' behavior decreases as first-hand knowledge about their behavior increases.

To show that effects are unique to the unprecedented influx of migrants, and that other large economic and political nationwide events did not trigger similar reactivation, Columns 3 and 4 of Appendix Table A.16 show that FEC troop deployment did not lead to differential far-right voting after the Oil Crisis and the violent Anni di Piombo in the 1970s.[29] In Columns 5 and 6, we use the Irpinia earthquake, which rocked parts of Campania in 1980 (Cipollone and Rosolia, 2007), as a counterfactual variation in space and time. None of the coefficients is large in magnitude or statistically significant at conventional levels. Further, we present kernel density estimates from a randomization inference exercise with 1,000 repetitions in Appendix Figure A.13. The left panel only shuffles the cross-sectional treatment assignment (troop locations), whereas the right panel shuffles both: troop locations and years defined as treated. In both cases, our true treatment effects extend well beyond the kernel density estimates.

Finally, we present heterogeneous treatment effects by splitting municipalities into quintiles of the 2011 population (Appendix Table A.17) and of their 2008 far-right vote share (Appendix Table A.18). The effects are statistically significant across almost all specifications. The effect across voting quintiles tends to decline as the far-right vote share in 2008 increases. Furthermore, the effect for municipalities in the highest population quintile is not distinguishable from zero. This is unsurprising, as these are urban locations (with an average population of approximately 100,000) that tend to offer fewer electoral opportunities for the far right (Kenny and Luca, 2021).

4.4 Voting for the Far Right: An Earlier Migration Shock

While we have demonstrated contagion, i.e., that historical exposure to FEC-related atrocities drives a shift toward the far right in the wake of a large influx of (different) migrants, one pressing question remains: Does any sort of salient migration inflow trigger such contagion, or does it require additional factors that make the recent inflow of migrants unique?

[29] We set the post period to 1969, as this marked the beginning of the Anni di Piombo (Costalli et al., 2025). The Oil Crisis in Italy began in 1973; using years after 1973 as the cutoff does not qualitatively alter the results. These regressions exclude periods after 2008 to avoid accidentally capturing the effects of recent migration waves.

Table 4: Difference-in-Differences: 1990s Migration Shock

	No Controls	Demographic	Geographic	Economic	Political
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
FEC troops × Post 1990	0.0050*	0.0042	-0.0010	-0.0048	-0.0043
	(0.0027)	(0.0028)	(0.0032)	(0.0036)	(0.0040)
Municipality FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	7,432	7,062	6,619	2,800	2,710
R^2	0.81	0.82	0.85	0.85	0.90
Mean in Control	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.07	0.08
Effect in SDs	0.07	0.06	-0.01	-0.08	-0.07

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is the share of votes for the far right. The main independent variable is a dummy for FEC troop presence interacted with a dummy for years after 1990. Column 1 does not include controls. Column 2 includes the (log of) families and of the population in the 1921 Census, the share over the age of 6, who can read, and of foreigners in the 1921 population. Column 3 includes the (log of the) distance to Naples, to the nearest Roman road, to the nearest provincial capital, and the nearest main road in 1943, as well as the malaria index. Column 4 includes (the log of) 1927 business, employees, main agricultural employees, secondary agricultural employees, and 1929 agricultural holdings over the 1921 population. Column 5 includes Fascist violence in 1920-22, the presence of a Fascist branch in 1921, the Fascist vote share in 1924, years of Nazi occupation, and the socialist and communist vote share in 1924. All controls are interacted with election-year fixed effects. The level of analysis is the municipality. The sample is restricted to the election years 1948-2008. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. Municipality and year fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table 4 presents results analogous to Table 3, but uses the sudden and unprecedented influx of Albanians and other migrants from the former Yugoslavia into Italy in the 1990s as the source of temporal variation. Following the fall of the Iron Curtain, Albania was plagued by severe food shortages that quickly escalated into social unrest, prompting many Albanians to leave the country. On August 8, 1991, the cargo ship *Vlora* arrived in the port of Bari, carrying 10,000–20,000 Albanians, catching Italian authorities off guard. After this initial and widely publicized event, Italy, a country previously characterized primarily by emigration, sought to curb Albanian migration inflows, but undocumented migration continued. Similarly, refugees from war-torn former Yugoslavia (initially mostly from Bosnia, later also from Kosovo) made their way onto Italian shores throughout much of the 1990s.

The estimated effect in Column 1 of Table 4 is barely significant, much smaller in size, and disappears upon inclusion of control variables. The event study in Appendix Figure A.4 furthermore shows clear signs of pre-trends; in any case, there appear to be

no robust detectable effects on the far-right vote share. These findings emphasize that the large influx of migrants beginning in 2011 was unique in its ability to shift voting toward the far right.

4.5 Voting for the Far Right: African American Units

A remaining concern is that FEC troop exposure captures not the atrocities themselves but a more generic experience: A large-scale encounter between rural Italian communities and visibly distinct foreign soldiers. Under this alternative, the post-2011 shift could reflect latent reactions to racial or ethnic difference per se, reactivated by the arrival of new migrants who are themselves visibly distinct, rather than the memory of violence.

To distinguish between these explanations, we exploit variation in the presence of African American units, which provides a contemporaneous comparison within the same military campaign. Historical research on African American troops emphasizes the positive relationships that many of these soldiers cultivated with Italian civilians (O'Connell, 2021), in contrast to the distinctive, large-scale episode of violence associated with the FEC troops. If mere exposure to visibly distinct soldiers were sufficient to generate contagion, municipalities exposed to African American units should exhibit a post-2011 shift similar to that of FEC-exposed municipalities. We restrict our sample to municipalities exposed to American troops but never to FEC troops. This ensures that any estimated effect cannot reflect FEC exposure. Within this sample, we compare municipalities exposed to African American units with those exposed only to white US units, before and after 2011.

Table 5 reports the results. In Columns 1 and 2, we use a dummy for the presence of African American units, the closest analog to our measure of FEC exposure in the preceding regressions. Columns 3 and 4 use the count of African American units in a municipality (in 100s of units), and Columns 5 and 6 use the natural logarithm of 1+ the unit count. We find no evidence that exposure to African American units increased far-right voting after 2011. Across all specifications, the estimated effects are small and negative. Given the estimated effect sizes and direction, we can rule out effects as large as those we estimated for FEC exposure. The small and negative, sometimes precisely

Table 5: Difference-in-Differences: Black Units

	Black Units Dummy		Black Units Count		Log of Black Units Count	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Black US Units × Post 2011	-0.0007	-0.0032				
	(0.0053)	(0.0036)				
# of Black US Units (in 100s) × Post 2011			-0.0002	-0.0032**		
			(0.0015)	(0.0014)		
Log of # of Black US Units × Post 2011					-0.0006	-0.0016*
					(0.0014)	(0.0009)
Municipality FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Region × Year FEs		✓		✓		✓
Observations	1,862	1,862	1,862	1,862	1,862	1,862
R^2	0.85	0.92	0.85	0.92	0.85	0.92
Mean in Control	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14
Effect in SDs	-0.01	-0.03	-0.00	-0.03	-0.01	-0.01

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is the share of votes for the far right. The main independent variable is a dummy for the presence of African American units in Columns 1 and 2, the count of African American units (in 100s) in Columns 3 and 4, and the natural logarithm of 1+ the count of African American units in Columns 5 and 6. The level of analysis is the municipality. The sample is restricted to the election years 2001-2022. Only municipalities exposed to American troops but not to FEC troops are included. Region fixed effects are included as indicated. Municipality and year fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

estimated, coefficients are consistent with the findings of Schindler and Westcott (2021) for the United Kingdom.[30]

These results underscore that contagion does not arise from mere exposure to a visibly distinct out-group. Absent a legacy of atrocities, exposure to African American units did not generate a comparable post-2011 increase in far-right voting.

4.6 Survey I: Attitudes toward Migrants

To establish the link between exposure to FEC-related atrocities and the recent shift toward the far right, we administered Survey I. As discussed in Section 3.5, the survey elicited different views of contemporary migrant groups, including perceptions related to sexual harassment of Italian women. We define exposed respondents as individuals who currently reside in a municipality that hosted FEC troops and whose relevant ancestors were also residing in municipalities that did so.[31] Respondents are classified as

[30] They report tiny effect sizes of around 0.02 standard deviations, similar to the magnitudes estimated here.

[31] This sample selection is identical to the one we pre-registered and applied for Survey II. The average age at first birth in Italy has historically been around 25 years (Istituto Nazionale di Statistica, 2024b). For respondents born before 1964, we use parental place of residence; for respondents born in or after 1964, we additionally use grandparents' place of residence.

unexposed if neither they nor their relevant ancestors were residing in municipalities with recorded FEC troop presence.

Figure 3 reports the estimated exposure coefficients for each of the ten elicited views, separately for Albanians and for Syrians or Africans.[32] Each bar represents a linear regression in which the dependent variable is the level of agreement with a specific statement, and the main regressor is a dummy variable for FEC exposure. As we elicited agreement with each statement once for Albanians and once for Syrians/Africans, the figure presents two bars for each statement. All specifications control for age, gender, education, and employment status, with standard errors clustered at the municipality level.[33] All estimates for Albanians are small and statistically insignificant, indicating little difference in reported views between respondents from exposed and unexposed municipalities. In contrast, the estimates for Syrians or Africans are generally larger in magnitude and, in many cases, statistically significant. This contrast mirrors the electoral patterns documented above, in which far-right support increases following the European Refugee Crisis but responds much less to earlier migration from Albania and former Yugoslavia.[34]

Among the different motives elicited, perceived sexual harassment stands out, as the estimated coefficient is the largest in magnitude, albeit only slightly: Respondents in municipalities with FEC exposure, relative to those without, are more likely to agree with the statement that Syrian or African immigrants harass Italian women. The difference between this estimate and the estimate for Albanians is also statistically significant (see Appendix Table A.19), as are the differences in statements regarding labor market competition, assimilation, economic impact, and criminal activity. Taken together, among the variety of factors associated with more negative attitudes toward Syrian or African immigrants, the relative prominence of sexual-misconduct concerns is consistent with respondents mapping historical experiences with FEC troops onto contemporary migrant groups.

[32]Whether respondents received all statements for Albanians or Syrians/Africans first was randomized. To avoid potential order effects, we compare responses between subjects, i.e., we compare respondents who first answered questions about Syrians or Africans to those who first answered questions about Albanians.

[33]Results are robust to the inclusion of region fixed effects (see Appendix Figure A.14).

[34]One caveat is, of course, that Albanians have settled in Italy for much longer, giving respondents substantially more time to correct their beliefs about them. If that were the case, however, we would have expected to observe similar far-right swings in the electoral data at the time of their arrival, which we do not.

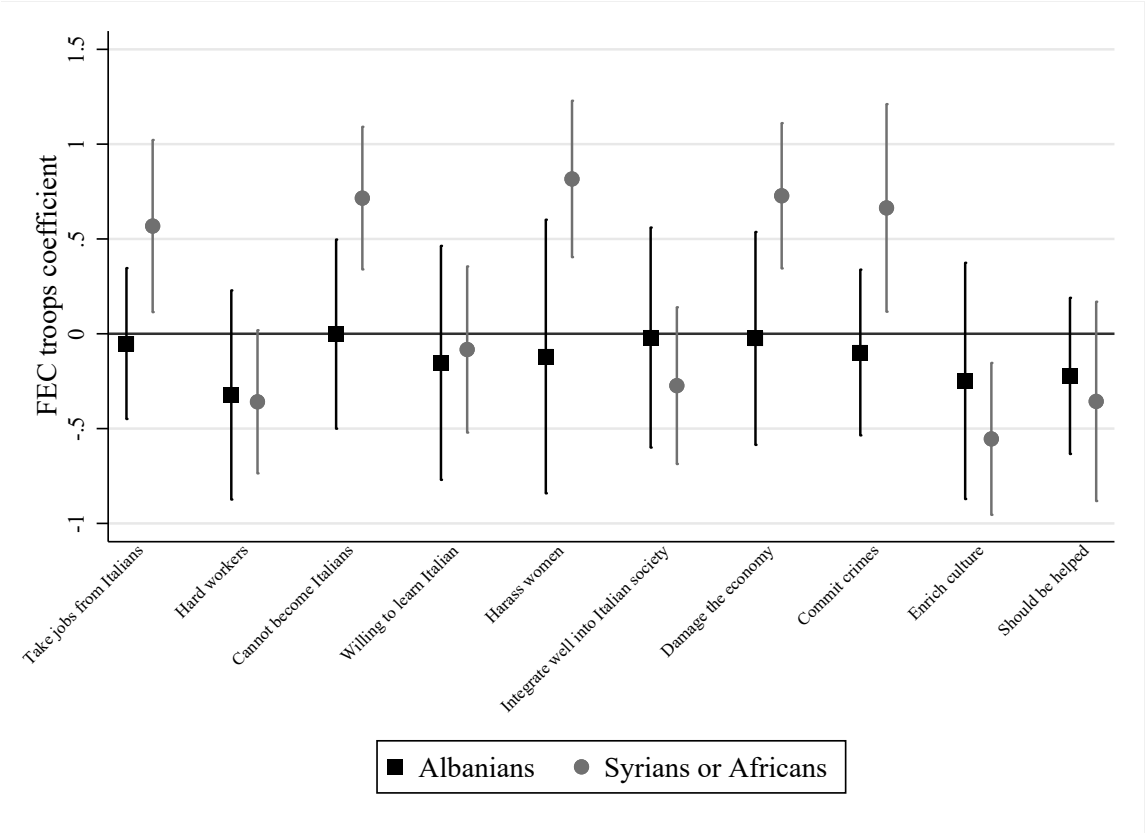


Figure 3: Survey I: Different Views on Albanians and Syrians or Africans

Consistent with the presence of local collective memory of the Marocchinate, respondents in FEC-exposed municipalities are also approximately 7 percentage points (equal to 0.14 standard deviations) more likely to report awareness of these episodes than respondents in non-exposed areas, although the difference is not statistically significant ($p = 0.125$).

Finally, Appendix Figure A.15 presents the mean feeling thermometer ratings for various immigrant groups, separately for municipalities with and without FEC exposure. The graphs show particularly low ratings for immigrants from Syria and Morocco (but also from Albania and other nations). Only Germans and French are, on average, rated above neutral, while Ukrainians and Chinese are essentially viewed as neutral. In FEC-exposed municipalities, ratings for the negatively viewed nationalities are even lower than in non-exposed municipalities.

4.7 Survey II: Selective Recall of Collective Memory

One mechanism that may explain the non-linearity we document is that the accelerating inflow of migrants triggered recall of the Marocchinate, stored in collective memory, which influenced beliefs and thereby produced contagion. One such conceptualization is described in Bordalo et al. (2025). They model how individuals form beliefs about previously unexperienced events under limited recall, assuming they use past memory to simulate potential outcomes. Because stored memories compete for retrieval, experiences that are more similar to the target event are more likely to be recalled and to influence the simulation. At the same time, experiences from unrelated domains can crowd out the retrieval of more informative ones, biasing beliefs when recall is limited. In our setting, the mechanism could operate as follows: Perceived similarities between immigrants from Syria and North Africa and the FEC troops involved in the Marocchinate cue recall of the atrocities from collective memory. These atrocities are uninformative about the expected conduct of the contemporary immigrants.[35] Their salience and the perceived similarity between the two groups, however, may give this memory excessive weight in the simulation, eventually driving the shift to the far right. While Bordalo et al. (2025) provide one formalization of selective recall consistent with our findings, we do not treat our analysis as a structural test of their specific model. Our findings are instead consistent with a broader class of work in which the environment, rather than deliberate choice, cues what comes to mind (Mullainathan, 2002; Gennaioli and Shleifer, 2010; Bordalo et al., 2020).

