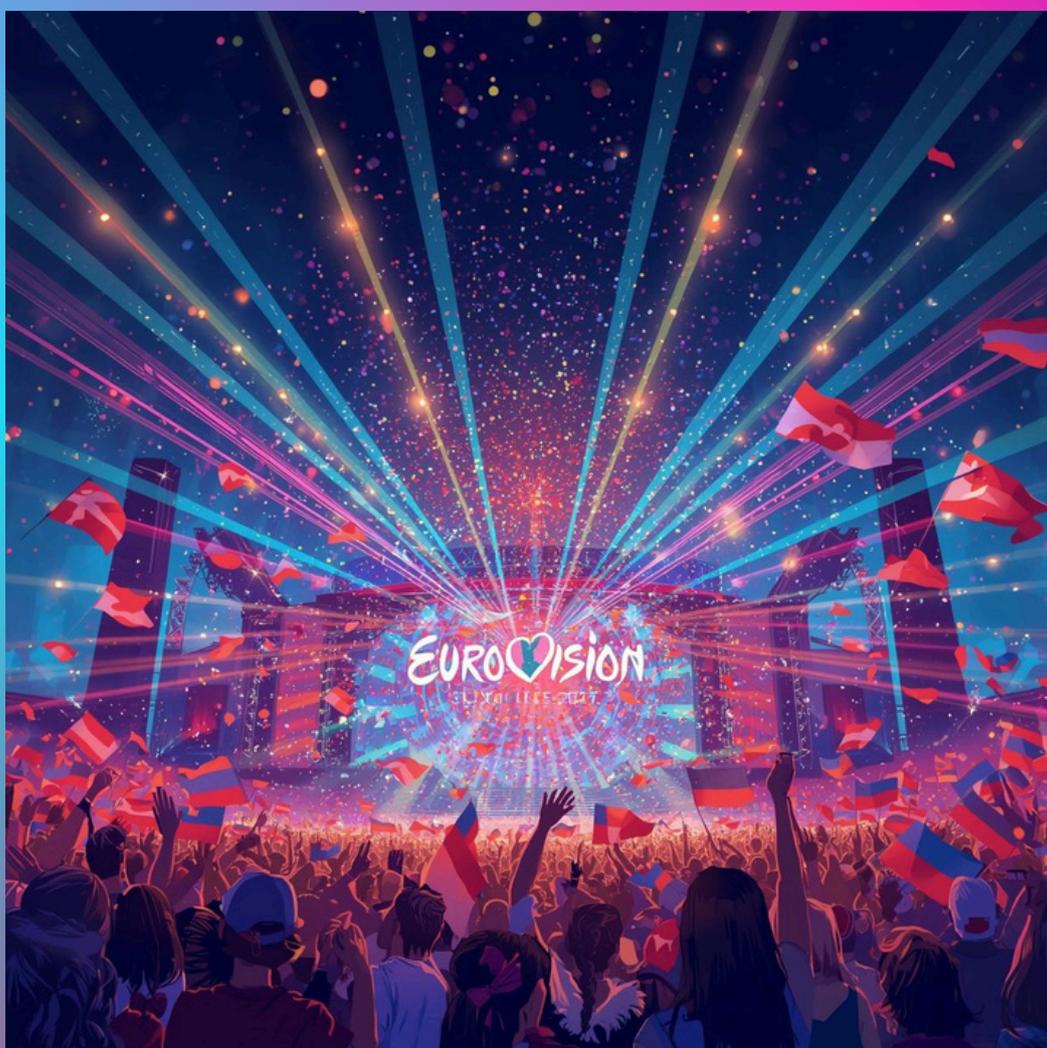




THE EUROVISION SONG CONTEST AND THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE APRIL 1-3 2026



THE EUROVISION SONG CONTEST AND THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES OVERVIEW



Since its inception in 1956, the Eurovision Song Contest (ESC) has launched the careers of global stars such as ABBA and Celine Dion. Multicultural and multilingual, and unmatched in scale outside the Olympic and Paralympic Games, the ESC has become a fixture of the European public media landscape. On the eve of its seventieth anniversary, the ESC crystallizes a wide range of issues: the staging of shared identities and geopolitical rivalries; the construction of normativities and representations; and the questioning of cultural legitimacy and its antithesis.

Studying the ESC thus entails exploring the intersections of identity, collective rituals, and social media participation, while also illuminating the complex political and social dynamics within the cultural and media industries. **To what extent can the humanities and social sciences help us to illuminate, understand, and critically analyze the social, cultural, and political issues—both past and present—embodied in the ESC?**

The conference “Eurovision Song Contest and the Humanities and Social Sciences” seeks to build upon the collective initiatives that have helped establish an interdisciplinary state of the art in ESC research. Adopting an interdisciplinary and critical perspective, the conference aims to explore and interrogate emerging approaches and studies related to the contest and its multiple dimensions.

