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Cultural Factors Influencing the Convergence of the Kurdish Ethnic Group with Other Ethnic Groups in the Islamic Republic of Iran

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ABSTRACT

The Islamic Republic of Iran, as a country characterized by ethnic and cultural plurality, has consistently faced the challenge of managing diversity and strengthening national cohesion. In this context, the Kurdish ethnic group, as one of the oldest and most authentic Iranian peoples, occupies a distinctive position in the country's political and cultural geography. The present study aims to examine the cultural factors affecting the convergence of the Kurdish ethnic group with other Iranian ethnic groups within the framework of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The main hypothesis posits that profound historical, linguistic, religious, and ritual commonalities provide a solid foundation for strengthening national identity and promoting ethnic convergence. The findings indicate that components such as a "shared historical background" (Kurds as descendants of the Medes and one of the principal pillars of Iranian civilization), "linguistic affinities" (the Kurdish language's belonging to the Iranian language family and its etymological relatedness to Persian), "shared rituals and traditions" (such as Nowruz), and "Islam as an overarching spiritual umbrella" constitute the most significant cultural drivers of convergence. Despite the presence of religious differences in certain regions, a culture of tolerance and peaceful coexistence—rooted in Islamic Sufism and mysticism—has played a substantial role in linking Kurds with other ethnic groups. This article concludes that emphasizing these cultural commonalities and accurately representing them in national media and the educational system can function as an antidote to divergence and security threats, thereby realizing the model of "unity in diversity" within Iranian society.

Keywords: *national convergence; Kurdish ethnic group; Iranian-Islamic identity; political culture; unity in diversity; Islamic Republic of Iran.*

Introduction

Iran, a land with a history spanning several millennia, has long been a cradle of coexistence among diverse ethnic groups and cultures. This country may be likened to a Persian carpet woven from the colorful warp and weft of various ethnic groups such as Persians, Turks, Kurds, Lurs, Baluchis, Arabs, and Turkmen, who—while preserving their cultural distinctions—have come together as a unified whole known as the "Iranian nation." Within this mosaic, the Kurdish ethnic group constitutes one of the most significant and influential components. Examining the convergence of the Kurdish ethnic group with other ethnic groups in the Islamic Republic of Iran is of great



importance not only from sociological and cultural perspectives, but also from the standpoint of national security and political stability. National convergence refers to a process through which the diverse components of a nation, despite their differences, unite around shared values, goals, and a common identity. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, this convergence rests upon two principal foundations: “Iranian-ness” (national–historical identity) and “Islamic-ness” (religious identity) (1, 2).

The Kurdish ethnic group, which constitutes a substantial proportion of the population in western and northwestern Iran, maintains inseparable ties with the history and culture of the Iranian plateau. Contrary to certain Orientalist perspectives that attempt to construct divisions among Iranian ethnicities, historical and cultural evidence indicates that Kurds are among the most authentic branches of the Iranian ethnos. The Kurdish language, with its diverse dialects, is one of the deeply rooted Iranian languages within the Indo-European family and shares numerous grammatical and lexical affinities with Persian. This linguistic cognation represents the first—and perhaps the most important—cultural bridge between Kurds and other Iranian ethnic groups, facilitating mutual understanding and cultural exchange over centuries. Ferdowsi’s *Shahnameh*, as a foundational text of Iranian national identity, contains numerous references affirming the mythological and historical continuity of Kurds with other Iranians, portraying them in epic narratives as survivors of Zahhak’s tyranny and guardians of Iran’s mountainous regions.

Beyond language and history, Islam functions as a powerful cultural factor playing a central role in convergence. Although religious diversity (Shi’a and Sunni Islam) exists among Kurds, the core of Islamic belief and devotion to the Ahl al-Bayt—particularly prominent among Sunni Kurds and especially within Sufi orders such as the Qadiriyya and Naqshbandiyya—has fostered unity and empathy with other Iranian ethnic groups. In the post–Islamic Revolution era, the discourse of the “single ummah” and initiatives aimed at inter-sectarian rapprochement created conditions in which ethnic identity was not positioned in opposition to national identity, but rather recognized as a complementary component of it (3). The culture of self-sacrifice and martyrdom manifested during the Sacred Defense constitutes a concrete example of this cultural convergence, as Muslim Kurdish *peshmerga* fought alongside combatants from across Iran to defend the country’s borders.

Nevertheless, cultural convergence is not a static process and is continually shaped by internal and external variables. In today’s world, where media and cyberspace transcend cultural boundaries, sustaining and strengthening convergence requires a precise understanding of the cultural factors that bind communities together. Shared customs and traditions—particularly the ancient festival of Nowruz, which is celebrated among Kurds with distinctive enthusiasm—symbolize the continuity of Iranian culture. Kurdish music, traditional attire, and folkloric literature, while specific to this ethnic group, have been embraced by other Iranian ethnicities due to their aesthetic and humanistic qualities, thereby becoming part of the national cultural heritage (4, 5).

Accordingly, the central question is how these vast cultural capacities can be mobilized to consolidate national cohesion. While certain ethno-centric currents attempt to create fissures by provoking ethnic sentiments, emphasizing cultural commonalities can neutralize such threats. This introduction, by clarifying the position of the Kurdish ethnic group within the puzzle of Iran’s national identity, provides the groundwork for a more detailed examination of the cultural factors underpinning convergence. A proper understanding of these factors can assist cultural and social policymakers in adopting tolerant and pluralistic approaches to strengthen national belonging among younger generations. The following sections will therefore undertake a more in-depth analysis of these factors and their effects on social and national cohesion.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this article is grounded in relative deprivation theory. Relative deprivation refers to a condition in which an actor perceives a discrepancy between value expectations—that is, the benefits and conditions individuals believe they are entitled to attain or maintain—and value capabilities, meaning the means and conditions they perceive as available for achieving or preserving those values. From this perspective, value capabilities primarily relate to social and physical environments, as they determine people's perceived chances of attaining or sustaining values they legitimately expect (6, 7). Relative deprivation thus emerges not merely from objective inequality, but from subjective perceptions and evaluations of disparity.

Accordingly, two necessary and sufficient conditions must exist for relative deprivation to arise within a society.

First, the perception of inequality: the subjective awareness and mental evaluation of inequality are more consequential than the mere existence of objective disparities, since individuals cannot feel deprived of inequalities they do not perceive. This perception is shaped by factors such as cognitive capacity and access to information, both of which may be enhanced through education, religion, travel, and mass media (8, 9).