We designed Survey II to test this mechanism directly. In analyzing Survey II, we follow the pre-analysis plan with two exceptions. First, we had pre-registered the inclusion of both municipality-level and respondent-level controls in the regressions. However, municipality-level controls are often highly collinear with the regressor of interest, making inference impossible. We therefore include only respondent-level controls (age, occupation, gender, civil status, and education level). Second, as described in Section 3.6, the survey question on voting history omitted a locally important far-right party, rendering it largely uninformative. As an alternative, we present descriptive evidence from the

[35] According to crime data by Statistics Italy, which is displayed in Appendix Figure A.16, both Albanians and Syrians are similarly often listed as offenders of sexual crimes, namely around 0.02–0.04 per 100 residents of the respective nationality. These similarities suggest that our treatment effects capture some form of associative contagion from FEC troops to Syrians, rather than a well-founded fear of substantially more misconduct by Syrians vis-à-vis Albanians.

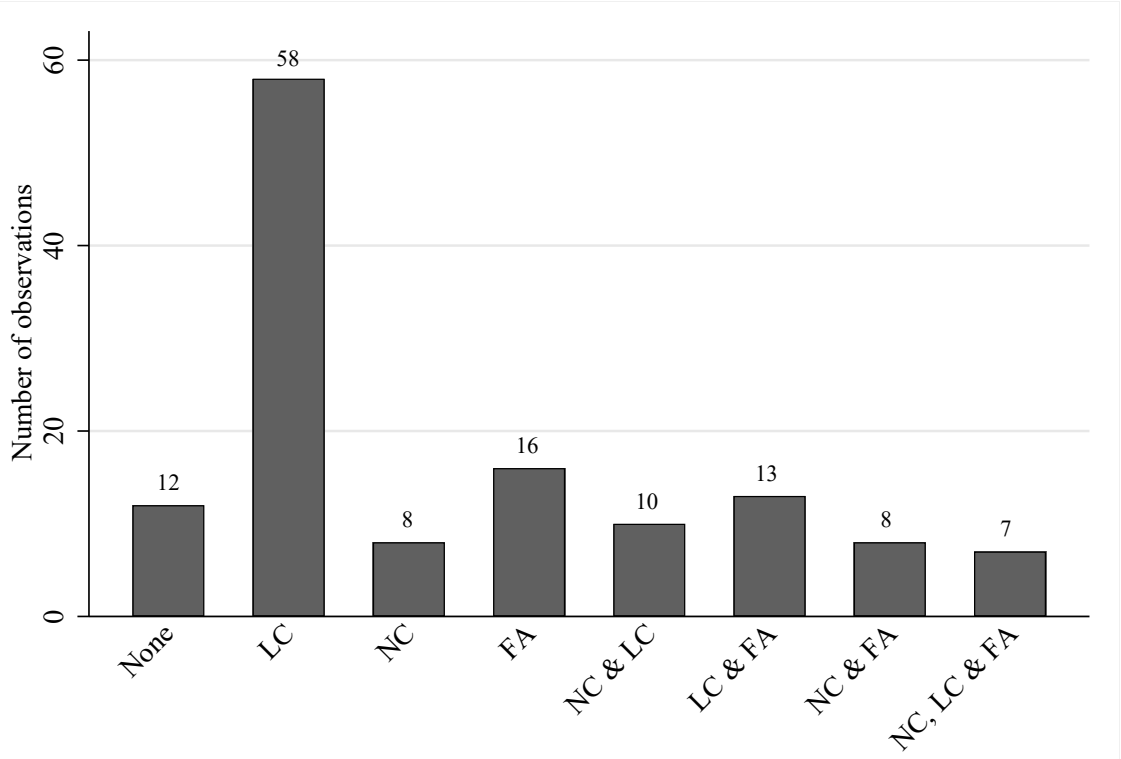


Figure 4: Survey II: Source of Memory

2013 ITANES survey (Associazione ITANES, 2013). All exploratory analyses are clearly marked as such.

Figure 4 shows the channels through which respondents in FEC-exposed areas learned about the Marocchinate. We categorize the sources they list as local (e.g., friends, neighbors, local organizations, schools), national (e.g., national newspapers), or familial. While many respondents report multiple sources, 88 of 132 report having learned from local sources. We take this as evidence that collective memory in FEC-exposed municipalities is alive and actively shared.

Table 6 reports results pertaining to contagion through collective memory. The outcome variable in Columns 1 and 2 is an indicator of whether respondents (correctly) knew what the Marocchinate were. As the first row shows, exposure to a reminder about the recent migration inflow increases the probability of correctly recalling the atrocities committed by FEC soldiers. This demonstrates selective recall: Perceived similarities between FEC soldiers and Syrian and North African refugees raise the probability of recalling the historical atrocities. The second row shows that respondents from FEC-exposed areas are

Table 6: Survey II: Collective Memory

	Knows Marocchinate		Response Time		Sentiment	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Syrian information treatment	0.0463*	0.0473*	4.6700	4.2041	0.0619	0.1274
	(0.0274)	(0.0268)	(4.5235)	(4.0289)	(0.1575)	(0.1602)
FEC troops	0.1257***	0.1191***	-1.8388	-6.7238	0.1131	0.2231
	(0.0361)	(0.0375)	(1.4227)	(6.5775)	(0.1541)	(0.1937)
Information treatment × FEC troops	-0.0259	-0.0239	-0.7590	0.4114	-0.3086	-0.3662
	(0.0428)	(0.0405)	(3.6221)	(2.5436)	(0.2580)	(0.2620)
Region FEs		✓		✓		✓
Observations	1,181	1,181	1,181	1,181	260	260
R^2	0.17	0.18	0.03	0.04	0.37	0.39
Mean in Control	0.18	0.18	9.46	9.46	-0.45	-0.45
Effect in SDs (Row 3)	-0.07	-0.06	-0.01	0.01	-0.34	-0.41

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable in Columns 1 and 2 is a dummy indicating whether a respondent knows about the Marocchinate, the response time to this question in Columns 3 and 4, and the emotional sentiment of their answer to the question of how the Marocchinate were told to them (scale from -1 = negative to +1 = positive). The main independent variables are a dummy for whether they received the Syrian information treatment (with the weather information control as the omitted category), a dummy for FEC troop presence, and the interaction between them. The included control variables are age, gender, education level, civil status, and occupation. The level of analysis is the respondent. The sample includes only respondents who currently reside and whose ancestors were also born in municipalities that hosted FEC troops, and respondents who currently reside and whose ancestors were also born in municipalities that did not host FEC troops. The observations included are restricted to respondents residing in the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only respondents from municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. In Columns 5 and 6, the sample is further restricted to only respondents who knew the term Marocchinate. Region fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

more likely to know about the Marocchinate, indicating that memory is predominantly local, in line with the anecdotal evidence in Section 2.3.[36] To explain the differential shift to the far right in FEC-exposed municipalities, we had also hypothesized a positive and significant coefficient on the interaction between FEC exposure and the treatment. The estimates, however, are indistinguishable from zero. This suggests that, while memory of these events is predominantly local, the sudden influx of migrants did not differentially affect their (selective) recall across municipalities. Columns 3 and 4 repeat the analysis using response times to the recall question as the outcome. The results are inconclusive, which we find unsurprising ex post: The treatment could lead to shorter response times (as information is recalled more quickly) or longer response times (as, without it, respondents quickly realize they do not know the answer). We nevertheless present these results, as pre-registered.

[36]This test for local collective memory is arguably superior to the one in Survey I, where we describe the Marocchinate and ask whether respondents knew of them, rather than asking them about the events and filtering out those who cannot describe them correctly.

Given the lack of an interaction effect in Columns 1 and 2, we carry out an additional exploratory analysis that may help explain why FEC-exposed municipalities shift differentially to the far right. One possible channel is the emotions respondents attach to the retrieved memory. For example, thinking about the atrocities may evoke stronger emotional responses in those who can link them to distant family members or who intimately know the places where they took place. Therefore, we apply FEEL-IT (Bianchi et al., 2021), a benchmark Italian sentiment-analysis corpus, to respondents' descriptions of how the Marocchinate were conveyed to them.[37] Because only 260 survey respondents (after applying the same sample restrictions as before) report knowing the Marocchinate, we rely primarily on non-parametric tests and use regressions to provide descriptive support for the test results. The average emotional valence (measured on a scale from -1 to $+1$) for those who received the treatment is -0.44 in non-exposed and -0.83 in FEC-exposed municipalities (Mann-Whitney test: $p = 0.008$). For respondents who did not receive the treatment, the average emotional valence is -0.48 in non-exposed municipalities and -0.65 in FEC-exposed municipalities (Mann-Whitney test: $p = 0.346$). The results in Columns 5 and 6 of Table 6 paint a similar picture. Although not statistically significant at conventional levels ($p = 0.235$ and $p = 0.166$), likely due to the small sample size, the implied magnitude of the interaction effect is substantial, up to 0.41 standard deviations. These findings suggest that selective recall of collective memory, coupled with the emotions attached to ancestral experience (Bolte and Raymond, 2025; Conlon, 2025), is a likely channel for the contagion of prejudice.

We discuss the role of direct attitude transmission in Appendix Section A.5. Finally, in Appendix Table A.20, we show descriptive evidence that survey respondents from FEC-exposed areas are more likely (though not significantly so, $p = 0.111$) to report migration as a top concern for their 2022 vote, and that in the 2013 ITANES, respondents in FEC-exposed areas are more likely to switch to the far right.[38]

[37] FEEL-IT was originally developed to detect sentiment in tweets, making it well suited to detecting emotional valence in short survey responses.

[38] The exploratory voting-choice regression includes individual fixed effects, so it detects within-person changes in vote choice. We treat this as merely descriptive, since the significant effect relies on just two out of 125 respondents switching far-right status from 2008 to 2013.

4.8 The Role of Politics and Media

The human tendency to selectively recall Marocchinate when primed by the influx of refugees naturally applies not only to voters but also to politicians and the media, who could have strategically made the connection visible to voters. As not every voter might have made the connection themselves (the Syrian information treatment only raised knowledge of Marocchinate by 4.5 percentage points, compared to an average 3.6 percentage point swing to the far right after 2011, with 7 percentage points in the 2022 elections), such interventions may have amplified effects (similar to, e.g., Ochsner and Roesel, 2024). Finding evidence that politicians or the media were picking up on Marocchinate, therefore, does not challenge the validity of our uncovered mechanism; rather, it helps explain the magnitude of the effect by accounting for amplification.

Appendix Figure A.17 plots the number of mentions of Marocchinate per 1,000 published newspaper articles in Italian news outlets using data from Factiva (2026). The mentions substantially increase around the year 2016 and remain high afterward, while being relatively flat and low before.[39] The included articles were published in a wide variety of local and national newspapers of various political leanings, as well as news agencies. The most frequent mentions of Marocchinate appear in articles by the news agencies Adnkronos and ANSA, and in the newspapers Il Messaggero (a large, national newspaper with a liberal-conservative stance) and Il Giornale (a large, national newspaper with a center-right stance). Some of the articles make explicit links between the Marocchinate and the waves of immigrants. For example, a reader letter published in Il Giornale (Cantarano, 2017) writes: "After the rapes and violence perpetrated by so-called 'political refugees,' I cannot help but think of the Moroccan rapes of Italian women during the Second World War, perpetrated perhaps by the ancestors of these criminals captured a few days ago." An article about controversial writer Francesca Totolo in La Stampa (Viarengo, 2025) cites her with "It's a well-known fact that foreigners commit acts of violence against women at a rate six times higher than Italians.[...] We're not concerned about the white Italian male, but about the tribal, anti-feminist culture that was imported from foreign countries. We're now at the stage of 'Marocchinate 2.0'."

The newspaper articles similarly reveal how politicians exploited the Marocchinate by linking it to recent migration inflows. For example, FdI is criticized in the local news-

[39] We find it important to note that the overall scale of mentions of Marocchinate is low; at its peak, only 2 out of 100,000 newspaper articles contain the expression.

paper Avellino Today for demanding a remembrance day for the victims of the Marocchinate as part of a broader nativist agenda (Luigi Caputo, 2022). Further, Senator Massimo Ruspandini from FdI proposed a bill to establish a commission of inquiry into the violence perpetrated against Italian women during the Marocchinate. After the Senate rejected the bill, he commented, referencing the gruesome and widely publicized murder of Desirèe Mariottini by African migrants a few days earlier: "Unfortunately, this is an extremely timely issue in this time of emergency regarding rapes by foreigners, as the tragedy of little Desirèe, also brutally raped by 'invading African troops', dramatically reminded us. A commission of inquiry into the Marocchinate would have been a tribute to her too." (ANSA, 2018).

These patterns suggest that the political consequences of refugee inflows were shaped not only by voters' own associative recall but also potentially reinforced and magnified by the associations of politicians and the media. This could help explain a broader shift to the far right than the individual-level results on memory selectivity would suggest. The broader implication is that even behavioral biases affecting only very few people can have large aggregate consequences if amplified by actors with a wide reach.

5 Conclusion

During the Allied campaign to liberate Italy in World War II, thousands of Italian women were raped by (mostly Moroccan) soldiers of the French Expeditionary Corps. These atrocities have entered the collective memory of local communities as the Marocchinate. In this paper, we have demonstrated that they have long-lasting yet nonlinear political consequences. For most of the Italian Republic's history, citizens in areas exposed to FEC soldiers voted like their unexposed peers. Only after the influx of refugees from Syria and North Africa, which began with the 2011 Arab Spring and intensified during the European Refugee Crisis of the mid-2010s, did areas that encountered FEC troops start to vote differentially more for far-right parties. We find no such shift during Italy's first salient migration wave in the 1990s, when large numbers of Albanians and former Yugoslavs arrived on Italian shores, or in areas that hosted African American troops during WWII; soldiers who constituted a visibly distinct out-group, yet were not involved in atrocities. This contrast points to a contagion of prejudice: the far right gained ground only when the arriving migrants were perceived as similar to the original perpetrators and in places

where they committed atrocities. Through survey evidence, we document that fear of sexual misconduct by Syrians, but not by Albanians, may be among the driving factors behind this contagion.

Collective memory, in turn, may have been the link that allowed this fear of sexual misconduct to carry over from the wartime perpetrators to a new out-group. We show that collective memory likely remained dormant for decades and, through perceived similarities, was selectively recalled by voters, in line with recent work on the selectivity of memory. Our exploratory analyses suggest that the emotions attached to this memory are shaped by the link respondents make between the historical atrocities and the recent arrival of new out-groups.

Of course, our difference-in-differences estimates only capture relative effect sizes. The far right in Italy has gained tremendously over the past decade (from around 15% in the early 2000s to 35% in the most recent election). Our estimated effect size of around 3.5% can therefore explain only a modest fraction of this overall shift. Still, our findings show that selective recall of collective memory, in interaction with adverse historical events, is an important determinant of far-right voting.

Our findings carry large potential implications. They suggest that political reactions to migration shocks cannot be fully understood without accounting for how historical experiences are cognitively organized and selectively recalled. Even when direct exposure to violence lies several generations in the past, collective memories can remain latent and become politically consequential when contemporary events evoke perceived similarities. In this sense, historical trauma does not mechanically translate into persistent hostility; rather, it can re-emerge in nonlinear ways, contingent on the nature of subsequent shocks and the idiosyncratic nature of selective memory retrieval. These findings should not be read as questioning the value of preserving the memory of atrocities that scarred local communities. Rather, they point to the need for care in how such memories are framed and invoked, since similarity-based recall may associate them with contemporary groups and events to which they are, in fact, of little relevance.

More broadly, this paper contributes to a growing body of work seeking to understand decision processes that draw on memory, both personal and collective. Understanding how past experiences are retrieved, reinterpreted, and emotionally weighted may be crucial for explaining sudden behavioral shifts. Future research should exam-

ine more closely how emotions shape the activation of collective memory, and whether similar mechanisms operate in other historical and geographic contexts.

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A Appendix

A.1 Survey I (English translation)

1. Please indicate your current place of residence. <Dropdowns: Region / Province / Municipality>
   (If the municipality is not available, select "(not required)".)