The discussions at this conference will be structured around the following central research questions:

- How are the humanities and social sciences approaching the ESC? Conversely, how might the ESC stimulate and challenge the theoretical frameworks and methodologies of these disciplines?
- Is the ESC an original social object with its own distinct questions and methods, or does it resemble other research topics that pose similar analytical challenges?
- Does current research on the ESC reflect a profound renewal of academic approaches, or is it primarily shaped by long-term dynamics involving the revision and adaptation of existing themes, objects, and analytical frameworks?
- What do analyses of the ESC contribute to the humanities and social sciences, particularly in terms of methodological tools, and interpretive perspectives?
- How do disciplinary orientations and the ethnocentric perspectives of researchers shape their interpretations of the ESC and influence their research practices?

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The organization of this conference will serve as a springboard for the establishment of an international research network: titled **ENCORE** (*Eurovision Network for Collaborative Research and Exploration*), this network will focus on how the ESC can be studied at the intersection of various approaches, disciplines, and research objects. It also aims to foster dialogue between science and society surrounding the contest. A wide range of non-academic partners—fan clubs, media outlets, businesses, and institutions—will be invited to initiate an open dialogue within the network, ensuring socially-grounded research and a meaningful exchange of knowledge between the various stakeholders involved in the Eurovision Song Contest.

In this spirit, the conference will alternate between sessions dedicated to the presentation and discussion of ESC research, participatory workshops to define the objectives and cooperation methods of the ENCORE network, a cultural evening dedicated to the ESC on April 2nd in partnership with the *12 Points* podcast, and cultural visits reserved for symposium participants (April 3rd).

This symposium is supported by funding from the Research Intervention Fund of the Faculté des Lettres (Sorbonne Université), the 4EU+ European University Alliance, the Europe Initiative (Sorbonne Université), the Doctoral School 5 "Concepts & Langages" (Faculté des Lettres - Sorbonne Université), the ICCA Index, and the research laboratories GRIPIC (CELSA - Sorbonne Université), LabSIC (Université Paris Nord), Centre Norbert Elias (Avignon Université), and PTAC (Université Rennes 2).

Participation in the conference is free of charge and open to researchers, professionals, students, fans, and anyone curious about ESC. To register, please click the following link (<https://bit.ly/esconferenceparis>) or scan the QR code below:



THE EUROVISION SONG CONTEST AND THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES PRACTICAL INFORMATIONS



This conference will take place at **CELSA - Sorbonne Université**. While in-person attendance is preferred to ensure high-quality exchanges and interactions, it will also be possible to follow the event remotely via videoconference. The conference will be held primarily in English, and simultaneous translation will be provided from English to French and French to English.

Wednesday, April 1st & Friday, April 3rd: Grand Amphithéâtre (Ground floor, back of the courtyard)

Thursday, April 2nd (morning): Petit Amphithéâtre (Room 115, 1st floor)

An information desk will be located in the main entrance hall, and directional signs will be posted throughout the building to guide you.

CELSA - Sorbonne Université : 77, rue de Villiers. 92200 Neuilly-sur-Seine.

CELSA profile on Google Maps: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/rs2Hz1uokjdfx4D68>

By metro from Paris:

Option 1 - Metro 3: Take line 3 towards Pont de Levallois-Bécon and get off at Pont de Levallois-Bécon. Then walk 10 minutes to the venue.

Option 2 - Metro 1 + Bus 93: Take line 1 towards La Défense and get off at Pont de Neuilly. Then take bus 93 towards Invalides and get off at Villiers. Alternatively, it's a 20-25 minute walk from Pont de Neuilly.

Detailed directions: RATP (<https://www.ratp.fr/>)

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Wednesday, April 1, 2026

8:45 AM – 9:30 AM. Welcome Coffee

9:30 AM – 10:30 AM. **Opening of the Conference. General Introduction**

Organizing Committee. Sébastien Appiotti (CELSA - Sorbonne Université), Lisa Bolz (CELSA - Sorbonne Université), Johan Boittiaux (Université Sorbonne Paris Nord), Philippe Le Guern (Université Rennes 2), Marie-Caroline Neuvillers (Avignon Université).

10:00 AM – 12:00 PM. **Session 1. Research Evolutions and Perspectives on Eurovision Song Contest**

Jess Carniel, Elad Carmel, Karen Fricker & Ivan Raykoff, University of Southern Queensland (Australia), University of Jyväskylä (Finland), Brock University (Canada), New School (USA).

An intellectual historian, a musicologist, a cultural studies scholar, and a theatre critic walk into a song contest...": Itinerant interdisciplinarity in Eurovision Studies

Chair: Lisa Bolz, CELSA - Sorbonne Université

12:00 PM – 1:30 PM. **Lunch Break**

1:30 PM – 4:00 PM: **Session 2. Geopolitics of Eurovision**

Chen Ozeri & Gad Yair, Hebrew University of Jerusalem (Israel).

Pinkwashing? Comparing Israel's and Russia's treatment of the LGBTQ cause through Eurovision.

Christina Öberg, Linnaeus University (Sweden).

Two sides a story: Eurovision Song Contest - the politicization of voting.

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Valeria Korablyova, Charles University, Prague (Czech Republic).