Second, the evaluation of inequality: feelings of relative deprivation arise when individuals compare themselves with others who occupy proximate social positions. Such social comparisons intensify perceptions of injustice and dissatisfaction (6).

Theoretical explanations rooted in relative deprivation locate the origins of maladaptive behaviors in subjective experiences such as social dissatisfaction, marginalization, and perceived injustice. When dissatisfaction and frustration intensify—particularly in contexts involving social comparison—the propensity for deviant, protest-oriented, or even violent collective behaviors increases (7, 10). Consequently, relative deprivation has been widely regarded as a significant factor in the emergence of social movements, conflict, and instability.

Many scholars associate relative deprivation with social comparison processes, emphasizing that perceived injustice, rather than material scarcity alone, drives collective reactions. Social cohesion and value consensus depend on perceptions of fairness in the distribution of rewards and opportunities. When individuals assess justice or injustice, they inevitably compare their own rewards, costs, and statuses with those of others. Equitable distribution, therefore, represents one of the fundamental values underpinning social cohesion and solidarity (1, 2).

From a functionalist perspective, normative integration is rooted in shared value principles within society. Social order is not merely imposed through authority or contractual arrangements, but rather emerges from patterned actions governed by shared norms and values. Consensus over core principles—such as equality and justice—is thus essential for sustaining social integration and collective stability (11).

Within exchange-based and modernization-oriented approaches, relations between citizens and the state are conceived as grounded in a psychological or moral contract. Individuals are more likely to comply with collective demands when their expectations—particularly regarding fairness and inclusion—are met. Conversely, violations of distributive justice intensify perceptions of inequality and relative deprivation, increasing the likelihood of social fragmentation and conflict. In sociological analyses, relative deprivation is therefore identified as a key driver of protest, deviance, and collective violence, especially when economic inequalities erode trust and social cohesion (2, 10).

In sum, relative deprivation theory constitutes one of the most relevant frameworks for explaining social change and variations in collective cohesion. Insufficient rewards and unmet expectations weaken social bonds, whereas

perceived fairness and reciprocal benefits reinforce group solidarity. Consequently, heightened feelings of relative deprivation tend to undermine collective cohesion, while reducing inequalities and enhancing perceptions of justice contribute to social stability and national integration.

Cultural Factors Influencing the Convergence of Ethnic Minorities in the Islamic Republic of Iran (Case Study: The Kurdish Ethnic Group)

1) Strengthening Persian-Language Education as the National Language While Preserving the Mother Tongue

Teaching Persian as the national language alongside preserving and strengthening the mother tongue is considered one of the most important cultural elements in consolidating ethnic convergence between the Kurdish ethnic group and other ethnic minorities in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Persian functions as a communicative bridge and a unifying language—one intertwined with the country's history, literature, and national identity. In contrast, the mother tongue carries each group's local and cultural identity, and neglecting it can generate feelings of deprivation or alienation. The experience of multilingual societies has shown that balanced language policies can reinforce the desire for coexistence and inter-ethnic cooperation. In Iran, sustained attention to teaching Persian from early ages, accompanied by programs for teaching Kurdish and other indigenous languages, can tangibly improve the quality of inter-ethnic communication and reduce cultural cleavages.

According to statistics published by the Center for Educational Research and Planning in 2023, in Kurdistan Province, students who simultaneously completed Persian language reinforcement courses and Kurdish language instruction demonstrated 14% better performance on national examinations than students who did not seriously learn one of the two languages (12). These data indicate that simultaneous instruction in the national language and the mother tongue not only strengthens internal communication skills, but is also effective in improving the understanding of intercultural concepts. An analysis of these statistics suggests that preserving the mother tongue is not an obstacle to learning the national language; on the contrary, the identity stability derived from such preservation increases motivation to learn the official language.

Educational policies in this domain have been successful when paired with localized content and the presence of teachers proficient in both languages. In the "New Bilingual" plan implemented in 2020 in five border counties of Kurdistan, 67% of primary-school teachers had the capacity to teach both languages, and this situation led to a 25% reduction in Persian-learning difficulties among first-grade students (12). An analysis of this achievement indicates that teachers' linguistic competence is the key to improving academic performance and building trust between the education system and local families.

The role of the media in reducing linguistic distance among ethnic groups is also noteworthy. In 2022, the Kurdistan provincial network implemented the bilingual television program "Ham-Sedayi" (Co-voicing), which averaged more than 500,000 weekly viewers. Reviews by the Provincial Council of Public Culture found that 78% of the audience felt their Persian proficiency had improved, while simultaneously experiencing greater pride in their mother tongue (13). An analysis of this experience shows that media can play a complementary role to the education system in promoting both Persian and the mother tongue, and can even expand individuals' vocabulary informally.

Holding bilingual scientific and cultural conferences is another approach that has fostered cultural proximity between Kurds and other ethnic groups. In 2024, a series of meetings titled "Language Bridges" was held at the University of Kurdistan, during which professors and students from different provinces of Iran delivered talks in both Persian and Kurdish. Statistics indicated that 85% of participants described their cultural relations with other ethnic

groups as “more intimate” than before. An analysis of this event clarifies that academic settings can provide practical training for strengthening both languages simultaneously and building social bonds.

Despite the noted successes, some challenges remain. The shortage of standardized textbooks in indigenous languages, pressure from certain political or media currents to remove the mother tongue from official arenas, and the lack of sufficient teachers proficient in both languages hinder the full realization of these policies’ objectives. An analysis of these challenges indicates that establishing a balanced language system requires both material investment in educational infrastructure and a cultural shift in policymakers’ perspectives.

Strengthening Persian alongside preserving and elevating the mother tongue not only creates no contradiction, but is a key factor in ethnic convergence and national cohesion. Persian can provide the shared framework for dialogue and cooperation among all ethnic groups, while the mother tongue gives meaning to local identity and intergenerational continuity. Implementing intelligent educational and media policies, empowering teachers, and localizing curriculum content are the most important tools for achieving this goal. The successful experience of Kurdish-populated provinces shows that the more proficiency in the national language and the authenticity of the mother tongue are strengthened simultaneously, the deeper the sense of a shared “common destiny” within the Iranian nation becomes.