2. What is the highest level of education you have completed? <Dropdown>

3. What is your gender? <Dropdown>

4. What is your year of birth? <Dropdown>

5. Which of the following best describes your current employment situation? <Dropdown>

6. Were you born in a country other than Italy? <Yes/No>
   If yes: please specify the country. <Input>

7. Is at least one of your parents an immigrant in Italy from abroad? <Yes/No>

8. In which municipality did your ancestors reside in 1945? You may enter information for up to six ancestors.

   a. Father: <Input>

   b. Mother: <Input>

   c. Paternal grandfather: <Input>

   d. Paternal grandmother: <Input>

   e. Maternal grandfather: <Input>

   f. Maternal grandmother: <Input>

   Instructions: provide the most precise information possible; leave blank if unknown; if an ancestor lived outside Italy, write the country name.

9. How much do you agree with each statement? <Slider: 1–7 (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree)>

a. Overall, immigrants bring a benefit to Italy.

b. Refugees coming from Syria and Africa should not be welcomed in Italy.

c. Interactions with the Muslim community contribute positively to Italian society.

d. It is a good thing that Italy belongs to the European Union.

e. Italian politicians care more about their own interests than those of voters.

f. The Italian economy is stronger now than it was 10 years ago.

10. How positively do you evaluate each group of immigrants? <Slider: 1–7 (1 = very negative, 7 = very positive)>

    a. Germans

    b. Moroccans

    c. French

    d. Ukrainians

    e. Eritreans

    f. Syrians

    g. Romanians

    h. Pakistanis

    i. Albanians

    j. Algerians

    k. Chinese

11. Now consider immigrants from Albania. How much do you agree with each statement? <Slider: 1–7>

    a. These immigrants take jobs away from Italians.

    b. These immigrants often harass Italian women.

    c. These immigrants will never be able to become true Italians.

    d. These immigrants work hard.

    e. These immigrants work hard to learn the Italian language.

f. These immigrants enrich Italian culture.

g. These immigrants often commit crimes.

h. These immigrants harm the Italian economy.

i. We should help these immigrants.

j. These immigrants will integrate well into Italian society.

12. Now consider immigrants from Syria and Africa. How much do you agree with each statement? <Slider: 1–7>

    a. These immigrants take jobs away from Italians.

    b. These immigrants often commit crimes.

    c. We should help these immigrants.

    d. These immigrants harm the Italian economy.

    e. These immigrants often harass Italian women.

    f. These immigrants will never be able to become true Italians.

    g. These immigrants work hard to learn the Italian language.

    h. These immigrants work hard.

    i. These immigrants will integrate well into Italian society.

    j. These immigrants enrich Italian culture.

13. The term Marocchinate is used to refer to episodes of mass sexual violence and killings committed during the Italian campaign of the Second World War by Moroccan soldiers, who were colonial troops of the French Expeditionary Corps. Before today, were you aware of these events? <Yes / No>

A.2 Survey II

The treatment condition in survey II received the following text:

"In 2015, Italy faced an extraordinary wave of migration, with over 150,000 arrivals in a single year. Many migrants came from Syria and African countries, such as Sudan, Nigeria, Eritrea, and Somalia. This migratory wave put strong pressure on the Italian reception system, arousing widespread concerns about security, the safety of Italian women, public order, and economic sustainability."

The control condition in survey II received the following text:

"In 2015, Italy faced a series of extreme weather events. Numerous municipalities suffered floods, with more than 400 millimeters of rain falling in a single day. These events caused casualties and serious damage to houses, businesses, and agriculture. The management of the emergency aroused criticism from public opinion, with concerns about the government's ability to deal with disasters and protect the affected communities."

A.3 Tables

Table A.1: Balance Table

	Geographic & Demographic		+ Political + Economic	
	(1) No FEs	(2) Region FEs	(3) No FEs	(4) Region FEs
(Log of) Distance to Rome	0.0543	0.0460	0.1176	-0.1704
	[0.6120]	[0.6580]	[0.9360]	[0.9540]
(Log of) Distance to Naples	-0.1682**	-0.2191**	0.2672	-0.1621
	[0.0300]	[0.0220]	[0.8580]	[0.9700]
(Log of) Distance to nearest main road in 1943	-0.0810*	-0.0710*	-0.0691	-0.0743
	[0.0500]	[0.0980]	[0.6460]	[0.6280]
(Log of) Distance to nearest railroad in 1943	0.0662	0.0648	0.0377	0.0452
	[0.2180]	[0.2380]	[0.8180]	[0.7860]
(Log of) Distance to nearest Roman road	0.0891**	0.0842*	0.1036	0.1169
	[0.0260]	[0.0740]	[0.5240]	[0.4880]
(Log of) Distance to nearest coast	-0.0064	0.0069	-0.3854	-0.3385
	[0.8740]	[0.8980]	[0.2120]	[0.3060]
(Log of) Distance to nearest main port city	-0.0366	0.0024	0.1768	0.0200
	[0.6260]	[0.9820]	[0.7520]	[0.9680]
(Log of) Distance to nearest provincial capital	0.0307	0.0249	-0.0051	-0.0087
	[0.4680]	[0.5760]	[0.9800]	[0.9560]
(Log of) Distance to nearest large river	-0.0601	-0.0595	0.0027	-0.0002
	[0.2480]	[0.2960]	[0.9900]	[1.0000]
(Log of) Distance to the Gothic line	0.0444	-0.0021	0.1153	0.0923
	[0.4740]	[0.9860]	[0.6480]	[0.7140]
(Log of) Distance to Fascistville	-0.0407	-0.0348	-0.0295	-0.0011
	[0.2020]	[0.3160]	[0.8040]	[0.9940]
(Log of) area in km^2	0.0294	0.0257	-0.3400	-0.3287
	[0.6500]	[0.7040]	[0.3940]	[0.4780]
Malaria index	6.5961***	5.1303**	9.5484	7.7821
	[0.0000]	[0.0240]	[0.3260]	[0.4860]
Mean altitude	0.0003	0.0002	0.0012	0.0011
	[0.3240]	[0.4900]	[0.3740]	[0.4260]
Ruggedness	0.0002	0.0002	-0.0002	-0.0002
	[0.5320]	[0.6220]	[0.8720]	[0.8780]
Municipality occupied by a violent Nazi division	0.0011	0.0216	-0.0482	-0.0394
	[0.9880]	[0.7340]	[0.8100]	[0.8400]
Number of episodes of Nazi violence	0.0051	0.0053	0.0049	0.0066
	[0.4180]	[0.3840]	[0.8500]	[0.7940]
Years of Nazi occupation	0.4578***	-0.1138	0.1389	0.2411
	[0.0060]	[0.6940]	[0.8640]	[0.7760]
At least one episode of Nazi violence	0.0146	0.0251	-0.1528	-0.1813
	[0.8060]	[0.6660]	[0.5400]	[0.4800]
(Log of) 1911 population	0.0285	0.0088	-0.0309	-0.0194
	[0.8840]	[0.9780]	[0.9360]	[0.9620]
(Log of) 1921 number of families	-0.0574	-0.0400	-0.3721	-0.4988
	[0.7920]	[0.8480]	[0.7560]	[0.6660]
(Log of) 1921 population	0.0151	0.0153	0.7198	0.8362
	[0.9640]	[0.9540]	[0.6360]	[0.5780]
Share of population over 6 years of age in 1921	-0.1609	-0.1259	2.3788	1.9019
	[0.8800]	[0.9340]	[0.7800]	[0.7980]
Share of literate population in 1921	-0.0062**	-0.0054**	0.0072	0.0092
	[0.0220]	[0.0480]	[0.6900]	[0.6660]
Share of foreign population in 1921	1.1212	-1.7814	12.1727	13.9725
	[0.9400]	[0.9100]	[0.8240]	[0.8120]
Fascist violence in 1920-22			0.2700	0.3333
			[0.7020]	[0.6320]
Presence of Fascist branch in 1921			-0.1325	-0.1224
			[0.4960]	[0.5260]
Fascist vote share in 1924			0.9237	1.0351
			[0.6460]	[0.6080]
Socialist vote share in 1913			-0.0231	-0.0164
			[0.9680]	[0.9720]
Socialist and Communist vote share in 1924			2.1560	2.4256
			[0.5840]	[0.4920]
1929 number of livestock divided by 1921 population			0.5113	0.5103
			[0.5440]	[0.5520]
1927 number of business divided by 1921 population			-3.3641	-2.9644
			[0.6920]	[0.7460]
1927 number of employees divided by 1921 population			1.2267	0.9155
			[0.6080]	[0.6920]
1927 number of main agricultural employees divided by 1921 population			1.6341	1.5032
			[0.2680]	[0.3260]
1927 number of secondary agricultural employees divided by 1921 population			0.6468	0.6910
			[0.7840]	[0.7960]
1929 number of agricultural holdings by 1921 population			-0.4016	-0.4776
			[0.9220]	[0.8980]
Region FEs		✓		✓
Observations	400	400	80	79
R^2	0.49	0.51	0.89	0.89

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is a dummy for FEC troop presence. The level of analysis is the municipality. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. Region fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table A.2: Balance Table: Levels

	Geographic & Demographic		+ Political + Economic	
	(1) No FEs	(2) Region FEs	(3) No FEs	(4) Region FEs
Distance to Rome	-0.0018	-0.0013	-0.0055	-0.0169
	[0.4280]	[0.6320]	[0.6700]	[0.5400]
Distance to Naples	-0.0003	-0.0006	0.0066	0.0160
	[0.8880]	[0.8440]	[0.6580]	[0.5500]
Distance to nearest main road in 1943	-0.0114*	-0.0114*	-0.0165	-0.0235
	[0.0720]	[0.0840]	[0.4940]	[0.3600]
Distance to nearest railroad in 1943	0.0116	0.0108	-0.0072	-0.0092
	[0.4060]	[0.4420]	[0.8340]	[0.7800]
Distance to nearest Roman road	0.0098**	0.0112**	0.0066	0.0112
	[0.0100]	[0.0160]	[0.6140]	[0.4900]
Distance to nearest coast	0.0003	0.0005	-0.0084	-0.0037
	[0.8860]	[0.8180]	[0.5320]	[0.8240]
Distance to nearest main port city	-0.0013	-0.0006	0.0026	-0.0010
	[0.4460]	[0.7660]	[0.7760]	[0.9400]
Distance to nearest provincial capital	0.0042	0.0036	-0.0025	0.0019
	[0.1080]	[0.1960]	[0.8100]	[0.8960]
Distance to nearest large river	-0.0068	-0.0070	-0.0034	-0.0032
	[0.5020]	[0.5400]	[0.9340]	[0.9320]
Distance to the Gothic line	0.0003	-0.0001	0.0028	0.0036
	[0.8940]	[0.9880]	[0.8140]	[0.7600]
Distance to Fascistville	-0.0002	-0.0002	-0.0001	0.0001
	[0.4300]	[0.5380]	[0.9340]	[0.8960]
Area in km^2	-0.0006	-0.0007	-0.0008	-0.0006
	[0.4460]	[0.4140]	[0.7300]	[0.8020]
Malaria index	3.5398**	2.2750	4.6799	0.4664
	[0.0460]	[0.2260]	[0.6200]	[0.9480]
Mean altitude	0.0001	0.0001	0.0008	0.0005
	[0.5000]	[0.5960]	[0.5120]	[0.7560]
Ruggedness	0.0002	0.0001	-0.0004	-0.0001
	[0.6580]	[0.7100]	[0.8040]	[0.9560]
Municipality occupied by a violent Nazi division	-0.0147	0.0045	-0.0552	-0.0258
	[0.8340]	[0.9280]	[0.7640]	[0.8960]
Number of episodes of Nazi violence	-0.0030	-0.0003	-0.0023	-0.0048
	[0.7920]	[0.9660]	[0.9280]	[0.8460]
Years of Nazi occupation	0.3732**	-0.0889	-0.4230	-0.2720
	[0.0460]	[0.7560]	[0.6300]	[0.7540]
At least one episode of Nazi violence	0.0240	0.0274	-0.0547	-0.0538
	[0.6860]	[0.6900]	[0.8400]	[0.8360]
1911 population	0.0000	-0.0000	-0.0000	-0.0000
	[0.9680]	[0.8540]	[0.5820]	[0.5220]
1921 number of families	0.0000	0.0000	-0.0001	-0.0002
	[0.9360]	[0.7460]	[0.8240]	[0.6320]
1921 population	0.0000	-0.0000	0.0000	0.0001
	[0.9860]	[1.0000]	[0.7220]	[0.5480]
Share of population over 6 years of age in 1921	-0.1812	-0.1658	-0.7970	-1.6236
	[0.8660]	[0.9000]	[0.9600]	[0.8800]
Share of literate population in 1921	-0.0072***	-0.0063**	-0.0011	-0.0028
	[0.0060]	[0.0220]	[0.9360]	[0.8740]
Share of foreign population in 1921	-16.0223	-18.7141	7.8967	13.5690
	[0.3840]	[0.2980]	[0.8960]	[0.8080]
Fascist violence in 1920-22			-0.0154	0.0482
			[0.9800]	[0.9480]
Presence of Fascist branch in 1921			-0.0820	-0.0684
			[0.6740]	[0.7360]
Fascist vote share in 1924			0.3308	0.3444
			[0.8540]	[0.8600]
Socialist vote share in 1913			0.2659	0.2728
			[0.6640]	[0.6560]
Socialist and Communist vote share in 1924			1.0342	0.9309
			[0.7680]	[0.7820]
1929 number of livestock divided by 1921 population			0.0537	0.0613
			[0.8400]	[0.8180]
1927 number of business divided by 1921 population			-2.4496	-2.9937
			[0.7280]	[0.6800]
1927 number of employees divided by 1921 population			1.0405	0.9758
			[0.5740]	[0.6200]
1927 number of main agricultural employees divided by 1921 population			0.7565	0.5235
			[0.5420]	[0.7040]
1927 number of secondary agricultural employees divided by 1921 population			0.1114	0.1254
			[0.9520]	[0.9480]
1929 number of agricultural holdings by 1921 population			-0.6439	-0.1577
			[0.8800]	[0.9680]
Region FEs		✓		✓
Observations	400	400	80	79
R^2	0.51	0.53	0.90	0.90

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is a dummy for FEC troop presence. The level of analysis is the municipality. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. Region fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table A.3: Descriptive Statistics by Region

	Tuscany	Umbria	Lazio	Molise	Campania
FEC troops	0.2828	0.2500	0.7037	0.3913	0.0926
	(0.4519)	(0.5000)	(0.4583)	(0.4990)	(0.2908)
American troops	0.8056	0.7500	0.5852	0.9130	0.9815
	(0.3972)	(0.5000)	(0.4945)	(0.2881)	(0.1352)
Voter turnout in 2008 elections	0.8410	0.8435	0.8256	0.7812	0.7849
	(0.0282)	(0.0186)	(0.0378)	(0.0607)	(0.0635)
Far-right vote share in 2008 elections	0.0487	0.0450	0.0326	0.0180	0.0188
	(0.0157)	(0.0061)	(0.0181)	(0.0072)	(0.0098)
Population in 1,000 in 2011	19.7390	73.6412	31.8563	5.2431	23.6076
	(38.7033)	(75.4272)	(224.8753)	(11.7314)	(77.3389)
Share of Syrians in 2011	0.0000	0.0001	0.0001	0.0000	0.0000
	(0.0001)	(0.0002)	(0.0001)	(0.0000)	(0.0001)
Share of Albanians in 2011	0.0145	0.0092	0.0042	0.0014	0.0017
	(0.0104)	(0.0057)	(0.0041)	(0.0028)	(0.0023)
Share of Moroccans in 2011	0.0065	0.0034	0.0027	0.0034	0.0021
	(0.0047)	(0.0030)	(0.0029)	(0.0047)	(0.0029)
Share of migrants in 2011	0.0935	0.0945	0.0729	0.0677	0.0474
	(0.0326)	(0.0256)	(0.0276)	(0.0355)	(0.0231)
Municipality area (in km^2)	96.1940	256.4526	66.0225	32.8920	28.2559
	(77.4093)	(152.7987)	(120.2730)	(17.4166)	(28.2855)
Ruggedness	150.2099	181.5669	198.6895	249.4074	160.1058
	(109.6866)	(64.5220)	(139.6052)	(94.7865)	(140.7975)
Mean altitude (in meters)	261.2144	367.6350	343.1062	602.6057	196.1322
	(214.2957)	(43.6513)	(243.9215)	(285.1435)	(184.3512)
Malaria suitability index	0.0720	0.1025	0.1257	0.0637	0.0384
	(0.0324)	(0.0289)	(0.0368)	(0.0146)	(0.0160)
Observations	145	4	135	23	162

Notes: The table reports raw averages for municipalities in our estimation sample. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included.