Russia's Intervision 2025 as a Geopolitical Technology: Dark Cultural Diplomacy and Its Global Projections.

Burak Özçetin, Zeren İldoğan, Bilkent University (Turkey).

Withdrawing from Europe: Eurovision and the Struggle over Cultural Hegemony in Turkey.

Chair: Johan Boittiaux, Université Sorbonne Paris Nord

4:00 PM – 4:30 PM – Coffee Break

4:30 PM – 6:30 PM. Session 3. Eurovision: A Vehicle for Territorial Narratives and Identities?

Solène Scherer, Aix-Marseille Université (France).

The Heritage-making (Patrimonialization) of Eurovision across multiple scales: the example of Austria.

Stéphane Sawas, INALCO (France).

Greece in the Eurovision Song Contest (1974-2025): National identity and communion, from kefi to melancholy.

José Luis Panea, Universidad de Sevilla (Spain).

On copleras, crooners and ye-yés: staging Spanishness during Late Francoism at the Eurovision Song Contest.

François Foret, Université Libre de Bruxelles (Belgium).

Making Europe through sport and music? How Belgians perceive the effects of the Euro and Eurovision on European unity.

Chair: Philippe Le Guern, Université Rennes 2

8 PM. Gala Dinner

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Thursday, April 2, 2026

9:00 AM – 9:30 AM – Welcome Coffee

9:30 AM – 12:45 PM. Session 4. Eurovision Song Contest: Media Strategies and Mediation Frameworks

Sophie Kiang, CELSA - Sorbonne Université (France).

From TV ritual to digital experience: participation and viewing practices of Eurovision on YouTube.

Mads M. Tommerup Andersen, University of Copenhagen (Denmark).

Traces of reality TV in the ESC: A televisual content analysis

Benoît Lafon & Guylaine Guéraud-Pinet, Université Grenoble Alpes (France).

Mediatization of the French imaginary, between unicity and diversity: French songs and performances at Eurovision (1956-2025).

11 AM – 11:15 AM. Coffee Break

Georges Cremona, University of Malta (Malta).

Reimagining the Eurovision Song Contest as a Multimodal Pedagogical Space: Field Reflections from Higher Education Contexts.

Jonathan Hendrickx, University of Copenhagen (Denmark).

Fan Friction? Investigating the Epistemology and Ontology of Fan Media Covering the Eurovision Song Contest.

Sofia Vieira Lopes, NOVA University of Lisbon (Portugal).

From Underdog to Spotlight: Portuguese Challenges to Eurovision's Mainstream Narratives.

Chair: Marie-Caroline Neuvillers, Avignon Université

12:45 PM – 2:00 PM – Lunch Break

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2:00 PM – 4:00 PM. Launch of the ENCORE International Research Network (*Eurovision Network for Collaborative Research and Exploration*)

Presentation of the research network and programmatic workshop (activities, stakeholders, network structure, and funding).

4:00 PM – 4:20 PM. Coffee Break

4:20 PM – 6:30 PM. ENCORE Science & Society Collaborative Network

Presentation of the proposed network and programmatic workshop (research objects & themes, partners, and activities).

8:00 PM – Cultural Evening in partnership with *12 Points* podcast.

Les Berthom, 35 boulevard Voltaire, 75011 Paris



Media outlet for opinion and entertainment, "12 Points" podcast aims to demystify Eurovision Song Contest and make it accessible to everyone. From history and culture to economics and politics, 12 Points decodes every surprising and thrilling facet of the contest with pedagogy and humor.

During this event, we invite you to:

1. Attend a 12 Points live podcast recording;
2. Take part in an interactive Eurovision quiz (with prizes to be won);
3. Join the "Eurovision AI Song Contest" (an AI-assisted song creation competition);
4. And wrap up the night in style with a musical "Best of" featuring the contest's greatest hits!

→ Register: <https://bit.ly/esconferenceparis>

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Friday, April 3, 2026

9:00 AM – 9:30 AM – Welcome Coffee

9:30 AM – 12:00 PM. Session 5. Performing Diversity and Inclusivity at Eurovision Song Contest : Critical Perspectives

Paul David Flood, Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester (USA).
Crossing the Borders: The 1990 Eurovision Song Contest and the Prospect of European (Racial) Integration.

Peter Rehberg, University of Cincinnati (USA).
From Proto-Queer to Post-Gay: Queer Eurovision Now and Then.

Johann Pibert, University of Bonn, Free University of Berlin (Germany).
Audiovisuality of Queer Eurovision: United in Diversity?

Marcin Bogucki, University of Warsaw (Poland).
"I got no ambition for high position in the competition". Theory and practice of joke entries.

12:00 PM – 12:30 PM – Conclusion and Outlook

12:30 PM – 1:30 PM – Lunch Break

2:30 PM – 5:30 PM – Cultural Tours

- Sorbonne (Heritage Tour)
- Philharmonie de Paris (Exhibition: *Video Games & Music*)

Important: This program is reserved for conference speakers. It will be open to other registered participants subject to availability.



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REGISTER