2) Promoting Shared Islamic and Iranian Customs and Traditions

Shared Islamic and Iranian customs and traditions are among the most central elements connecting the cultures and ethnic groups of Iran—elements that, in both religious and national dimensions, create common grounds for interaction, coexistence, and cooperation. The Kurdish ethnic group, with a rich historical background in both Islamic and Iranian spheres, has been able to define a substantial portion of its identity within the framework of these commonalities. Religious occasions such as Eid al-Adha and Eid al-Fitr, or national ceremonies such as Nowruz, are celebrated in many Kurdish regions in ways that practically foster convergence with other ethnic groups. This convergence, when strengthened by shared cultural factors, not only shortens the distances between communities but also deepens the sense of “togetherness.”

According to the results of a study conducted in 2022 by an Iranian student public-opinion polling center, in Kurdish regions, 83% of respondents identified Nowruz as a “national and inclusive جشن,” and 74% stated that this ceremony provided opportunities for greater familiarity with guests from other ethnic groups (4). These figures indicate that shared traditions, by creating face-to-face interaction beyond ethnic boundaries, positively influence social perceptions. An analysis of these numbers makes clear that rituals with shared Iranian and Islamic roots can potentially become cultural instruments for managing convergence.

Religious ceremonies such as Muharram also occupy a special place in the western regions of the country, particularly in Kurdistan. In Muharram 2021, more than 54% of mourning processions in Sanandaj were administered with the participation of non-local ethnic groups, and the presence of members of Turk, Lur, and Arab communities was recorded in these ceremonies (14). This level of collective cooperation itself demonstrates that Islamic values manifested in religious rituals can reduce ethnic boundary-marking. An analysis of this trend suggests that religious ceremonies, when accompanied by an environment of acceptance and inter-ethnic interaction, create an unparalleled capacity for consolidating national cohesion.

Holding joint Iranian–Islamic festivals and rituals in educational settings has also been implemented as an effective cultural policy. In the 2023 academic year, the Ministry of Education organized the “Week of Shared

Customs” in nine provinces, including Kurdistan. According to an official report, during this week more than 190,000 Kurdish students participated alongside peers from other ethnic groups in ceremonies such as the Nowruz greeting ritual, the Eid al-Ghadir celebration, and commemorations of Teachers’ Day (15). An analysis of this experience shows that educational institutions, by providing participatory settings, can contribute to forming shared memories among younger generations—memories that themselves become cultural capital for future convergence.

Markets and public spaces during traditional seasons also play a distinctive role in cultural intermingling between Kurds and other ethnic groups. During Nowruz 2024, the presence of tourists from different provinces in Sanandaj’s bazaars increased by 28% compared to the previous year, according to tourism-organization statistics, which facilitated exchanges of goods, foods, and even customs between Kurds and visiting guests. An analysis of these interactions indicates that everyday life—even outside formal policy frameworks—can, by relying on shared traditions, become a driver of cultural proximity.

Despite these achievements, certain challenges remain, including insufficient documentation of these rituals in national media and the influence of foreign cultural currents that attempt to downplay shared Iranian–Islamic values. An analysis of this situation indicates that sustaining convergence through shared customs requires strengthening content production, investing in interprovincial joint programs, and expanding applied research in cultural studies.

The overall conclusion is that promoting shared Islamic and Iranian customs and traditions, when pursued strategically and purposefully, can serve as one of the most important cultural factors for consolidating national unity. The Kurdish ethnic group, given its historical depth and adherence to these traditions, possesses a high capacity to function as a communicative bridge among cultures. The more these customs are reinforced through education, media, grassroots activities, and religious practices, the more a sense of shared destiny and deeper convergence will take shape within Iranian society.

3) Holding Interethnic Festivals and Artistic Events

Holding interethnic festivals and artistic events in Iran is regarded as one of the major platforms for cultural and social interaction among diverse ethnic groups, including the Kurdish ethnic group and other minorities. These events not only showcase the country’s cultural diversity, but also provide opportunities for direct co-presence and dialogue among ethnic communities. In such festival settings, linguistic barriers and cultural stereotypes are substantially reduced, and are replaced by curiosity and mutual respect. The Kurdish ethnic group, with its rich background in music, dance, handicrafts, and performing arts, occupies a prominent position in these events, and its active participation helps make cultural commonalities with other ethnic groups more visible.

According to an official report by the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance in 2023, the national festival “Naghmeh-ye Vahdat” (Melody of Unity), held in Sanandaj, hosted more than 1,200 artists from 24 provinces who participated in sections such as local music, ritual theater, and handicrafts exhibitions (16). These data indicate that public interest in festivals is increasing and that such events possess substantial capacity to deepen convergence. An analysis of these figures suggests that broad participation contributes to strengthening social capital and to forming shared experiences that can later function as enduring cultural memories.

Regional music festivals play a distinctive role in mutual familiarization among ethnic groups. At the International Festival of Regional Music of Iran held in Kerman in 2022, groups from Kurdistan, Khorasan, Sistan and Baluchestan, and Azerbaijan performed. According to a survey by the Islamic Culture and Relations Organization, 71% of attendees, after watching performances by other ethnic groups, expressed a desire to travel at least once

to the province of origin of that music (17). These responses indicate that music can serve as a gateway to cultural tourism and to the creation of more durable ties. Analysis of this experience suggests that music, due to its emotional and translinguistic character, has a particular power to create proximity among different communities.

Joint visual arts exhibitions constitute another arena with high potential for transmitting intercultural meanings among ethnic groups. For example, in the “Colorful Iran” exhibition held in Tehran in 2024, more than 450 artworks by artists from 20 provinces were displayed, including 65 works by Kurdish artists. According to the organizers’ statement, around 60% of visitors also reviewed and interpreted works related to other ethnicities, and in conducted interviews many described aesthetic experience as a factor enabling a better understanding of other cultures (5). An analysis of these findings shows that visual arts—by bypassing linguistic and conceptual filters—can reveal layers of ethnic identity that are less visible in everyday interactions.

Cinema and theater also hold a special place along this path. At the 12th short-film festival “Ethnic Empathy,” held in 2021, the themes included stories of interethnic cooperation, peaceful resolution of local disputes, and portrayals of the everyday lives of different ethnic groups. The festival secretariat’s assessment indicated that 39% of viewers developed more positive attitudes toward other ethnic groups after viewing the works, and 27% also reported a greater willingness to travel to other regions of Iran. Analysis of this event indicates that audiovisual media, due to its capacity to represent lived reality and shared emotions, is an influential tool for reducing cultural distance (18).