Table A.4: Surveys I & II: Descriptives and Balance

	(1) Survey I	(2) Survey II	(3) Survey II: Control	(4) Survey II: Treatment	(5) Difference (T-C)
Male	0.50	0.44	0.45	0.43	-0.02
	(0.50)	(0.50)	(0.50)	(0.49)	(0.03)
Year of Birth	1,977.82	1,974.85	1,974.54	1,975.14	0.60
	(14.55)	(12.87)	(12.21)	(13.46)	(0.74)
Education levels					
Upper secondary (high school diploma)	0.53	0.50	0.51	0.49	-0.03
	(0.50)	(0.50)	(0.50)	(0.50)	(0.03)
Non-university tertiary diploma (short-cycle)	0.06	0.08	0.08	0.08	-0.00
	(0.23)	(0.27)	(0.27)	(0.27)	(0.02)
Postgraduate specialization / PhD	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	-0.00
	(0.15)	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.13)	(0.01)
Bachelor's degree	0.19	0.23	0.22	0.25	0.03
	(0.39)	(0.42)	(0.41)	(0.43)	(0.02)
Master's degree (or single-cycle degree)	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.00
	(0.32)	(0.33)	(0.33)	(0.33)	(0.02)
Lower secondary or less	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-0.00
	(0.00)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.04)	(0.00)
Primary education	0.08	0.05	0.04	0.05	0.01
	(0.27)	(0.21)	(0.20)	(0.22)	(0.01)
Other	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	(0.05)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Employment status					
Unemployed (seeking work)	0.12	0.07	0.06	0.08	0.01
	(0.32)	(0.26)	(0.24)	(0.27)	(0.01)
Unemployed (not seeking work)	0.03	0.04	0.04	0.04	-0.00
	(0.18)	(0.19)	(0.19)	(0.18)	(0.01)
Employee (permanent contract)	0.12	0.15	0.16	0.14	-0.03
	(0.32)	(0.36)	(0.37)	(0.34)	(0.02)
Employee (fixed-term contract)	0.15	0.11	0.10	0.12	0.02
	(0.36)	(0.31)	(0.30)	(0.32)	(0.02)
Self-employed	0.37	0.44	0.47	0.41	-0.06**
	(0.48)	(0.50)	(0.50)	(0.49)	(0.03)
Retired	0.09	0.13	0.11	0.14	0.04**
	(0.28)	(0.33)	(0.31)	(0.35)	(0.02)
Student / trainee	0.07	0.03	0.03	0.04	0.01
	(0.25)	(0.18)	(0.17)	(0.19)	(0.01)
Other	0.05	0.04	0.03	0.05	0.02
	(0.22)	(0.19)	(0.17)	(0.21)	(0.01)
Civil status					
Separated or divorced		0.09	0.10	0.08	-0.02
		(0.28)	(0.30)	(0.27)	(0.02)
Single, never married		0.23	0.24	0.22	-0.02
		(0.42)	(0.43)	(0.41)	(0.02)
Married / cohabiting		0.65	0.64	0.67	0.03
		(0.48)	(0.48)	(0.47)	(0.03)
Widow / widower		0.02	0.02	0.03	0.01
		(0.15)	(0.13)	(0.16)	(0.01)
Other		0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00
		(0.09)	(0.08)	(0.10)	(0.01)
Observations	486	1,221	595	626	1,221

Notes: The table reports raw averages and standard deviations for respondents in our estimation samples in both surveys (Columns 1 and 2). Columns 3 and 4 report both treatment arms of Survey II separately, and Column 5 reports the difference between these two. Significance levels from t-tests * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table A.5: Memorial presence

	Dummy for Presence of Marocchinate Memorial							
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
Dummy FEC troops	0.1170***	0.0493*						
	(0.0280)	(0.0257)						
Rape Dummy (Conservative)			0.4972***	0.4611***				
			(0.1389)	(0.1255)				
Rape Dummy (Optimistic)					0.1556***	0.0959***		
					(0.0358)	(0.0325)		
Rape Count (Optimistic)							0.0040***	0.0035***
							(0.0007)	(0.0007)
Region FEs		✓		✓		✓		✓
Observations	473	473	473	473	473	473	473	473
R^2	0.06	0.12	0.13	0.22	0.09	0.14	0.30	0.33
Mean in Control	0.02	0.02	0.04	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02
Effect in SDs	0.93	0.39	2.50	2.31	1.21	0.74	0.03	0.03

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is a dummy for the presence of a Marocchinate-related memorial in the municipality. The independent variable is either a dummy for FEC troop presence in Columns 1 and 2, a dummy for rapes as reported in Lucioli and Sabatini (1998) in Columns 3 and 4, a dummy for rapes as reported in Associazione Nazionale Vittime delle "Marocchinate" (2023) in Columns 5 and 6, or the number of rapes as reported in Associazione Nazionale Vittime delle "Marocchinate" (2023) in Columns 5 and 6. The level of analysis is the municipality. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. Region fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table A.6: Instrumental Variables Regression

	Dependent Variable: Share of Far-Right Votes					
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Rape Dummy (Conservative) × Post 2011	0.4396***	0.0933*				
	(0.1304)	(0.0507)				
Rape Dummy (Optimstic) × Post 2011			0.0724***	0.0195**		
			(0.0103)	(0.0093)		
Rape Count (Optimistic × Post 2011					0.0019***	0.0007**
					(0.0005)	(0.0003)
Municipality FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Region × Year FEs		✓		✓		✓
Observations	2,818	2,818	2,818	2,818	2,818	2,818
Kleibergen-Paap F	14.11	12.06	138.78	59.86	20.15	18.87
Mean in Control	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14
Effect in SDs	3.92	0.83	0.65	0.17	0.02	0.01

Notes: The table displays coefficients from two-stage least squares regressions. The dependent variable is the share of votes for the far right. The endogenous regressor is a measure of wartime sexual violence interacted with a post-2011 indicator, instrumented by FEC troop presence interacted with the same indicator. The violence measure is a dummy for rapes as reported in Lucioli and Sabatini (1998) in Columns 1 and 2, a dummy for rapes as reported in Associazione Nazionale Vittime delle "Marocchinate" (2023) in Columns 3 and 4, or the number of rapes as reported in Associazione Nazionale Vittime delle "Marocchinate" (2023) in Columns 5 and 6. The level of analysis is the municipality. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. Region fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table A.7: Difference-in-Differences: Other Parties

	Far Right	Center Right	Center	Center Left	Far Left	Turnout
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
FEC troops × Post 2011	0.0359***	0.0195***	-0.0455***	0.0024	-0.0037**	0.0149***
	(0.0042)	(0.0049)	(0.0064)	(0.0043)	(0.0019)	(0.0042)
Municipality FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	2,818	2,818	2,818	2,818	2,818	2,818
R^2	0.87	0.91	0.87	0.93	0.67	0.85
Mean in Control	0.14	0.25	0.18	0.33	0.05	0.77
Effect in SDs	0.32	0.14	-0.29	0.02	-0.16	0.16

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is the share of votes for the far right (Column 1), the center right (Column 2), the center (Column 3), the center left (Column 4), the far left (Column 5), and the turnout (Column 6). The main independent variable is a dummy for FEC troop presence interacted with a dummy for years after 2011. The level of analysis is the municipality. The sample is restricted to the election years 2001-2022. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. Municipality and year fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table A.8: Difference-in-Differences: Spillover Effects

	Baseline	Region FEs	Province FEs	Province (avgs)	Province (sums)
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
FEC troops × Post 2011	0.0359***	0.0079**	0.0053	0.0464***	0.0010**
	(0.0042)	(0.0035)	(0.0040)	(0.0158)	(0.0004)
Municipality FEs	✓	✓	✓		
Province FEs				✓	✓
Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Region × Year FEs		✓			
Province × Year FEs			✓		
Observations	2818	2818	2806	138	138
R^2	0.87	0.92	0.94	0.93	0.93
Mean in Control	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.15	0.15
Effect in SDs	0.32	0.07	0.05	0.43	0.01

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is the share of votes for the far right. The main independent variable is a measure of FEC troop presence interacted with a dummy for years after 2011. In Columns 1, 2, and 3, the measure of FEC troop presence is a dummy variable. Columns 4 and 5 aggregate the dependent variable at the province level. Column 4 defines the measure of FEC troop presence as the average of all dummies for municipalities within the same province. Column 5 defines the measure of FEC troop presence as the number of municipalities in which the dummy was positive within the same province. Region-by-year and province-by-year fixed effects are included as indicated. The level of analysis is at the municipality level in Columns 1, 2, and 3 and at the province level in Columns 4 and 5. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. The sample is restricted to the election years 2001-2022. Municipality or province and year fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality or province level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table A.9: Difference-in-Differences: Conley Standard Errors

	Baseline	Conley: 10km	Conley: 20km	Conley: 50km	Conley: 100km	Spatial Unit Roots
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
FEC troops × Post 2011	0.0359***	0.0359***	0.0359***	0.0359***	0.0359***	0.3002***
	(0.0042)	(0.0052)	(0.0081)	(0.0121)	(0.0126)	(0.0770)
Municipality FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
(Differenced) FEC Troops						✓
Observations	2,818	2,819	2,819	2,819	2,819	2,819
R^2	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.87	0.16
Mean in Control	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.00
Effect in SDs	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	0.32	1.75

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is the share of votes for the far right. The main independent variable is a dummy for FEC troop presence interacted with a dummy for years after 2011. In Column 6, both dependent and independent variables are differenced and use SCPC inference following Müller and Watson (2024); Becker et al. (2026). Column 6 also includes the (differenced) FEC dummy instead of municipality fixed effects to avoid multicollinearity. The level of analysis is the municipality. The sample is restricted to the election years 2001-2022. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. Municipality and year fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality in Columns 1 and 6, Conley (1999) standard errors with increasing cutoffs in Columns 2–5 in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table A.10: Spatial Inference Exercise

		Distance to Naples				Distance to Rome			
Adj	Clusters	Est p	Synth p	CI Width	CI	Est p	Synth p	CI Width	CI
HC	.	0.000	0.000	0.49	[0.75, 1.25]	0.000	0.000	0.50	[0.75, 1.25]
BCH	3	0.041	0.038	1.79	[0.1, 1.9]	0.023	0.022	1.34	[0.33, 1.67]
BCH	4	0.025	0.025	1.53	[0.24, 1.76]	0.053	0.045	2.04	[-0.02, 2.02]
BCH	5	0.015	0.017	1.37	[0.32, 1.68]	0.139	0.127	3.01	[-0.51, 2.51]
BCH	6	0.008	0.009	1.22	[0.39, 1.61]	0.109	0.105	2.64	[-0.32, 2.32]
BCH	7	0.001	0.001	0.84	[0.58, 1.42]	0.076	0.079	2.28	[-0.14, 2.14]

Moran=0.27, Structure=0.35, Effective Range=0.45, R2=0.03.

N=2819, Splines=5, PCs=5.

Notes: Reports p-values and confidence intervals of treatment effects, and p-values from a synthetic outcome exercise when adjusted with Bester et al. (2011) large cluster standard errors. In columns labeled "Distance to Naples", the regression includes (the log of) distance to Naples interacted with year fixed effects. In columns labeled "Distance to Rome", the regression includes (the log of) distance to Rome interacted with year fixed effects. Each of those exercises is based on 5,000 simulations. Moran represents the Z-score of the null hypothesis of zero correlation between each residual and its nearest neighbors. Structure measures the share of residual variance attributable to the spatially structured signal relative to the total variance. The effective range reports the spatial scale over which this structured component remains correlated, defined as the distance (normalized by the 95th percentile of pairwise distances) at which spatial correlation decays to approximately 0.14. R^2 gives the explanatory power of a regression of the outcome on a quadratic in longitude and latitude.

Table A.11: Difference-in-Differences: Removing Regions

	Without Tuscany	Without Umbria	Without Lazio	Without Molise	Without Campania
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
FEC troops × Post 2011	0.0513***	0.0363***	0.0234***	0.0388***	0.0112***
	(0.0053)	(0.0042)	(0.0054)	(0.0043)	(0.0037)
Municipality FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	1,946	2,794	2,008	2,680	1,844
R^2	0.86	0.87	0.85	0.88	0.92
Mean in Control	0.13	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.17
Effect in SDs	0.48	0.33	0.22	0.35	0.09

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is the share of votes for the far right. The main independent variable is a dummy for FEC troop presence interacted with a dummy for years after 2011. Column 1 excludes the region of Tuscany, Column 2 excludes Umbria, Column 3 excludes Lazio, Column 4 excludes Molise, and Column 5 excludes Campania. The level of analysis is the municipality. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. The sample is restricted to the election years 2001-2022. Municipality and year fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table A.12: Difference-in-Differences: Removing Municipalities

	Full Sample	>30km from Rome	>30km from Naples	>30km from Cassino	>30km from Rome or Naples
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
FEC troops × Post 2011	0.0359***	0.0366***	0.0265***	0.0416***	0.0270***
	(0.0042)	(0.0043)	(0.0040)	(0.0050)	(0.0041)
Municipality FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	2,818	2,740	2,404	2,404	2,326
R^2	0.87	0.87	0.89	0.87	0.89
Mean in Control	0.14	0.14	0.15	0.15	0.15
Effect in SDs	0.32	0.34	0.23	0.36	0.23

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is the share of votes for the far right. The main independent variable is a dummy for FEC troop presence interacted with a dummy for years after 2011. Columns 2–5 exclude locations within 30km of Rome, Naples, Cassino, and Rome and Naples, respectively. The level of analysis is the municipality. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. The sample is restricted to the election years 2001-2022. Municipality and year fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table A.13: Difference-in-Differences: Alternative Treatment

	Dependent Variable: Share of Far-Right Votes				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
FEC troops × Post 2011	0.0359***	0.0338***	0.0279***	0.0376***	0.0091**
	(0.0042)	(0.0042)	(0.0035)	(0.0045)	(0.0046)
(Log of) Distance to nearest main road × Post 2011		0.0089***			
		(0.0025)			
(Log of) Distance to Naples × Post 2011			0.0253***		
			(0.0011)		
Share of literate population in 1921 × Post 2011				0.0005***	
				(0.0002)	
Malaria index × Post 2011					0.4391***
					(0.0542)
Municipality FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	2,818	2,818	2,818	2,648	2,624
R^2	0.87	0.87	0.89	0.87	0.88
Effect in SDs (Row 1)	0.32	0.30	0.25	0.34	0.08

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is the share of votes for the far right. The main independent variable is a dummy for FEC troop presence interacted with a dummy for years after 2011. Additional independent variables (interacted with Post 2011) are the logarithm of the distance to the nearest main road in 1943, the distance to Naples, the share of the literate population in 1921, and the malaria index. The sample is restricted to the election years 2001-2022. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. The level of analysis is the municipality. Municipality and year fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table A.14: Difference-in-Differences: Internal Migration Quintiles

