

Singing Integration: How Shared Experiences Build Supranational Identity and Political Support*

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Abstract

Can shared experiences across nations foster people's attachment to a community beyond the nation-state? The answer is *a priori* ambiguous: international events bring nations together around a common frame, but they also set them against one another. To answer this question, we study the Eurovision Song Contest, an annual competition broadcast to a large transnational audience and organized around shared European values. Comparing respondents surveyed just before and after their country's participation in the show, we find that the contest raises European identification, which complements national identity rather than substituting for it. The effect persists over time and is independent of the outcome of the event. Regarding mechanisms, we show that Eurovision changes the values individuals attribute to Europe without changing their own values, and identification increases when the two align. Importantly, the event has electoral consequences: in countries that narrowly qualify for the final, votes in European Parliament elections shift toward more pro-European parties.

Keywords: National identity, Supranational identity, Regional integration, Voting, Shared experiences, European integration, Eurovision Song Contest.

JEL Codes: D72, D83, D91, Z13.

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1 Introduction

Political integration rests not only on shared institutions and economic interests but also on a sense of common belonging. Historically, the consolidation of nation-states has been accompanied by efforts to create identities broad enough to transcend local, regional, or ethnic attachments through instruments such as schooling, language policy, symbols, and shared historical narratives (e.g., Gellner, 1983; Rohner & Zhuravskaya, 2025). A similar challenge arises when political authority moves beyond the nation-state, but under different institutional constraints: supranational institutions generally lack direct control over the instruments through which national identities were built and must secure support across consolidated national communities whose heterogeneous preferences raise the cost of integration (Alesina & Spolaore, 1997). Yet how supranational identities form, and whether they can be shaped at all, remain poorly understood.

This question has gained prominence over the last decade with growing contestation of regional integration. The United Kingdom left the European Union in 2020; the South American bloc UNASUR became inactive after a wave of disengagement that began in 2018; and Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger withdrew from the West African bloc ECOWAS in 2025. The weakening of such regional projects may have substantial economic and political consequences, including higher trade barriers and reduced capacity to address regional challenges such as climate change, public health, and migration (Sandler, 2006; Baccini, 2019). At the same time, the globalization and digitalization of media have expanded the ability of cultural events to transcend national borders and bring geographically dispersed audiences together through shared experiences (Frandsen et al., 2022). This paper therefore asks whether such cross-border cultural experiences can foster political identity beyond the nation-state and strengthen support for supranational institutions.

The effect of international shared experiences on political identity is theoretically ambiguous. On the one hand, events experienced simultaneously across countries can expose audiences to common symbols and values and make a broader political community more salient (Dayan & Katz, 1992). On the other hand, such international events generally organize participation along national lines: countries compete under their own banners, audiences support national representatives, and competition may intensify national rather than supranational attachment (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). An international shared experience may therefore create a broader identity, reinforce national identity, or do both simultaneously. Determining which force dominates is ultimately an empirical question.

To address it, we focus on the Eurovision Song Contest (hereafter Eurovision), an annual televised competition in which national broadcasters from across Europe select artists to represent their countries. Eurovision is one of Europe’s longest-running and

largest cultural events and provides a particularly useful setting because it combines national representation with a shared European framework. Each participating country competes under its flag, but does so on a common stage that celebrates European unity and shared values (Yair, 2019; Carniel, 2025). The contest’s audience is also substantial: every year, it draws around 160 million television viewers across nearly 40 countries.¹ This means that a large share of the European public is exposed, at the same time, to a show built around European values. These features allow us to examine how the contest affects both national and European identification, as well as support for European integration.

Our empirical analysis proceeds as follows. We first estimate the impact of Eurovision on European identification. To that end, we combine information on countries’ participation in the contest with individual-level survey data from the Eurobarometer. Our identification strategy exploits Eurobarometer fieldwork conducted in the weeks around the show’s final, known as the Grand Final. Specifically, for each edition, we compare the self-reported attitudes of respondents interviewed just before the final with those of respondents from the same country interviewed just afterward. We can apply this design to five editions, covering 102 country-edition pairs and nearly 130,000 respondents.