Of course, implementing interethnic festivals and events is not without challenges. Limited financial support, weak national-level promotion, and sometimes poor alignment of timing and location can reduce the effectiveness of certain events. Moreover, the lower participation of some smaller ethnic groups suggests that specific policies are needed to encourage and facilitate the involvement of less-visible communities. An analysis of these problems makes clear that long-term success depends on an inclusive approach, sustained media support, and attention to cultural justice in ethnic participation.

Holding interethnic festivals and artistic events—given the strong artistic capacities of the Kurdish ethnic group and other ethnic communities—can function as the backbone of Iran’s cultural convergence process. When combined with careful planning, content diversity, and broad media coverage, these events become platforms for the formation of shared experiences, mutual recognition, and investment in collective positive memories. The power of art to cross boundaries—both linguistic and cognitive—demonstrates that investment in this domain can shape a more cohesive future for all Iranian ethnic groups.

4) Expanding Cultural and Artistic Exchanges Among Provinces

Expanding cultural and artistic exchanges among Iran’s provinces is one of the most effective strategies for strengthening social relations and enhancing ethnic convergence. These exchanges—such as sending artistic groups, organizing joint workshops, exhibitions, and cultural programs through reciprocal travel—create opportunities for close familiarity with the lifestyle, arts, language, and traditions of other ethnic groups. The Kurdish ethnic group, drawing on its rich music, dance, handicrafts, and oral literature, can play an active role in this arena, while also learning from the arts and cultures of other provinces. Beyond transferring knowledge and skills, this process broadens mindsets and makes attitudes toward other ethnic groups more positive.

According to the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance’s 2023 report, over the past year more than 85 interprovincial cultural exchange programs were implemented, with Kurdistan Province hosting 12 of them. These

programs included a joint handicrafts festival with East Azerbaijan, a film week featuring artists from Sistan and Baluchestan, and a joint performance of maqami music with artists from North Khorasan. Participation statistics show that more than 45,000 people visited these programs, and 68% of respondents in a survey considered these events effective in changing their perceptions of other ethnic groups (17). An analysis of these data indicates that cultural and artistic exchange programs can transform perceptions of the “other” by creating tangible and emotionally resonant experiences.

One successful example of such exchanges was the “Cultural Friendship Caravan,” held in 2022 with the participation of artists from Kurdistan and Fars provinces. In this program, theater groups, musical ensembles, and handicrafts exhibitors presented their works for 10 days in both provinces. According to the evaluation, about 75% of participants reported becoming familiar with at least one new cultural element they had not previously known (17). Analysis of this experience suggests that even programs on a limited scale can produce deep effects on cultural awareness and social interaction.

Traveling art exhibitions have also been introduced in recent years as a major tool for cultural exchange. In 2024, the “Art on the Move” project was implemented in six provinces, including Kurdistan, displaying paintings, calligraphy, and photographs by artists from host and guest provinces. Based on Cultural Heritage Organization statistics, these exhibitions attracted more than 32,000 visitors in total, and 58% of them reported increased motivation to travel to other provinces (17). Analysis of these figures indicates that traveling art programs can simultaneously provide communicative platforms and play an effective role in developing cultural tourism.

Implementing cultural and artistic programs among school and university students has also been among the most successful dimensions of cultural exchange. For example, in the 2021–2022 academic year, the “University Friendship Week” plan was organized with the participation of the University of Kurdistan and several universities from other provinces, including joint workshops in poetry, play-reading, and music. Evaluations showed that 82% of participants considered these interactions an opportunity to better understand their peers’ cultures. Analysis of this trend suggests that cultural exchanges in academic settings—given young people’s dynamism and cognitive readiness—are more effective and can create long-term social capital.

Nevertheless, cultural exchange policies face persistent challenges. Budget constraints, limited transportation facilities for artworks and artistic groups, and the discontinuity of programs have reduced the sustainability of impact in some regions. In addition, the lack of clear policymaking for the balanced participation of all ethnic groups in such exchanges may create disparities in the visibility of cultures. Analysis of these obstacles indicates that establishing a centralized planning system and targeted financial support can increase the sustainability and effectiveness of these exchanges (1).

Expanding interprovincial cultural and artistic exchanges is a strategic instrument for consolidating ethnic convergence in Iran. The Kurdish ethnic group, with its broad cultural capacities, can play an exemplary role in this process while simultaneously learning from the cultural richness of other ethnic groups. Sustaining these exchanges—alongside media coverage and active civil-society participation—can create a durable model of cultural interaction that operates beyond provincial geographical boundaries and strengthens the foundations of national cohesion.

5) Producing Multilingual Media Content with a Convergence-Oriented Approach

Producing multilingual media content is one of the most important twenty-first-century instruments for bringing culturally and linguistically diverse societies closer to one another. In Iran—where there is substantial ethnic and linguistic diversity, including the Kurdish ethnic group and other ethnic minorities—multilingual media can create a strong communicative bridge among ethnic communities. Such content may include television programs, podcasts, social media outputs, websites, and documentary productions that are produced in two or more local and national languages. This approach, especially when portraying the culture, history, and everyday life of various ethnic groups, both strengthens mutual respect and increases opportunities for reciprocal understanding (13, 16).

According to data from the Press Affairs Deputy of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance in 2023, more than 320 hours of television and radio programming were produced in the country's western provinces using a multilingual approach, of which 140 hours were broadcast in Kurdistan Province in Kurdish and Persian. A national IRIB audience survey reported that 62% of viewers, after watching multilingual content, felt greater closeness to the cultures of other ethnic groups (18). Analysis of these statistics suggests that when audiences hear messages in their mother tongue while simultaneously receiving the official equivalent, conditions are created for better message comprehension and reduced psychological distance.

One successful example of this approach was the “Windows of Iran” project, implemented in 2022 with institutional support and cultural cooperation. This program consisted of short documentaries about the traditions, foods, music, and languages of Iran's various ethnic groups and was broadcast simultaneously in a local language and Persian. According to the organizers' estimates, the series achieved more than 2 million views on social media, and 70% of respondents described learning new expressions from other languages as an appealing experience (13). Analysis of this example clarifies that multilingual content production has an interactive and educational dimension in addition to information dissemination, which in the long term can lead to deeper social interactions.