	Quintile 1	Quintile 2	Quintile 3	Quintile 4	Quintile 5
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
FEC troops × Post 2011	0.0448***	0.0273***	0.0393***	0.0392***	0.0285***
	(0.0108)	(0.0091)	(0.0091)	(0.0095)	(0.0076)
Municipality FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	558	554	560	564	562
R^2	0.86	0.87	0.87	0.88	0.89
Mean in Control	0.14	0.15	0.14	0.15	0.15
Effect in SDs	0.40	0.24	0.36	0.34	0.26

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is the share of votes for the far right. The main independent variable is a dummy for FEC troop presence interacted with a dummy for years after 2011. Each of the five columns corresponds to the quintiles of municipalities constructed by the share of the population in 2011 that had moved into the municipality. The sample is restricted to the election years 2001-2022. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. The level of analysis is the municipality. Municipality and year fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table A.15: Difference-in-Differences: Heterogeneity by 2011 Migrant Population

	Baseline	Moroccans Bottom Half	Moroccans Top Half	Syrians Bottom Half	Syrians Top Half
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
FEC troops × Post 2011	0.0359***	0.0440***	0.0296***	0.0403***	0.0163*
	(0.0042)	(0.0064)	(0.0048)	(0.0047)	(0.0086)
Municipality FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	2,818	1,402	1,416	2,258	560
R^2	0.87	0.86	0.90	0.86	0.91
Mean in Control	0.14	0.13	0.15	0.14	0.15
Effect in SDs	0.32	0.41	0.26	0.36	0.15

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is the share of votes for the far right. The main independent variable is a dummy for FEC troop presence interacted with a dummy for years after 2011. Column 1 estimates the baseline effect, Columns 2 and 3 (Columns 4 and 5) split the sample by the 2011 share of Moroccans (Syrians) residing in the municipality. The sample is restricted to the election years 2001-2022. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. The level of analysis is the municipality. Municipality and year fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table A.16: Difference-in-Differences: Other Shocks

	Baseline		Oil Crisis & Anni di Piombo		Irpina Earthquake	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
FEC troops × Post 2011	0.0359***	0.0079**				
	(0.0042)	(0.0035)				
FEC troops × Post 1969			-0.0031	-0.0014		
			(0.0025)	(0.0025)		
Earthquake-hit municipalities × Post 1980					-0.0013	0.0051
					(0.0125)	(0.0127)
Municipality FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Region × Year FEs		✓		✓		✓
Observations	2,818	2,818	7,432	7,432	7,432	7,432
R^2	0.87	0.92	0.81	0.85	0.81	0.85
Mean in Control	0.14	0.14	0.08	0.08	0.08	0.08
Effect in SDs	0.32	0.07	-0.04	-0.02	-0.02	0.07

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is the share of votes for the far right. The main independent variable is a dummy for FEC troop presence interacted with a dummy for years after 2011 (Columns 1 & 2) or after 1969 (Columns 3 & 4), or a dummy for whether a municipality was affected by the Irpina earthquake interacted with a dummy for years after 1980 (Columns 5 & 6). The sample is restricted to the election years 2001-2022 (Columns 1 & 2) or 1948-2008 (Columns 3-6). The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. The level of analysis is the municipality. Municipality and year fixed effects are included as indicated. Region-by-year fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table A.17: Difference-in-Differences: Population Quintiles

	Quintile 1	Quintile 2	Quintile 3	Quintile 4	Quintile 5
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
FEC troops × Post 2011	0.0258***	0.0408***	0.0185**	0.0361***	0.0061
	(0.0093)	(0.0088)	(0.0084)	(0.0103)	(0.0161)
Municipality FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	562	557	563	564	558
R^2	0.86	0.91	0.88	0.88	0.85
Mean in Control	0.15	0.14	0.15	0.14	0.13
Effect in SDs	0.22	0.36	0.16	0.32	0.06

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is the share of votes for the far right. The main independent variable is a dummy for FEC troop presence interacted with a dummy for years after 2011. Each of the five columns corresponds to the quintiles of municipalities constructed by their 2011 population. The sample is restricted to the election years 2001-2022. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. The level of analysis is the municipality. Municipality and year fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table A.18: Difference-in-Differences: Voting Quintiles

	Quintile 1	Quintile 2	Quintile 3	Quintile 4	Quintile 5
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
FEC troops × Post 2011	0.0513***	0.0525***	0.0239***	0.0199***	0.0216***
	(0.0129)	(0.0090)	(0.0084)	(0.0066)	(0.0074)
Municipality FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Year FEs	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	642	534	544	539	545
R^2	0.82	0.87	0.89	0.92	0.95
Mean in Control	0.11	0.13	0.15	0.15	0.18
Effect in SDs	0.57	0.50	0.21	0.18	0.18

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is the share of votes for the far right. The main independent variable is a dummy for FEC troop presence interacted with a dummy for years after 2011. Each of the five columns corresponds to the quintiles of municipalities constructed by the far-right vote share in 2008. The sample is restricted to the election years 2001-2022. The observations included are restricted to the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. The level of analysis is the municipality. Municipality and year fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table A.19: Survey I: Differences in Views about Albanians and Syrians or Africans

	(1) Take jobs from Italians	(2) Hard workers	(3) Cannot become Italians	(4) Willing to learn Italian	(5) Harass women	(6) Integrate well into Italian society	(7) Damage the economy	(8) Commit crimes	(9) Enrich culture	(10) Should be helped
FEC troops	-0.2320	-0.5712**	-0.2758	0.0051	-0.1025	-0.0083	-0.1131	-0.1629	-0.1664	-0.1302
	(0.2459)	(0.2746)	(0.2339)	(0.3024)	(0.2445)	(0.2999)	(0.2111)	(0.1867)	(0.2565)	(0.1850)
Syrians or Africans	-0.2296	-0.2191	-0.0187	-0.3349	-0.2494	-0.2709	-0.2537	-0.1428	0.0576	0.0914
	(0.2042)	(0.2392)	(0.2147)	(0.2716)	(0.2442)	(0.2319)	(0.2133)	(0.2220)	(0.2325)	(0.2282)
FEC troops × Syrians or Africans	0.6339*	-0.0104	0.7048***	-0.0644	0.7735***	-0.1974	0.7316***	0.5779**	-0.2422	-0.0883
	(0.3234)	(0.4349)	(0.2647)	(0.4672)	(0.2913)	(0.4013)	(0.2519)	(0.2690)	(0.3491)	(0.3024)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	476	476	476	476	476	476	476	476	476	476
R^2	0.20	0.19	0.23	0.20	0.12	0.17	0.18	0.17	0.22	0.23

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is the agreement to one of ten statements listed in Appendix Section A.1. The main independent variables are a dummy for FEC troop presence, a dummy for statements about Syrians/Africans (with Albanians as the omitted category), and their interaction. The included control variables are age, gender, education level, and occupation. The sample includes only respondents who currently reside and whose ancestors were also born in municipalities that hosted FEC troops, and respondents who currently reside and whose ancestors were also born in municipalities that did not host FEC troops. The observations included are restricted to respondents residing in the Campania, Lazio, Molise, Tuscany, and Umbria regions. Only respondents from municipalities that either hosted American or FEC troops or both are included. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

Table A.20: Survey II: Other Results

	Migration Concerns		Far-right Vote	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
FEC troops	0.0373	0.0572		
	(0.0238)	(0.0358)		
FEC troops × Post 2011			0.0347**	0.0280
			(0.0167)	(0.0192)
Region FEs		✓		
Region × Year FEs				✓
Respondent FEs			✓	✓
Observations	1,221	1,221	250	250
R^2	0.04	0.04	0.75	0.75
Mean in Control	0.31	0.31	0.02	0.02
Effect in SDs	0.08	0.12	0.26	0.21

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable in Columns 1 and 2 is a dummy whether the respondent from Survey II listed migration as a top concern for their vote choice in the 2022 election. In Columns 3 and 4, it is a dummy whether the ITANES 2013 respondent voted for the far right, interacted with a dummy for 2013 (relative to 2008). The independent variable is a dummy for FEC troop presence in Columns 1 and 2, which, in Columns 3 and 4, is interacted with a dummy for years after 2011. The included control variables in Columns 1 and 2 are age, gender, education level, civil status, and occupation. Region, region-by-year and respondent fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