Our approach identifies the causal effect of the contest on respondents’ attitudes under the assumption that interview timing around the Grand Final is exogenous. A series of balance and placebo tests supports the plausibility of this assumption.

We find that respondents interviewed after their country’s participation in the Eurovision final are 2 percentage points more likely to identify as European than those interviewed before. This effect is quantitatively meaningful: applied uniformly to the contest’s annual audience, it would imply around 3.2 million additional individuals identifying as European. These findings stand up to a series of robustness checks, including alternative measures of European identity and pro-European attitudes, as well as a complementary empirical strategy that allows us to leverage data across 18 Eurovision editions. We can also demonstrate that the results are not driven by any particular country or edition, a general improvement in respondents’ mood following the show, or social desirability bias. In addition, we find suggestive evidence that the effect is stronger in countries where European identification is initially weaker.

A natural question that follows is whether participation in Eurovision affects individuals’ sense of European identity through mere exposure to a shared event or through how their country fared in it. If exposure drives the effect, it should be stronger where the contest is more salient and should not vary with its outcome. Using audience size and local media coverage to measure salience, we find that the increase in European identification is larger where viewership and media attention are higher and is undetectable in countries that did not take part in the contest, where both are substantially lower. By

¹See <https://www.ebu.ch/topics/eurovision-song-contest>.

contrast, the effect does not vary with the outcome of the contest, whether measured by the performance of the respondent’s country or by its political and cultural distance from the winner. Taken together, these results indicate that exposure to Eurovision itself, rather than its outcome, increases European identification.

We then examine how this increase in European identity relates to national identity. We find that it is entirely driven by a decline in the probability that respondents identify exclusively with their nationality and a corresponding rise in the probability that they identify first with their nationality and second as European. In contrast, we observe no movement toward categories in which European identity is primary or exclusive. This pattern suggests that Eurovision fosters a form of dual identity in which European identification coexists with national identity instead of crowding it out.

We next show that the effect persists beyond the immediate aftermath of the contest. Using Eurobarometer waves conducted several months after the final, we document that although the increase in European identification attenuates, it remains positive and statistically significant.

Turning to the mechanism through which Eurovision affects European identification, we draw on the economics of social identity, in which identification with a group depends on the perceived distance between an individual’s characteristics and the attributes associated with that group (Akerlof & Kranton, 2000; Shayo, 2009; Dehdari & Gehring, 2022). We argue that because Eurovision is built around the idea of *Europeanness* and shared European values (Carniel, 2025), it changes individuals’ perceptions of Europe, particularly the values they see as representative of it. When the representation of European values conveyed by the contest is close to an individual’s own values, her perceived distance from Europe falls and identifying as European becomes more appealing.

This argument rests on three hypotheses that we test in turn. First, the contest must communicate recognizable information about European values. We focus on the values that the literature identifies as central to Europe: peace, democracy, human rights, the rule of law, freedom, and tolerance (Manners, 2002; Checkel & Katzenstein, 2009). Using a large language model (LLM)-based semantic analysis of transcripts from Eurovision broadcasts between 2004 and 2025, we document that the contest consistently showcases these values.

Second, exposure to the show should change how individuals perceive Europe and the values they associate with it. We begin by showing that respondents interviewed after their country’s participation are more likely to identify shared values as a key source of European belonging, whereas none of the other factors included in the survey question, such as history, language, or geography, is positively affected. We then show that respondents are more likely to report that at least one of the values that were showcased during Eurovision is among those that best represent the European Union. By contrast, the contest has no effect on whether they personally endorse those same

values. These results document that Eurovision changes what individuals believe Europe stands for without altering their own values, which points to a change in beliefs rather than a change in preferences.

The final prediction of our perceived-distance framework is that the effect of Eurovision on European identification should depend on the proximity between one’s personal values and those showcased during the show. Consistent with this prediction, we find that the greater this proximity, the greater the identity response. Overall, these findings indicate that the contest changes individuals’ perceptions of Europe and strengthens European identification when the values they come to attribute to Europe align with those they already hold.