Digital space has also become a major platform for multiplying multilingual messages. In 2024, the Instagram campaign “Our Stories,” which published short folkloric narratives in Kurdish, Turkish, Persian, and Arabic, attracted more than 500,000 followers in under six months. The campaign, managed by a youth team from four provinces, published content with subtitles and occasionally dubbing so that members of different ethnic groups could follow the stories (17). Analysis of this experience shows that social media—due to its direct interactivity—provides a favorable environment for dismantling traditional communicative boundaries among ethnic groups.

Studies indicate that even in education, multilingual content can operate beyond second-language learning and contribute to deeper understanding of other communities' cultures and values. For instance, in the “Bilingual Media School” plan implemented in Kurdistan in 2021, students not only produced news content in Kurdish and Persian, but also interviewed peers from other regions. Results showed that more than 80% of students reported a more positive feeling toward non-same-language peers after completing the program. Analysis of this case indicates that multilingual media are not merely channels of messaging, but also practical processes for rehearsing coexistence and cooperation (12).

Despite these successes, obstacles and challenges remain. Unequal distribution of content-production facilities, limited training for specialized personnel, and at times unprofessional translation can reduce quality and impact. Moreover, the absence of a centralized macro-level policy for national multilingual content production has meant that many such projects depend on episodic support or individual initiatives. Analysis of these barriers indicates

that creating a sustainable stream requires allocating technological infrastructure, skilled human resources, and stable budgets so that multilingual messaging can be maintained nationwide (19).

Producing multilingual media content with a convergence-oriented approach is one of the key tools for strengthening cohesion between the Kurdish ethnic group and other Iranian ethnic groups. By providing a platform for the simultaneous presence of the mother tongue and the national language, this approach signals respect for cultural identity while building a resilient bridge between cultures. In a world where communication is becoming faster and more expansive every day, neglecting multilingual media not only wastes an opportunity, but can also perpetuate cultural distances and misunderstandings. Targeted and planned investment in this domain can build a future in which Iranian ethnic groups feel they are part of a shared national narrative (15, 20).

6) Introducing Shared National Cultural Figures and Symbols

Shared cultural figures and symbols, due to their broad meaning-making and identity-bearing capacity, can function as a key element in fostering ethnic convergence. In Iran—home to a colorful constellation of ethnicities, languages, and traditions—introducing and foregrounding such symbols creates an opportunity to highlight historical and cultural commonalities. The Kurdish ethnic group, with a rich heritage and diverse cultural resources, can use this capacity to strengthen its bonds with other Iranian ethnic groups. From poets and national heroes to rituals and visual markers that circulate throughout the country, each can build a bridge between the minds and hearts of people across different regions.

According to statistics published by IRIB's Research Center in 2023, more than 67% of viewers of television programs introducing shared national cultural figures and symbols reported a stronger sense of solidarity with other provinces and ethnic groups. These programs included documentaries on figures such as Ferdowsi, Rumi, and Hafez, as well as contemporary national heroes, which were welcomed across different provinces, including Kurdish regions (21). Analysis of these data shows that when cultural symbols are presented in ways that allow all ethnic groups to see themselves as stakeholders, the conditions for reducing cognitive distance and strengthening a "shared national identity" are enhanced.

One influential example in this area was the "Iran Has One Story" project in 2021, implemented with the cooperation of the provincial Cultural Heritage offices of 15 provinces, including Kurdistan. This visual campaign published images and narratives related to 20 prominent national figures whose roots or historical connections extended across multiple provinces. The project's content was presented through a traveling exhibition as well as in digital space; according to the organizing body's report, total in-person visits reached 420,000, and 73% of visitors stated that they became more aware of the cultural connections between their own province and other parts of the country (16). Analysis of this model indicates that when historical and cultural narratives are integrated with image and storytelling, their impact on generating a sense of shared belonging becomes stronger.

Educational settings also play an important role in introducing and institutionalizing these shared symbols. The "Heroes of Iran" program, implemented in the 2020–2021 school year in primary and secondary schools across several provinces including Kurdistan, introduced these figures to students through illustrated stories about the lives of Iranian scientists, inventors, and artists. According to the Ministry of Education's evaluation, more than 85% of students were able, after participating in the program, to name at least three cultural or scientific figures associated with Iran's national identity (12). Analysis of this experience indicates that integrating formal education with national cultural narratives can strengthen ethnic convergence from early ages.

Ritual symbols and national celebrations constitute another effective channel in this process. Rituals such as Nowruz, Yalda Night, and the National Day of Persian Poetry and Literature provide shared platforms for all Iranian ethnic groups. Although these occasions are celebrated with local variations in different regions, their roots and core meanings are shared, which helps strengthen the sense of “membership in one large family” within the collective national imagination. Analysis of these symbols shows that such rituals—given their strong capacity to integrate local and national traditions—constitute one of the durable pillars of interethnic convergence (4, 11).

Nevertheless, challenges also exist in the proper introduction of these symbols. Insufficient attention to the diversity of historical narratives, an excessive focus on one or two ethnic groups, and the absence of comprehensive participation by cultural elites from different provinces can weaken such efforts or, in some cases, contribute to feelings of marginalization. For example, some critiques of recent national documentaries have argued that Kurdish or Lur cultural symbols have not received adequate representation. Analysis of these critiques suggests that an effective cultural-policy strategy is to design content from the outset with consultation and participation from representatives of all ethnic groups, so that each group feels it has a genuine share in the “national image” (14, 22).

The overall conclusion is that introducing shared national cultural figures and symbols can function as a powerful cultural strategy with a central role in ethnic convergence between Kurds and other Iranian ethnic groups. When a national symbol or figure becomes embedded in the emotional and cultural memory of all ethnic groups, it turns into a point of connection and linkage. Investing in identifying, re-defining, and representing these symbols carefully and participatorily not only reduces cultural divides, but also contributes to the formation of an inclusive national narrative in which all ethnic groups see their identities reflected (14, 16).

7) Participation of Kurdish Artists in National Cinema and Music Projects

Over the past two decades, the participation of Kurdish artists in national cinema and music projects has become an important mechanism for strengthening ethnic convergence in Iran. From the early 2000s, when figures such as Shahab Hosseini, Merila Zarei, and some directors aligned with Kurdish artists began drawing on Kurdish actors and composers in major cinematic works, a new wave of Kurdish presence in the country’s artistic arena took shape. However, what occurred in the 2010s and the early 2020s was far broader and more impactful. The entry of a younger generation of Kurdish artists—who are proficient in the national language and music while also proudly preserving their own cultural heritage—shifted their position from “artistic marginality” to that of key actors in Iran’s art scene. Cultural policy in the Islamic Republic of Iran, particularly after 2016, also created more opportunities for ethnic participation in national projects so that national unity could be reinforced through creative interaction. This ongoing trajectory in cinema and music has progressively opened cultural boundaries and contributed to a more positive image of Kurdish identity in the broader Iranian public sphere (15).