A.4 Figures

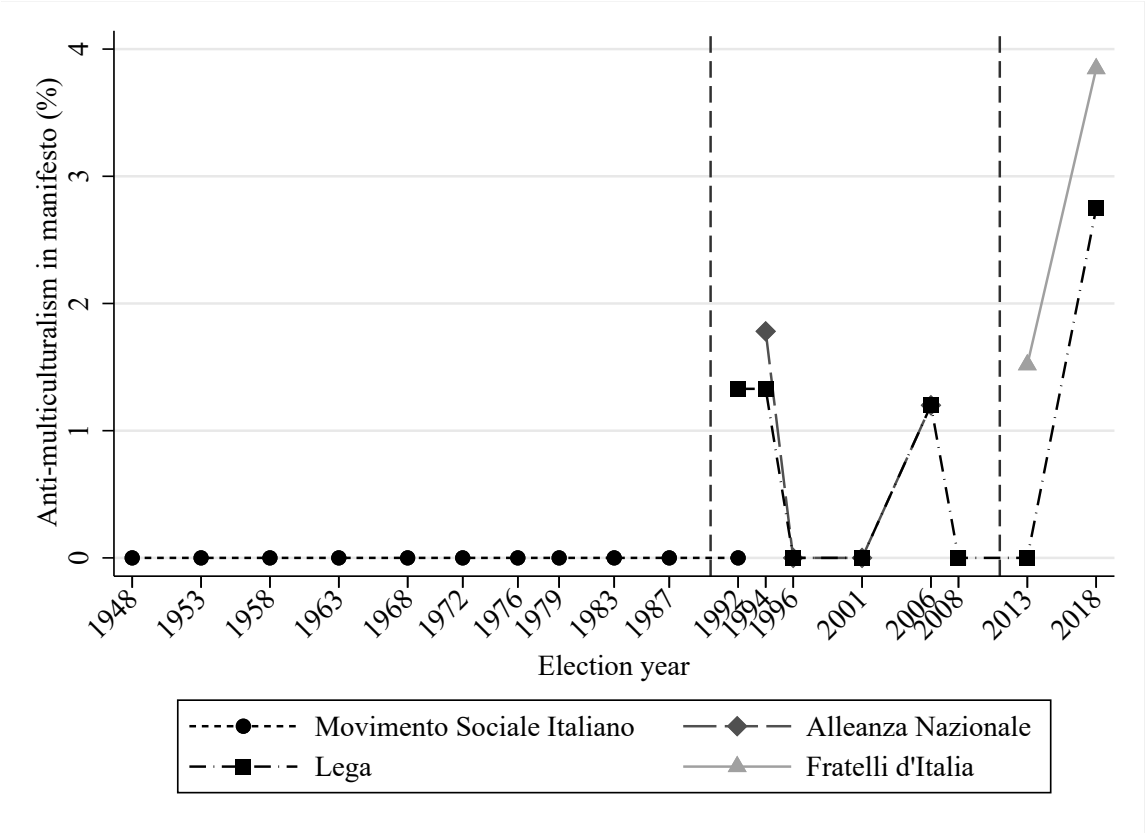


Figure A.1: Anti-Multiculturalism in Far-Right Parties' Manifestos

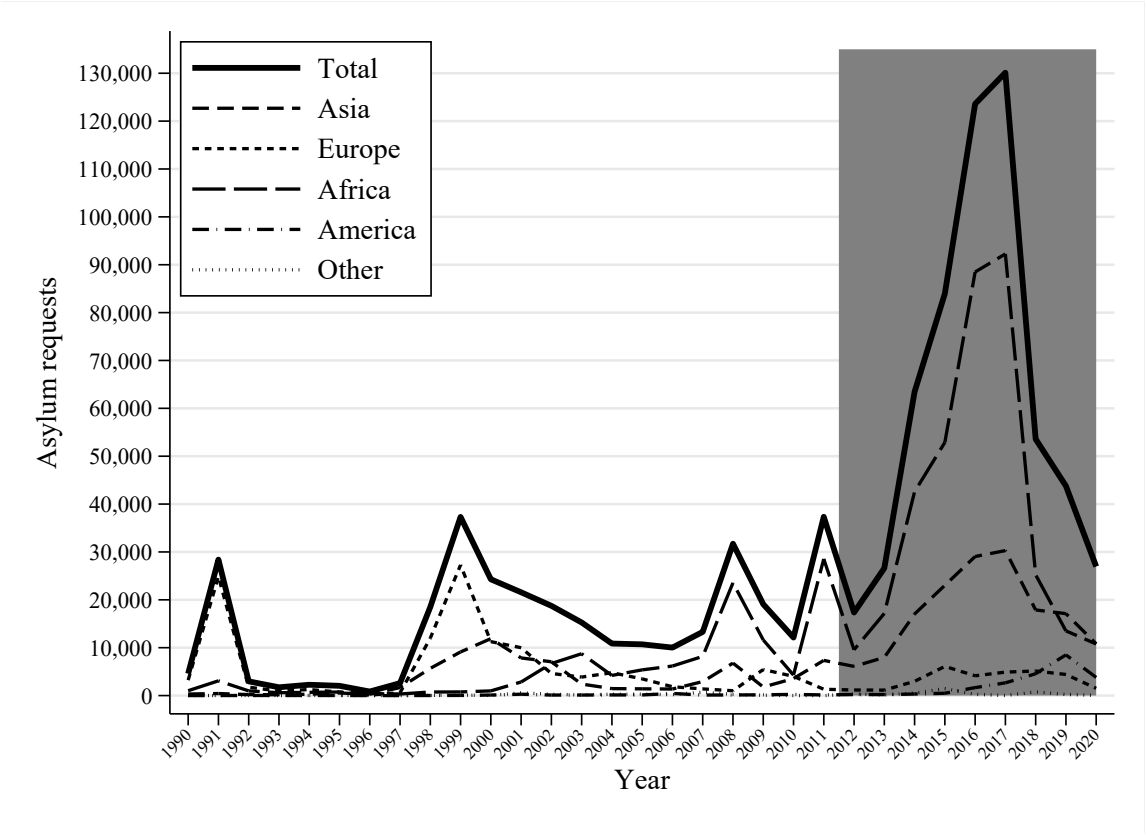


Figure A.2: Asylum Requests

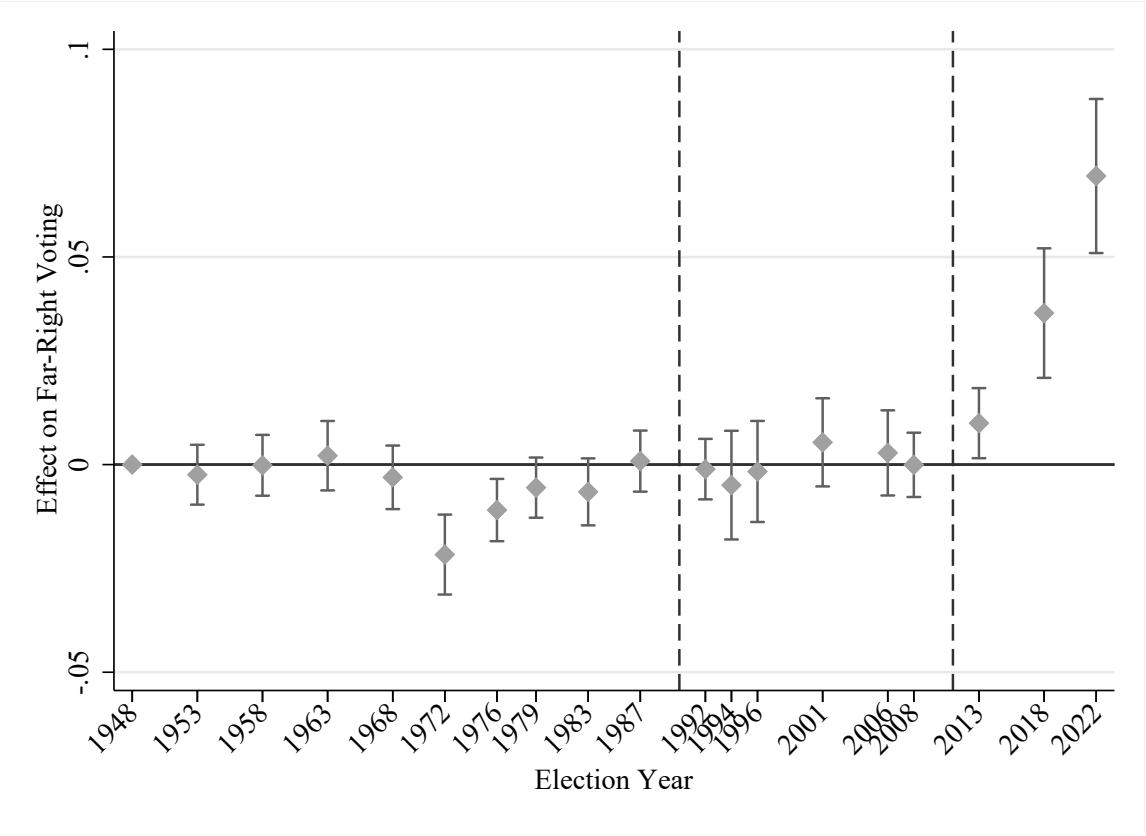


Figure A.3: Event Study: Vote Share for the Far Right after 1948

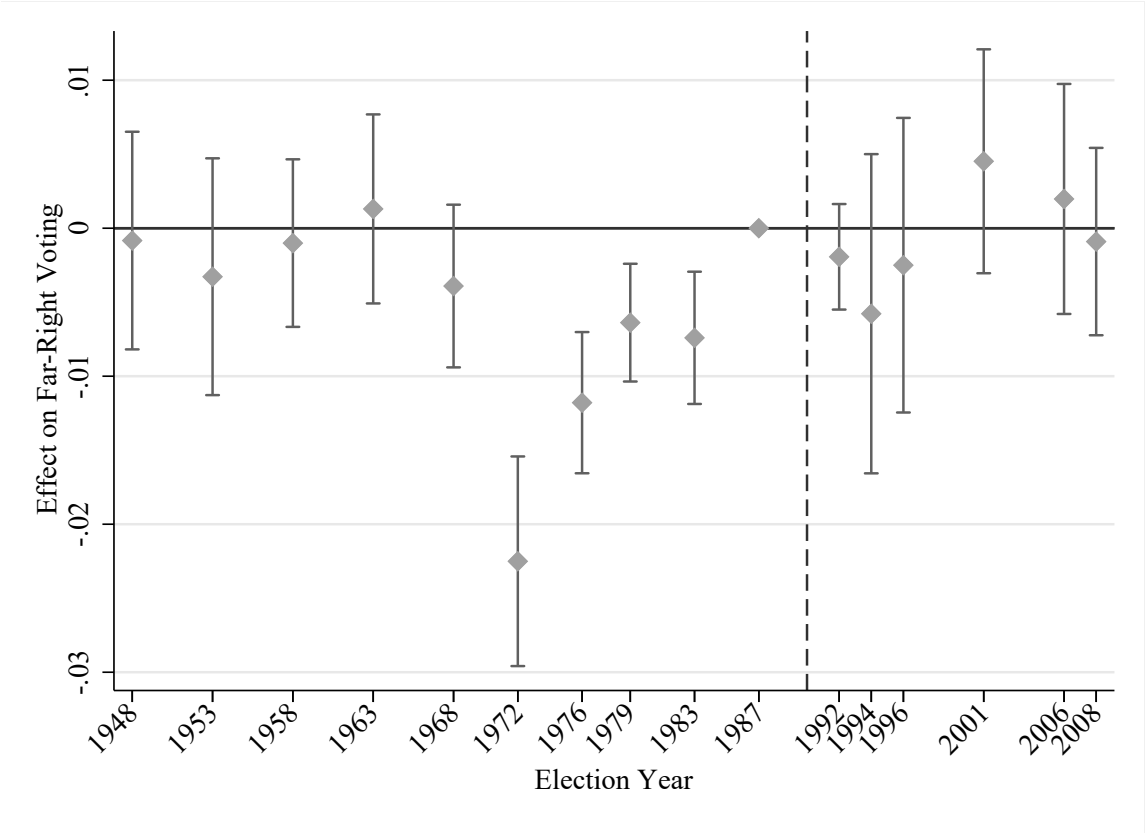


Figure A.4: Event Study: Vote Share for the Far Right after 1990

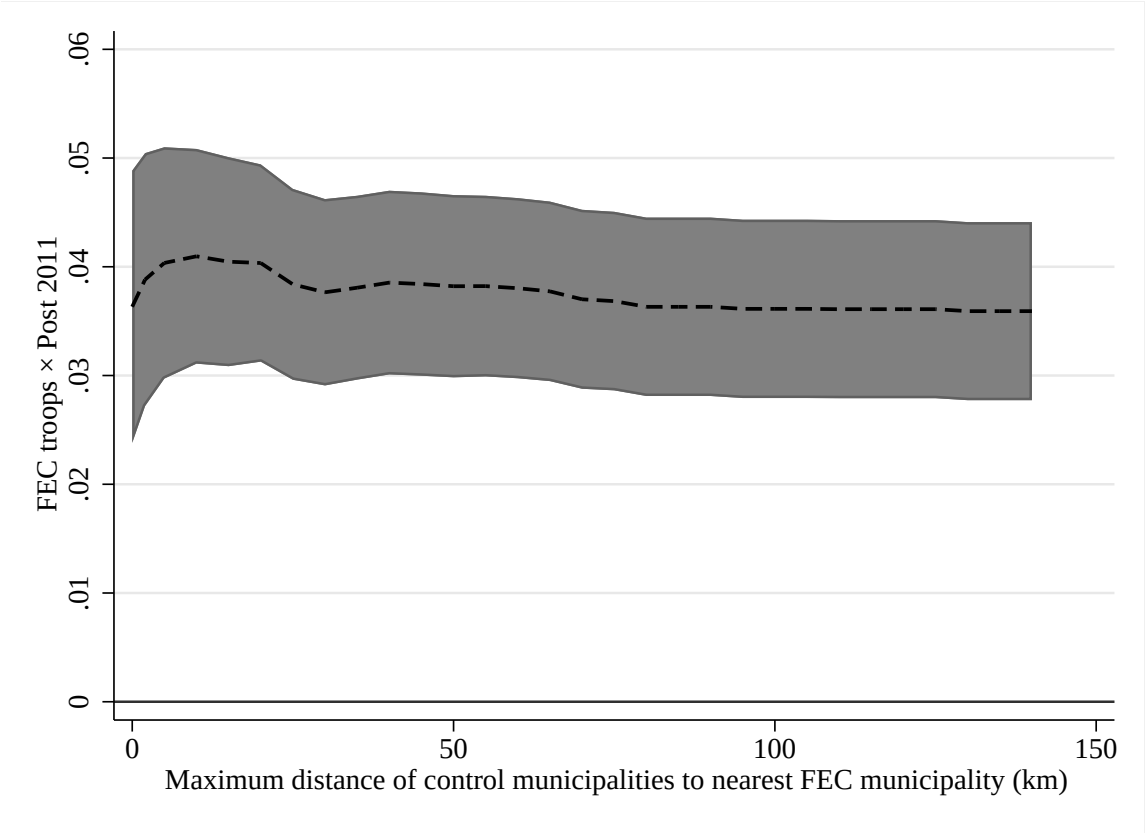


Figure A.5: Difference-in-Differences: Varying the Control Group

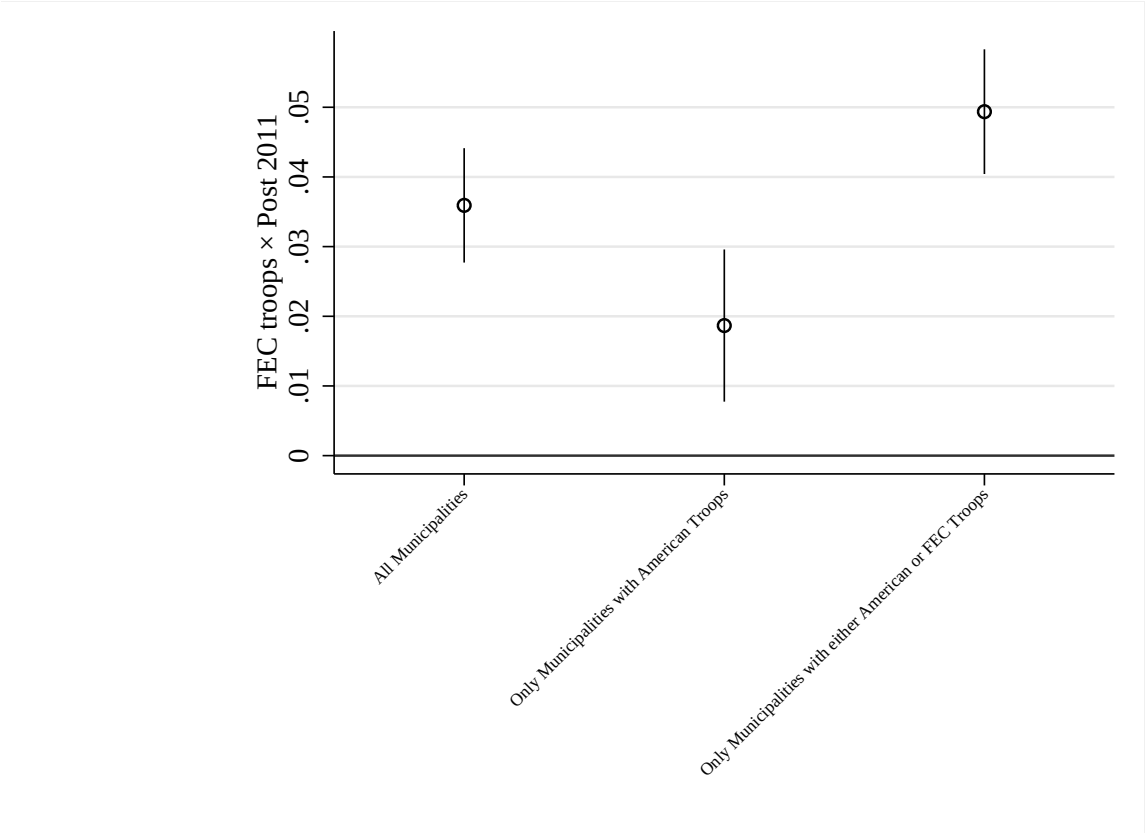


Figure A.6: Difference-in-Differences: FEC Troops With and Without American Troops

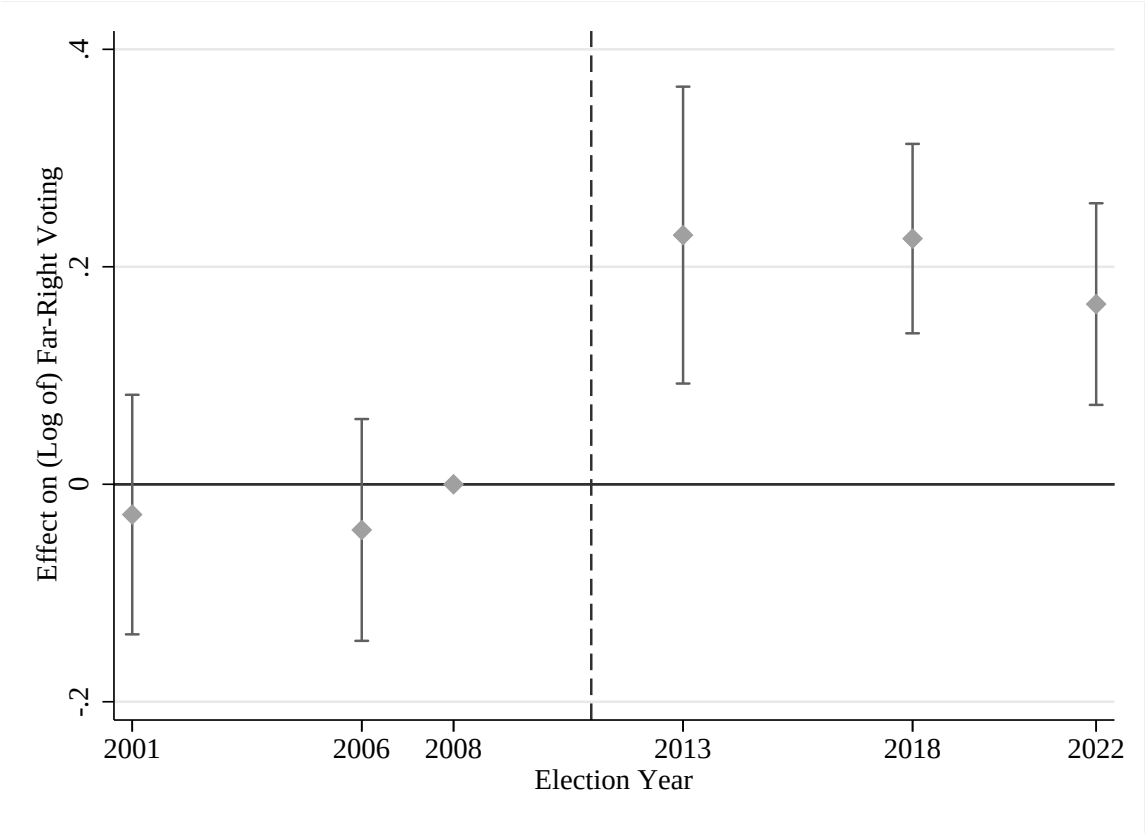


Figure A.7: Event Study: (Log of the) Vote Share for the Far Right

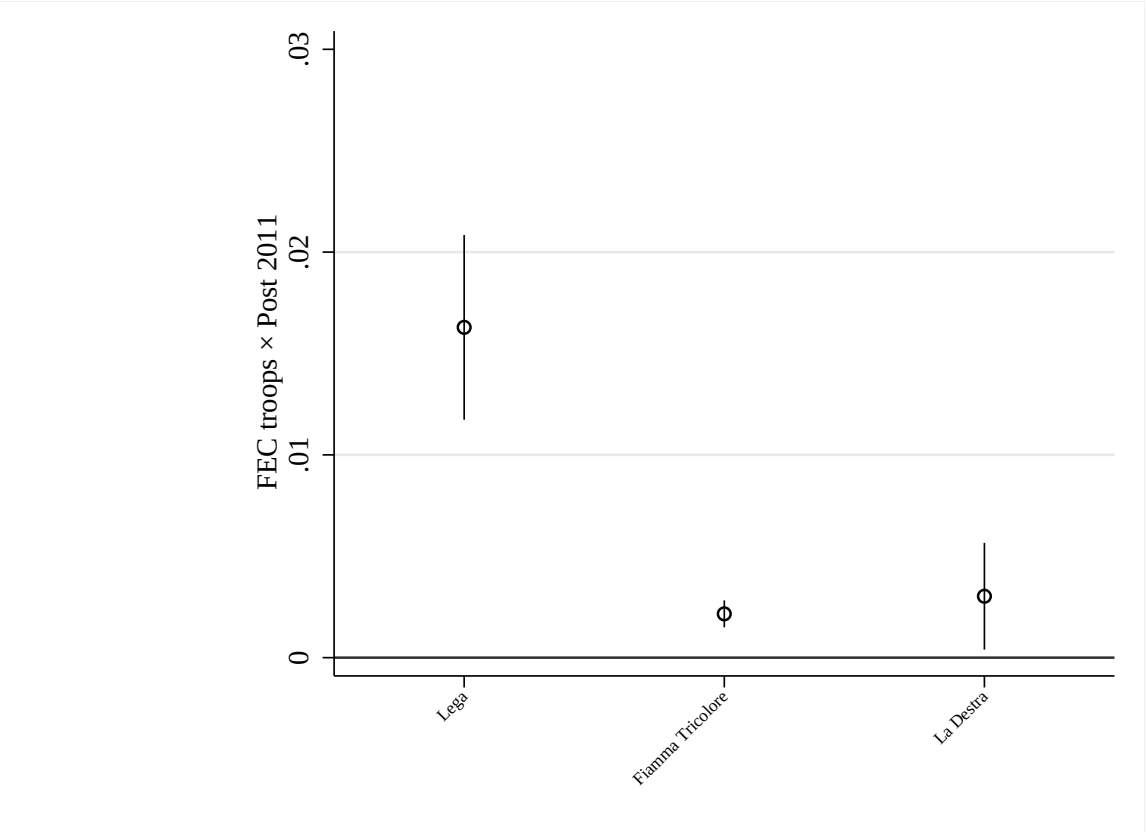


Figure A.8: Difference-in-Differences: Vote Share for Individual Far-Right Parties