In cinema, statistics and documentation indicate that from 2016 to 2024, a total of 48 national feature films were produced with the direct participation of Kurdish actors or Kurdish technical and behind-the-scenes professionals. These films reportedly generated approximately 440 billion tomans in domestic sales and attracted nearly 12 million viewers in cinemas nationwide. For example, the film *The Last Snow*, which won the Crystal Simorgh for Best Original Score at the 2023 Fajr Film Festival, featured music composed by the Kurdish composer Aria Jafari, with melodic themes combining Kurdish *Mahur* elements and the Tehran Symphony Orchestra. In addition, among eight selected Fajr films from 2020 to 2024, the presence of one or more Kurdish artists in leading roles is reported. Content analyses of these films suggest that in 78% of cases, Kurdish characters are portrayed as carriers of

coexistence, unity, and collective ethics, with narrative movement away from ethnic confrontation and toward social interaction (14).

The music sector has also displayed distinctive dynamism. Between 2019 and 2024, more than 55 national music projects were produced with the participation of Kurdish artists, including albums, film scores, Fajr Music Festival concerts, and national performances across provinces. Of these, 23 projects ranked among the top-selling works of their respective years, and their cumulative plays on online music platforms reportedly exceeded 80 million. A notable example is the album *Voice of Iran* (2021), featuring 12 prominent singers from different ethnic groups; two Kurdish singers performed tracks arranged with instruments such as the *daf*, *shamshal*, and *tanbur* (5). This project demonstrated that Kurdish music can be integrated into a national, multicultural structure without losing its authenticity.

National media and broadcasting networks have played a substantial role in reflecting and expanding this participation. Since 2018, IRIB—particularly Channels Two, Four, and the Documentary Network—has increased the production and broadcast of special programming about Kurdish artists participating in national projects. For instance, at the 2021 Fajr Music Festival, 42% of joint performances were staged by ensembles composed of Kurdish musicians and artists from other Iranian ethnic groups; according to a survey report by the Ministry of Culture’s polling center, 65% of attendees stated that these programs improved their views of Kurdish culture (23). This broad media reflection has enabled joint works to transcend the artistic field and enter the domain of internal cultural diplomacy.

From a policy perspective, the active presence of Kurdish artists in national projects has not only had an artistic dimension, but has also functioned as a soft instrument for strengthening ethnic linkage. In recent years, Kurdish artists have obtained membership in the Iranian Music Association, the House of Cinema, and decision-making councils of major festivals. Through these roles, they have helped steer project selection, thematic emphases, and group composition toward multi-ethnic collaboration. Direct participation in artistic policymaking processes has reportedly reduced the likelihood of stereotypical treatment of ethnic themes and created conditions for long-term cooperation among ethnic groups in major projects (22).

An analytical reading of this trend suggests that Kurdish artists’ participation in national projects produces a form of shared cultural capital that can play a mediating role during periods of social crisis or ethnic tension. Their presence has not only strengthened convergence among artistic elites, but has also influenced the broader social base; surveys indicate growth in positive attitudes toward Kurdish culture and increased interest among non-Kurdish populations in experiencing Kurdish cinema and music. Especially when supported by media coverage and cultural policy, this participation can become one of the key pillars of national cohesion (13, 16).

8) *Developing Shared Sports Activities Among Ethnic Groups*

In recent years, the development of shared sports activities among Iran’s diverse ethnic groups has gained a special position as a cultural strategy for strengthening ethnic convergence. Sport—particularly disciplines that enable multi-ethnic teams—creates unique opportunities for informal, non-prejudicial interaction among different ethnic communities. The Kurdish ethnic group, with a long-standing presence in wrestling, weightlifting, football, and indigenous sports such as *Chokh-Chokheh*, has expanded arenas of cooperation and friendship beyond provincial boundaries by participating in national competitions and leagues and by organizing joint events with other

ethnic groups. This trend is visible not only in formal sporting arenas but also in local festivals and competitions, indirectly contributing to reductions in cognitive and social distance among ethnic communities.

At the national level, Ministry of Sport data indicate that between 2018 and 2020, more than 240 sporting competitions and events were held nationwide with combined participation of Kurdish athletes and athletes from other ethnic groups, and in 65% of these events Kurdish teams or athletes were present in the main lineup or technical staff. For example, in the Iranian Premier League over the past five seasons, an average of 12 Kurdish players have competed on teams across the country, with some serving as team captains. Their presence in different cities has reportedly increased fans' familiarity with Kurdish culture and identity in other provinces (2). These figures suggest that the sustained physical presence of Kurdish athletes in diverse urban settings creates a channel for cultural interaction and mutual respect.

Interethnic sports festivals and competitions have also expanded significantly at national and provincial levels. According to the Federation of Rural Sports and Indigenous Games, between 2019 and 2023 more than 55 interethnic festivals were held in Kurdistan, West Azerbaijan, Kermanshah, Golestan, and Sistan and Baluchestan, featuring traditional competitions and indigenous games such as *Chokh-Chokheh* wrestling, tug-of-war, horse racing, and traditional volleyball. On average, 200 to 300 athletes from 8 to 12 provinces participated in each festival, and each event hosted more than 5,000 spectators (2). Beyond the sporting dimension, these festivals provide opportunities for cultural exchange and the display of customs, foods, and local clothing, and can develop into multi-dimensional cultural–social events.

Team sports such as volleyball and basketball have also provided a platform for sporting and social cooperation among ethnic groups. Reviews of Iran's Division One volleyball league results from 2020 to 2023 suggest that 25% of players were recruited from provinces with Kurdish majorities, and many of these athletes played for non-Kurdish teams. Moreover, in national university championships, mixed interethnic teams have achieved notable success. For example, Tehran University's team in 2022 reportedly won the national volleyball championship with a roster including Kurdish, Baluchi, Turkmen, and Lur players (22). These experiences indicate that interaction organized around a shared goal (team victory) can, in practice, break down walls of prejudice.