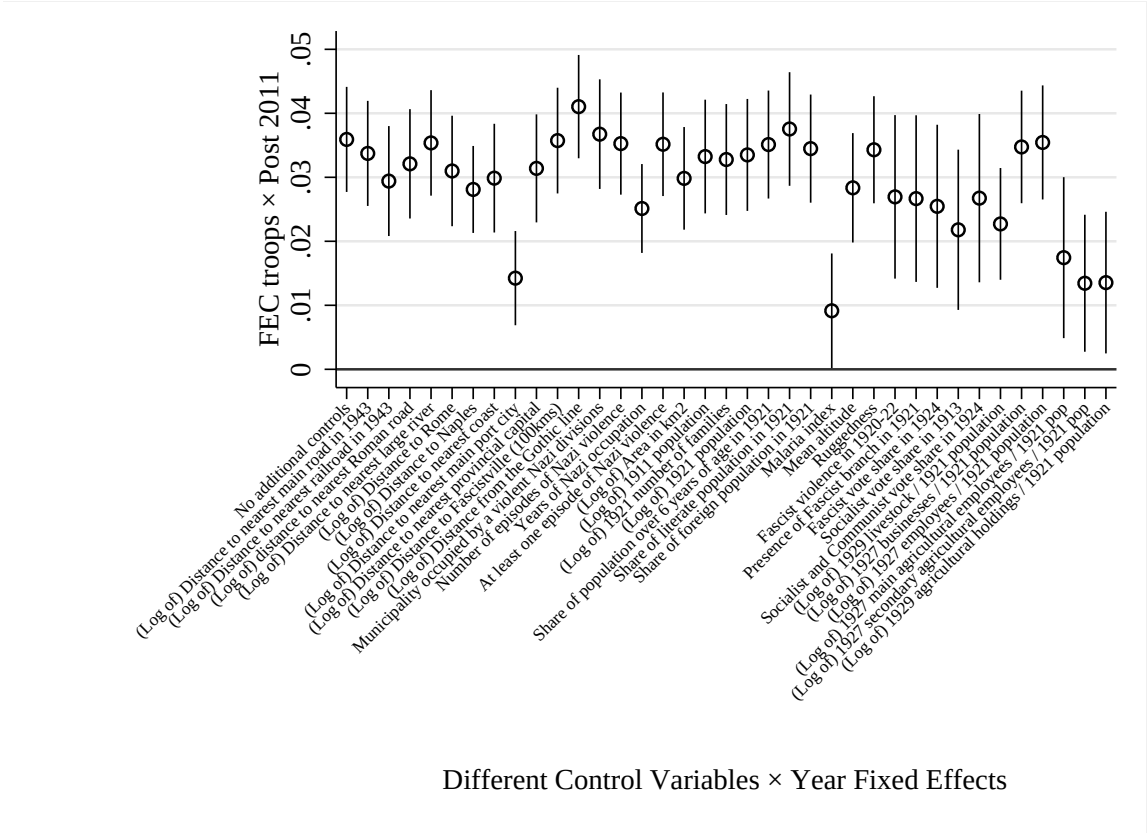


Figure A.9: Difference-in-Differences: Specification Graph

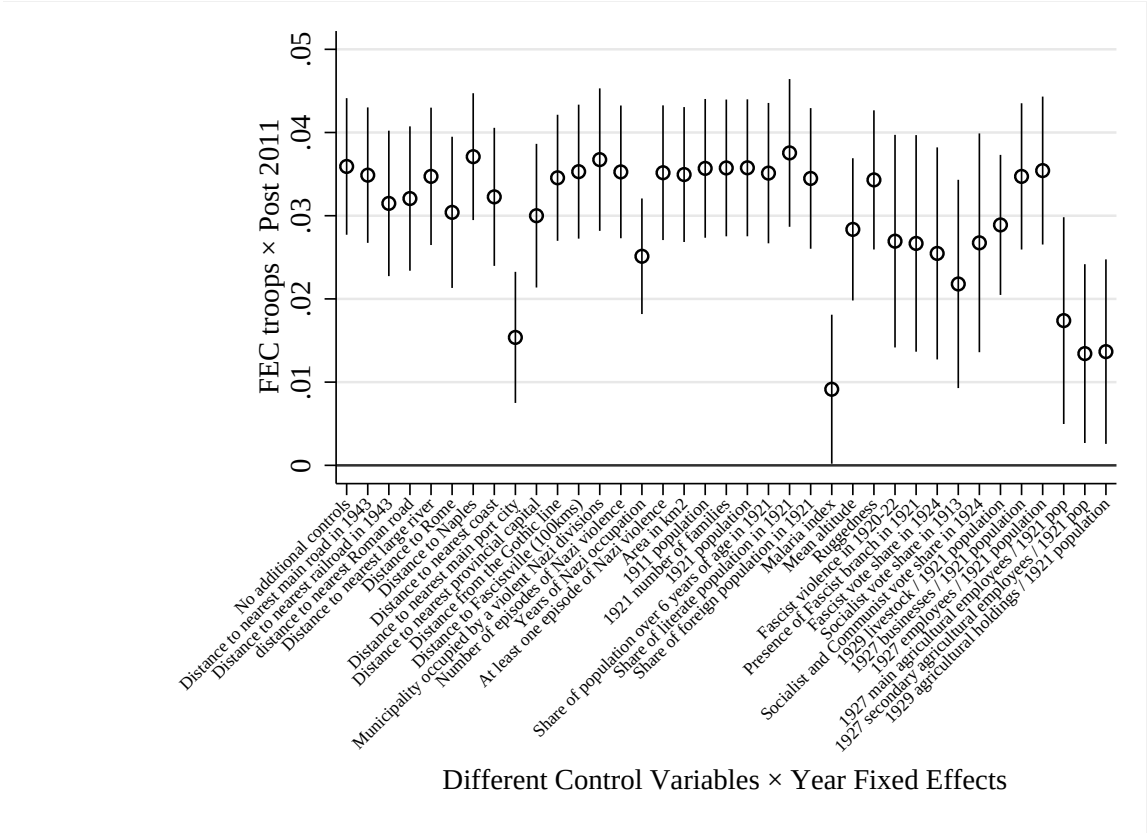


Figure A.10: Difference-in-Differences: Specification Graph (without logs)

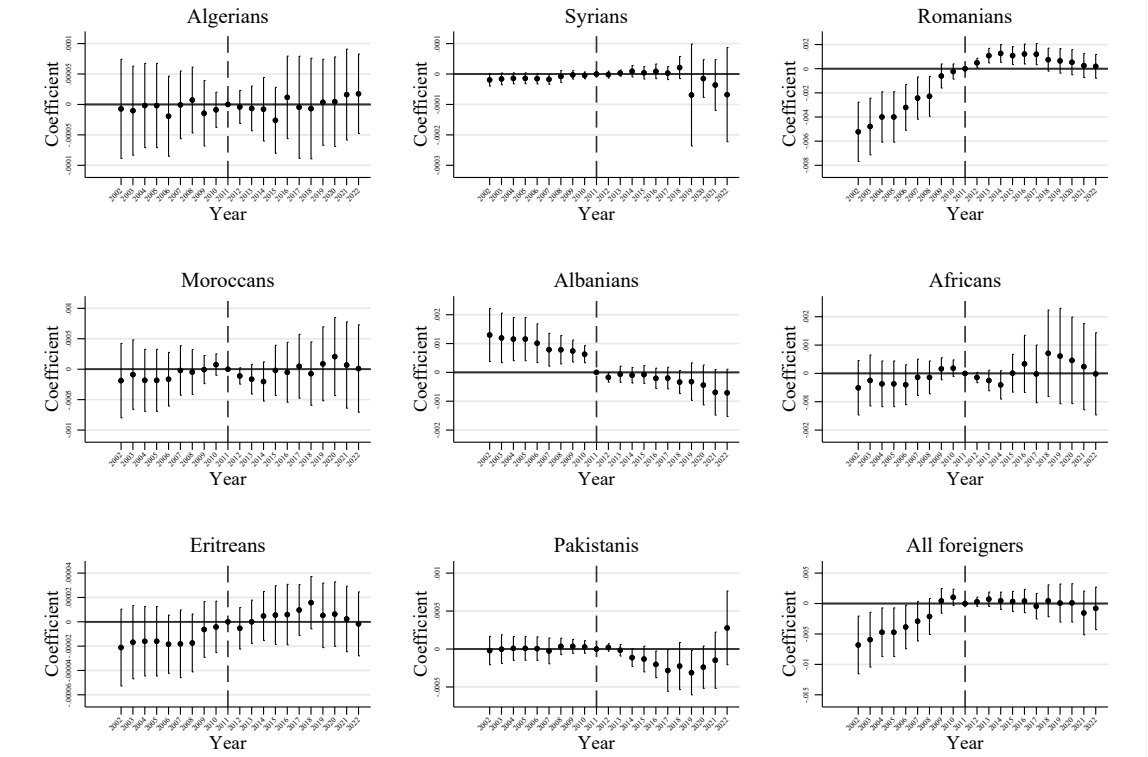


Figure A.11: Event Study: Migration Patterns by Nationality

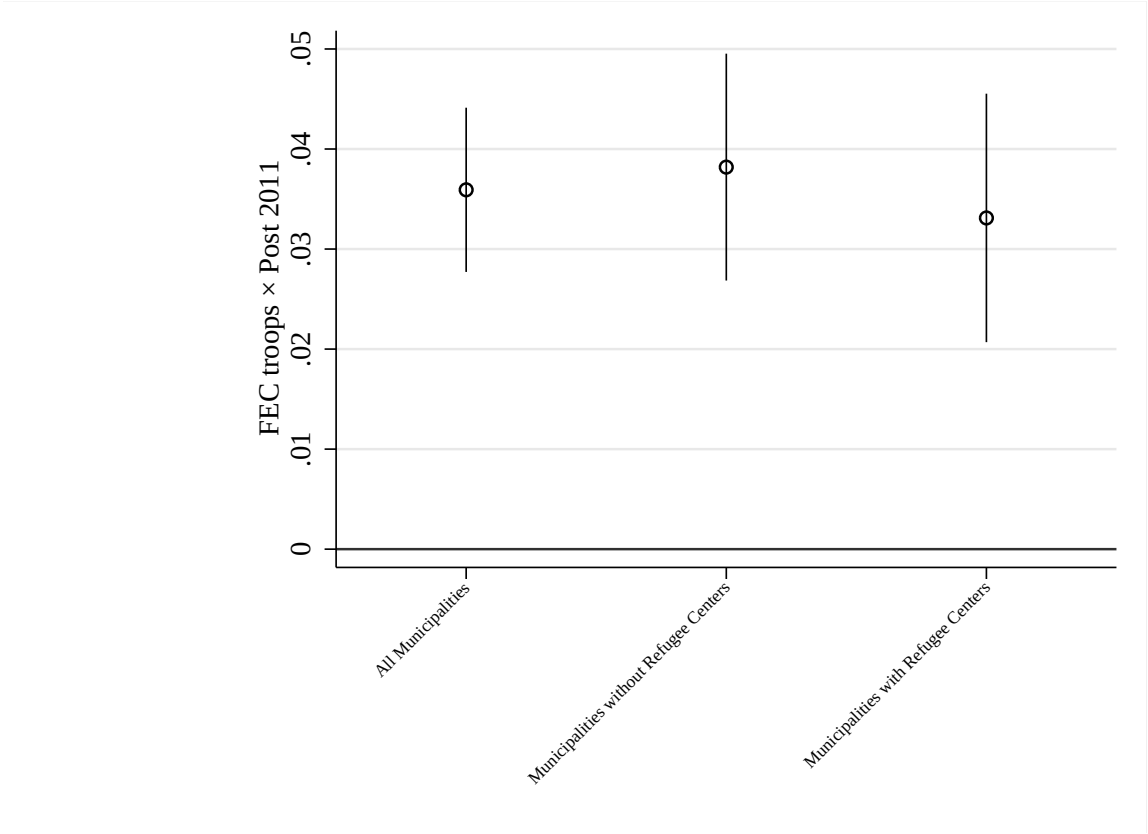
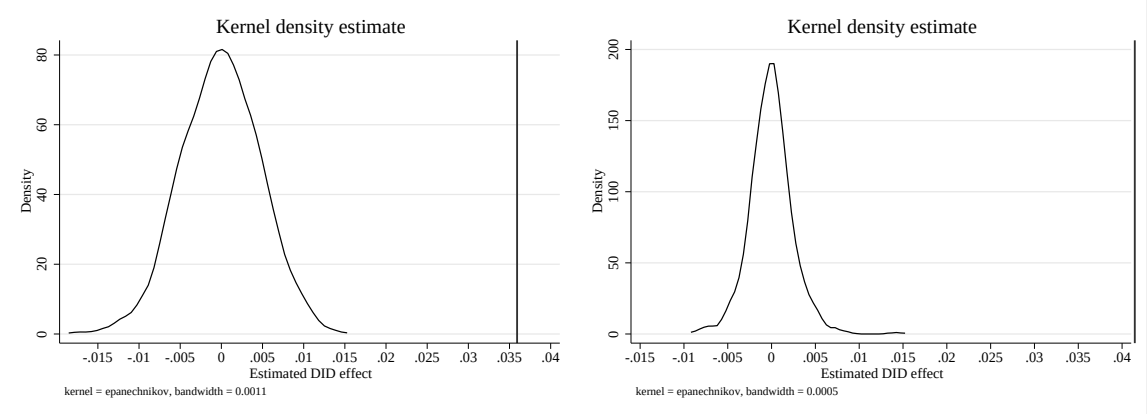