The participation of Kurdish women in national sporting events has also increased. According to National Olympic Committee statistics, from 2016 to 2024 the number of Kurdish female athletes on Iran's national teams rose from 14 to 32. These athletes participated in disciplines such as karate, volleyball, athletics, and taekwondo, winning five Asian medals and two world medals. Such achievements—particularly when accompanied by media coverage—simultaneously symbolize women's capability and function as a bridge for introducing Kurdish culture to the broader Iranian society (13). The presence of Kurdish women not only improves the public image of Kurdish identity, but can also shape broader attitudes toward women's roles within Kurdish traditional culture and open new pathways for the acceptance of social change.

Overall, the statistics and examples above indicate that developing shared sports activities among ethnic groups—especially with the active participation of Kurdish athletes—constitutes a key cultural tool for increasing ethnic convergence in Iran. These activities have not only improved social and cultural relations among ethnic groups, but have also indirectly contributed to managing diversity and reducing ethnic bias. Shared sporting successes strengthen a sense of common destiny and national pride, while healthy competition provides a context for reciprocal recognition and respect for differences. Sustaining this approach, alongside appropriate cultural

policymaking, can become a model for countries with similar ethnic diversity and contribute to consolidating social stability and national unity (1, 2).

9) Strengthening Ethnic Tourism and Ecotourism Between Kurdish Regions and Other Parts of the Country

In recent years, ethnic tourism and ecotourism between Kurdish regions and other parts of Iran have become one of the most vibrant domains of cultural exchange. Traveling to Kurdish areas not only includes visits to distinctive natural landscapes and historical sites, but also creates opportunities to become familiar with local music, cuisine, handicrafts, and rituals. Conversely, the presence of Kurdish tourists in other provinces similarly facilitates intercultural communication. This two-way process has generated a positive tourism cycle that extends beyond purely economic relations into social and cultural spheres. Moreover, social media and digital advertising have facilitated public access to information about local attractions, contributing to the transformation of ethnic tourism from a limited practice into a national and even international phenomenon (16, 19).

According to statistics from the Ministry of Cultural Heritage, Tourism, and Handicrafts, during 2018–2024 approximately 4.8 million domestic tourists traveled to Kurdistan, Kermanshah, and West Azerbaijan provinces, and 65% of them came from non-Kurdish provinces. The largest numbers of visitors reportedly came from Tehran, Isfahan, and Razavi Khorasan, and this trend accelerated particularly with the development of air and rail routes. The ministry also reported that during the same period, about 1.3 million Kurdish travelers visited other provinces for ecotourism and urban tourism purposes (17). These data indicate that a two-way tourism flow, grounded in reciprocal interactions, is generating a form of cultural overlap that strengthens mutual understanding and trust.

The development of ecotourism accommodations has also substantially supported this process. By 2024, around 420 ecotourism lodges had been registered in Kurdish regions, 73% of which were established after 2016. These lodges are often built or renovated by drawing on traditional village architecture and old houses, and in many areas they are managed through family participation. Research indicates that Kurdistan's ecotourism lodges have attracted not only domestic tourists but also international visitors, contributing to increased handicraft transactions and the revitalization of local businesses (24). Such accommodations serve not merely as places to stay, but as educational–cultural environments that transmit an embodied experience of Kurdish everyday life to guests.

Organizing joint cultural–tourism events between Kurds and other ethnic groups has been another pathway for strengthening ethnic convergence. Festivals such as “Nowruz-gah” and “Ethnic Culture Week,” held between 2019 and 2024 in Tehran, Isfahan, and Mashhad, hosted Kurdish and other ethnic artists, cooks, and artisans. Each event attracted an average of 30,000 to 45,000 visitors over the course of a week. According to data from Iran's tourism studies centers, 76% of participants stated that after attending these events, they became more interested in traveling to Kurdistan and West Azerbaijan (17). Such festivals function as living showcases, placing cultures side by side and substantially lowering the “cost” of reciprocal recognition.

Another important indicator in strengthening ethnic tourism is the development of shared nature-tourism routes. Hiking and mountaineering routes such as “Hawraman to Marivan” and “Dalahu to Qasr-e Shirin” have, over the past five years, been formally included in the national tourism calendar. Statistics from Iranian mountaineering associations indicate that in 2023 more than 18,000 people used these routes, 54% of whom came from outside Kurdish regions (18). Beyond the athletic dimension, staying in intermediary villages along these routes provides travelers with opportunities to become familiar with everyday life and the hospitality of local communities. Linking sport and ethnic tourism thus connects two influential domains and broadens the cultural impact range.

A review of the above examples and statistics indicates that strengthening ethnic tourism and ecotourism between Kurdish regions and other parts of the country has played a key role in expanding cultural convergence. By shaping direct relationships, this trend creates opportunities for unmediated experiences of the “other’s” culture and enhances trust, cooperation, and mutual respect. Ethnic tourism not only supports local and national economies, but also energizes a sustainable cycle of cultural coexistence. Continuing this policy—alongside transportation infrastructure development, targeted promotion, and support for local communities—can elevate this process to a level where it functions as a resilient and unifying factor under social or political pressures.

10) Promoting Islamic Teachings with an Emphasis on the Unity of the Islamic Ummah

Promoting Islamic teachings with an emphasis on the unity of the Islamic ummah in Iran—particularly in Kurdish regions—has long been regarded as an important cultural strategy for strengthening convergence between the Kurdish ethnic group and other ethnic groups. By drawing on Muslims’ shared beliefs, this approach seeks to push ethnic boundaries to the margins and reinforce religious, ethical, and social bonds. In Kurdish regions, where the majority of the population is Muslim, educational, cultural, and religious programs can function as bridges of communication, highlighting shared foundations of belief rather than focusing on surface-level differences. Successful experiences—including the participation of Kurdish religious representatives in Islamic unity meetings, Friday sermons adopting convergence-oriented discourses, and the organization of joint religious occasions—illustrate this trajectory. Strengthening this path can create a shield of cohesion in the face of social and political challenges and operationalize the notion of a “single ummah” in the everyday lives of diverse communities (3).

According to statistics from the Cultural Research Center of the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, between 2017 and 2022 more than 280 conferences, workshops, and scientific-cultural meetings were held in Kurdistan, Kermanshah, and West Azerbaijan with “Islamic ummah unity” as their core theme. These events involved Sunni and Shi’a scholars as well as cultural activists from different ethnic groups, and in 64% of them Kurdish speakers played a key role in articulating shared teachings (3). The figures and evidence suggest that the active presence of Kurdish intellectual and religious leaders in these occasions has not only been welcomed locally, but has also influenced unity-oriented discourse at the national level.

Holding joint religious ceremonies—such as Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, and celebrations of the Prophet Muhammad’s birth—has provided contexts for interethnic interaction. On average, in recent years around 35% of participants in such ceremonies in interaction-oriented cities such as Sanandaj and Kermanshah have reportedly been from non-Kurdish ethnic groups. A 2021 report indicated that these events contributed to an 18% increase in the “interethnic trust” index in Kurdish regions (2). Joint participation in religious rituals is not merely symbolic; it can generate durable psychological effects on people’s perceptions and serve as a barrier against the emergence of ethnic cleavages.

National and local media have also played a significant role in promoting religious teachings through a unity-oriented approach. Provincial television networks such as Kurdistan and Kermanshah reportedly broadcast more than 420 hours of programming in 2022 centered on Islamic unity, and in 56% of these programs Kurdish experts were featured. This approach—combining religious education, documentaries on interethnic coexistence, and historical analysis of Muslim relations—has contributed to socializing younger generations into a “culture of unity,” provided that messages remain realistic and enable reciprocal interaction (13, 20).

Educational institutions and seminaries also play a prominent role. Between 2016 and 2024, more than 1,200 Kurdish seminarians reportedly studied in religious schools across the country, with some now serving as teachers and preachers. With deep familiarity with local culture and Islamic teachings, these individuals can convey unity messages in language that resonates with communities. During the same period, around 40 cooperation memoranda were reportedly signed between Sunni and Shi'a seminaries, with the primary aim of strengthening scholarly and cultural communications (3). Shared religious education and cross-sectarian seminary interaction thus create a durable layer of convergence that extends beyond the public sphere into elite networks.

Overall, promoting Islamic teachings centered on the unity of the Islamic ummah plays a strategic role in Iran's multi-ethnic context—especially in relations between Kurds and other ethnic groups. The reported statistics and evidence indicate that targeted actions in this domain—ranging from religious conferences and media programming to religious education and joint ceremonies—have helped improve indicators of trust, interaction, and coexistence. The strength of this approach lies in its grounding in a supra-ethnic identity, namely Islamic identity, which helps ensure that cultural boundaries are not barriers but contributors to the richness of unity. Sustaining this policy, alongside building channels for intra-faith and inter-sectarian dialogue, can help immunize society against ethnic-religious tensions and provide a model for durable convergence at the regional level (2, 3).

Conclusion

Examining the cultural factors influencing the convergence of the Kurdish ethnic group with other ethnic groups in the Islamic Republic of Iran leads us to a deep understanding of Iran's concept of a "patchwork yet unified identity." The results derived from analyzing historical, linguistic, religious, and social components indicate that ethnic convergence in Iran is not a prescriptive or merely political phenomenon, but rather one rooted in the deep history and lived culture of the people of this land. The Kurdish ethnic group has not existed as an isolated minority, but as "valiant border guardians" and "custodians of authentic Iranian culture," consistently positioned at the core of national identity. The final conclusions of this study can be articulated around several fundamental axes, which are elaborated below.

The first and most foundational conclusion confirms the proposition that culture is the strongest adhesive of national cohesion in Iran. Unlike Western nation-state models that have largely been formed through linguistic or racial homogenization, the Iranian model is grounded in cultural plurality and civilizational unity. The linguistic commonalities between Persian and Kurdish are so profound that many words and expressions testify to a shared heritage spanning several millennia. This linguistic continuity has enabled Kurdish literature and art to readily resonate with the sensibilities of other Iranians. Moreover, ancient rituals such as Nowruz, Yalda Night, and Chaharshanbe Suri—celebrated in Kurdistan with distinctive authenticity and splendor—underscore the fact that Kurds have served as faithful guardians of Iranian traditions. Consequently, any cultural policymaking in the Islamic Republic should be based on strengthening and promoting these shared elements rather than denying differences. Recognizing cultural diversity within the framework of the Constitution—particularly Articles 15 and 19—not only does not threaten national security, but by fostering satisfaction and a sense of belonging, it serves as a guarantor of greater stability and convergence.

The second axis of the conclusion concerns the role of religion and spirituality as catalysts for convergence. Although religious differences can, if mismanaged, turn into sources of divergence, Iran's historical and social experience demonstrates that the compassionate and mystical interpretations of Islam prevalent among Kurds and

other Iranians function as unifying forces. Devotion to the Ahl al-Bayt, which is strongly reflected in the literature and mysticism of Sunni communities in Kurdistan, has created a shared ground with Shi'a populations in other regions of Iran. By emphasizing Islamic unity, organizing unity-oriented conferences, and paying attention to comparative jurisprudence, the Islamic Republic of Iran has sought to utilize this capacity to neutralize divisive schemes. The outcome of this approach is a synergistic interaction between religious and national convergence, shaping a coherent identity of the Kurdish Iranian Muslim.

The third significant point in this conclusion is the role of social and media interactions in the contemporary era. In today's world, cultural isolation has lost its meaning. Increased communication, internal migration, interethnic marriages, and the education of Kurdish students in universities of other cities—and vice versa—have produced an interwoven social fabric. These lived interactions have dismantled negative stereotypes and contributed to mutual understanding among ethnic groups. However, a cautionary note emerges here: if national media and the educational system fail to provide accurate representations of Kurdish culture, language, and cultural figures, foreign media and ethnocentric currents will fill the resulting void with divergent narratives. Therefore, sustainable convergence requires cultural justice—meaning that the Kurdish ethnic group must feel that its culture and language occupy a worthy place in the national showcase.

Ultimately, the convergence of the Kurdish ethnic group with other Iranian ethnic groups is not the product of historical or geographical determinism, but rather a conscious choice grounded in thousands of years of shared coexistence. For the Islamic Republic of Iran to sustain and deepen this convergence, it must adopt intelligent strategies in which security is the product of cultural satisfaction. Strengthening domestic cultural diplomacy, investing in shared civilizational elements, promoting economic development in Kurdish regions as a cultural-economic complement, and utilizing Kurdish elites in the country's macro-level governance are among the key recommendations that emerge from this study.

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Transparency of Data

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