Figure A.12: Difference-in-Differences: Heterogeneity by Refugee Centers



(a) Reshuffle Cross-Section (b) Reshuffle Cross-Section and Time

Figure A.13: Randomization Inference

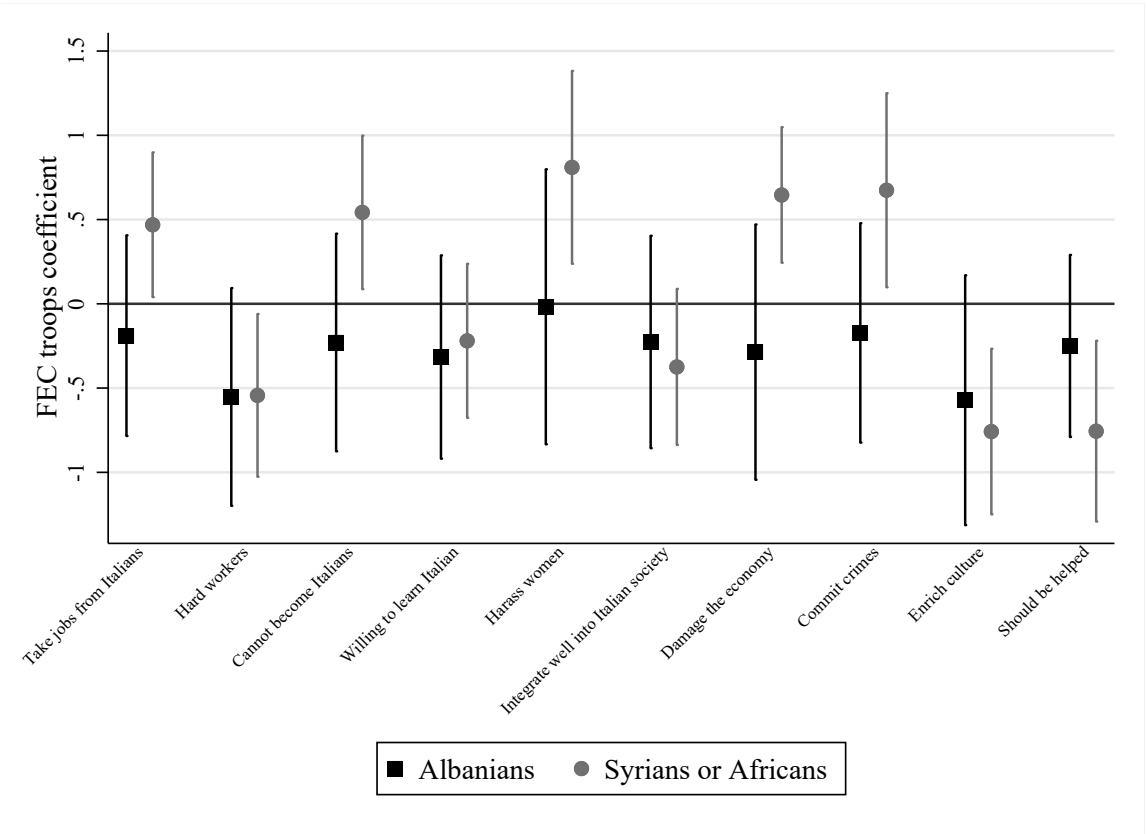


Figure A.14: Survey I: Different Views on Albanians and Syrians or Africans (including Region Fixed Effects)

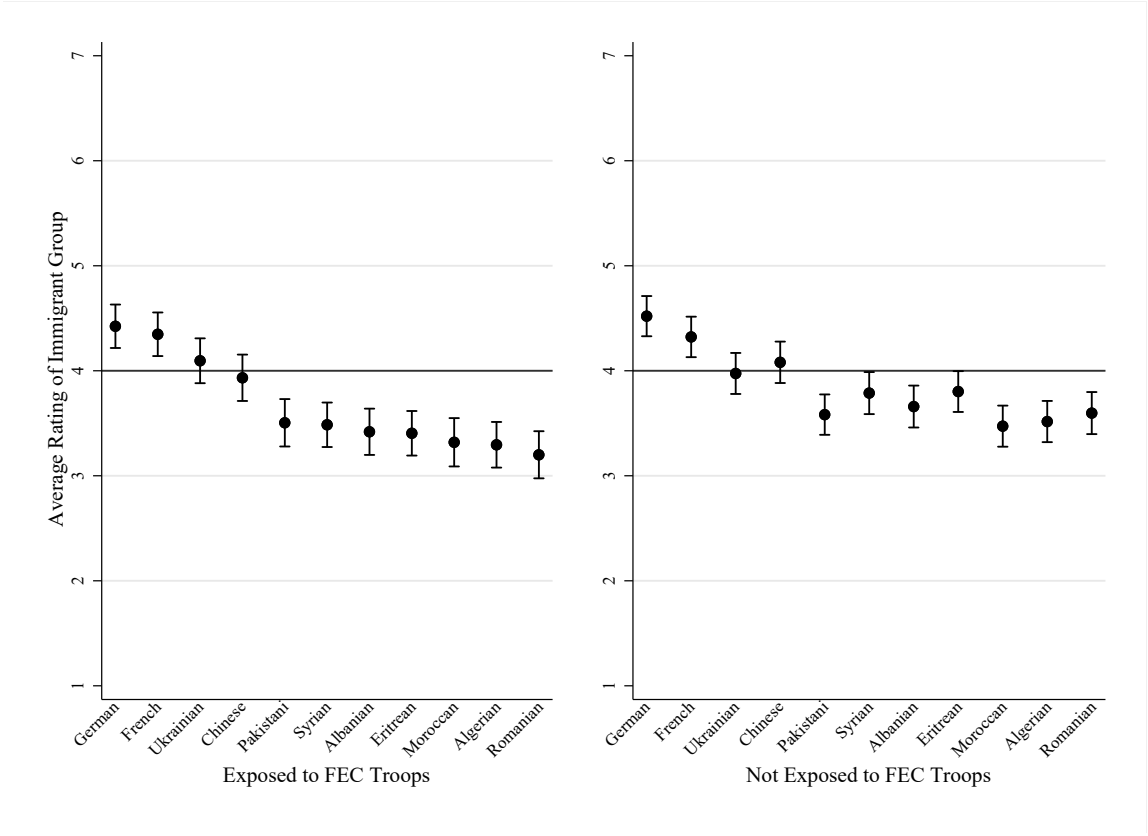


Figure A.15: Survey I: Views on Various Migrant Groups

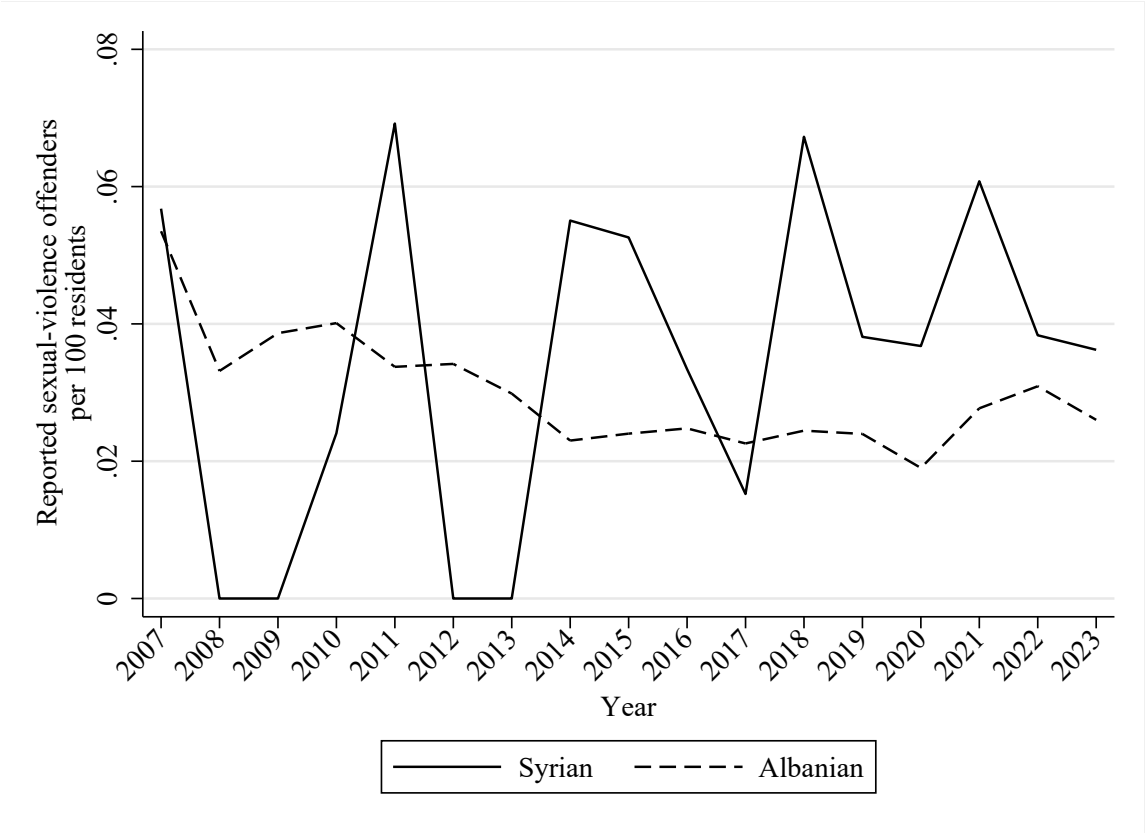


Figure A.16: Reported Sexual-Violence Offender Rates by Nationalities

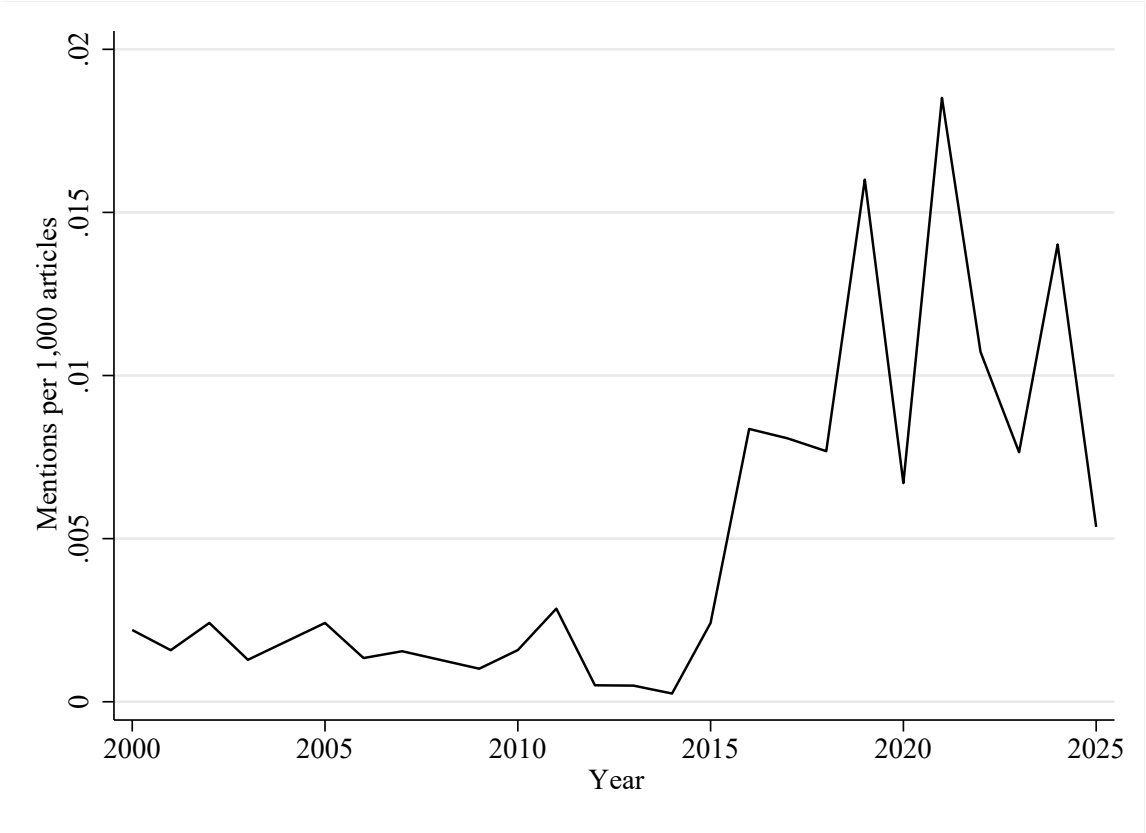


Figure A.17: Newspaper Mentions of Marocchinate per 1,000 Articles

A.5 Transmission of Attitudes

A different explanation for our results could lie in the transmission of attitudes rather than the selective reactivation of collective memory. Under this alternative channel, witnessing the atrocities would have led to a pronounced shift in sentiment against groups perceived as associated with the initial perpetrators, which would then be passed down either from parents to children (vertical transmission) or through the neighborhood (horizontal transmission), following Bisin and Verdier (2001). The contagion would thus have arisen at the time of the events, leading to animosities that persist over time and find a catalyst in voting only once a reason to act on them arises (i.e., the large inflow of migrants). Selective reactivation of collective memory, by contrast, would leave animosities toward Syrians unchanged over decades (no contagion in the past) and would be triggered only by the contemporary inflow of migrants (contagion in the present).

In our survey, we attempt to uncover potential intergenerational transmission of attitudes in the following way. After answering whether respondents knew what the Marocchinate was, they were presented with a brief factual description of the Marocchinate to harmonize their knowledge before proceeding to subsequent questions. They were then asked to report their own perceptions of how many out of 100 migrants from Syria or North Africa would commit sexual harassment. After answering for themselves, they retrospectively assessed how close family members, teachers, peers, and neighbors would have answered the same question when the respondent was a child. If attitude transmission was the primary mechanism, following Bisin and Verdier (2001), we would expect to observe two phenomena. First, respondents' current beliefs should be strongly correlated with the retrospective beliefs attributed to others in Marocchinate-exposed municipalities, but not necessarily in non-exposed municipalities. Second, respondents in FEC-exposed areas should report higher levels of beliefs about others than in non-exposed areas. These variables also allow us to distinguish whether such transmission occurred horizontally (i.e., if the correlation is stronger with peers, teachers, and local social networks) or vertically (i.e., if the correlation is stronger within the family).

Table A.21 investigates transmission of attitudes.[40] The outcome variables in Columns 1 through 4 are based on perceptions of how many out of 100 Syrians and North Africans would commit sexual harassment. Columns 1 and 2 use the average reported for

[40]Importantly, we do not investigate the transmission of the narrative, only attitudinal transmission. Evidence on the transmission of the narrative is presented in Table 6.

Table A.21: Survey II: Transmission

	Vertical transmission		Horizontal transmission		Mover to atrocities		Mover from atrocities	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
FEC troops	1.3670	0.9754	0.5347	-2.4822	-5.8801***	-8.7973***	-0.9679	-1.2762
	(1.3545)	(1.3323)	(1.5738)	(1.6260)	(1.3055)	(2.1374)	(3.0987)	(2.9920)
Region FEs		✓		✓		✓		✓
Observations	1,178	1,178	1,178	1,178	1,065	1,065	499	499
R^2	0.50	0.50	0.40	0.40	0.10	0.10	0.21	0.23
Mean in Control	35.86	35.86	43.50	43.50	35.18	35.18	37.66	37.66
Effect in SDs	0.05	0.04	0.02	-0.08	-0.20	-0.30	-0.03	-0.04

Notes: The table displays coefficients from OLS regressions. The dependent variable is based on estimates of how many out of 100 Syrians and North Africans would commit sexual harassment. Columns 1-2 report the average answer for all ancestors, Columns 3-4 report the average answer for peers, and Columns 5-8 report the answer for oneself. The main independent variable is a dummy for FEC troop presence. The included control variables are age, gender, education level, civil status, and occupation. The level of analysis is the respondent. In Columns 1-4, the sample includes only respondents who currently reside and whose ancestors also resided in municipalities that hosted FEC troops, and respondents who currently reside and whose ancestors also resided in municipalities that did not host FEC troops. In Columns 5-6, the sample only includes respondents whose ancestors were born in municipalities that did not host FEC troops. In Columns 7-8 the sample only includes respondents whose ancestors were born in municipalities that hosted FEC troops. Region fixed effects are included as indicated. Robust standard errors clustered at the municipality level in parentheses, with significance levels * = $p < 0.10$, ** = $p < 0.05$, and *** = $p < 0.01$.

the respondent's parents and grandparents, measuring vertical transmission. Columns 3 and 4 use the average reported for friends, teachers, neighbors, and classmates, measuring horizontal transmission. All coefficients are small and statistically insignificant.[41] Auxiliary regressions in Columns 5 through 8 confirm this picture using respondents' own answers and residential moves. Among respondents whose ancestors come from unexposed municipalities (Columns 5 and 6), those who now live in FEC-exposed areas give significantly lower estimates than those who remained in unexposed municipalities. This speaks against horizontal transmission of attitudes, as the respondents' current municipality of residence has not increased their negative judgment. Among respondents whose ancestors come from FEC-exposed municipalities (Columns 7 and 8), those who now live in unexposed locations do not think differently about the propensity of Syrians and North Africans to commit sexual harassment, making horizontal transmission very unlikely.

[41] We also do not observe stronger correlations between own and ancestral answers ($p = 0.567$) or own and peers' answers ($p = 0.593$) depending on whether respondents come from FEC-exposed versus unexposed municipalities.