Finally, we examine whether Eurovision has tangible implications for political behavior beyond its effects on attitudinal outcomes. To do so, we focus on voting in European Parliament (EP) elections, which generally take place only a few weeks after the contest. Because EP elections occur at a single point in time, we cannot use the same before-and-after comparison, and instead leverage a separate source of quasi-experimental variation: in each semi-final, only the ten countries receiving the highest scores qualify for the Grand Final. We exploit this rule in a regression discontinuity design that compares respondents from countries that narrowly qualified with those from countries that narrowly failed to do so. Near the cutoff, participation in the final is plausibly as good as randomly assigned, so that any difference in voting behavior in EP elections can be attributed to the contest. Using both survey and aggregate electoral data, we find that narrow qualification shifts votes toward more pro-European parties. These findings suggest that the effect of Eurovision extends beyond attitudes and translates into greater political support for European integration.

Our paper contributes to several strands of literature. The first is the empirical literature that uses observational data and quasi-experimental variation to identify the determinants of collective identity (Aspachs-Bracons et al., 2008; Clots-Figueras & Masella, 2013; Blouin & Mukand, 2019; Fouka, 2020; Cáceres-Delpiano et al., 2021; Dehdari & Gehring, 2022; Ronconi & Ramos-Toro, 2025). Most of this literature studies identities within existing states, where a central authority can shape identity directly through institutions and public policies. We extend this line of research by providing causal evidence that a mass cross-border cultural event can strengthen identification with a supranational political community beyond the nation-state. We further document a distinct mechanism that explains how identity moves and for whom: the shared experience shifts the values people associate with the community, without changing their own values. Identification then rises among those whose personal values already align with those attributed to the community. In other words, Eurovision does not bring people’s values closer to those of Europe; it brings Europe’s perceived values closer to their own. More broadly, our finding that identity can adjust within days and persist over months relates to research

on cultural persistence and change (Giuliano & Nunn, 2021).

Closest to our work, Depetris-Chauvin et al. (2020) show that national football success strengthens national identification in Africa at the expense of ethnic identification. In addition to documenting a different mechanism through which identity responds to shared experiences, we study the level above nations and find a contrasting pattern: identification increases regardless of how a country performs, and two identities can coexist, with the supranational identification added to a national identity that remains primary. In this respect, our findings also connect to work on fiscal federalism that models nested regional and federal identities as either independent or substitutable (Holm, 2016). Our evidence supports the former.

Second, our paper contributes to research on social identity and decision-making (Akerlof & Kranton, 2000; Kranton, 2016; Shayo, 2020), which emphasizes how identification depends on the attributes associated with social groups. We extend that framework by providing causal evidence on an informational channel through which perceptions of these attributes can change. The subsequent heterogeneous identity response we document also connects our results to work showing that responses to information depend on recipients' prior views and characteristics (Alesina et al., 2020; García-Hombrados et al., 2026).

Third, our findings add to research on how media exposure shapes political attitudes and behavior. Much of this literature studies explicitly political or partisan content (DellaVigna & Kaplan, 2007; Enikolopov et al., 2011; Martin & Yurukoglu, 2017), while a related strand shows that prolonged exposure to entertainment programming can also carry political consequences (Durante et al., 2019; Wang, 2021). We differ from both strands in the nature of the treatment: a brief, cross-national entertainment event rather than sustained exposure to a television channel, whether partisan or not. Specifically, our results suggest that a single, short-lived exposure is enough to move both political attitudes and voting behavior.

Finally, we contribute to research on the political foundations of public support for European integration (Guiso et al., 2016; Hobolt & de Vries, 2016), and in particular to work on the role of European identity (Carey, 2002; Fligstein, 2008; Mauterer et al., 2026). Within this literature, Alesina et al. (2017) identify the persistence of national identities as the main obstacle to further integration. We show that European-branded mass cultural experiences shared across countries can strengthen European identification alongside national identity and increase electoral support for integration, thus complementing existing explanations centered on external threat (Gehring, 2022) and institutional integration (Buscha et al., 2017). Our findings on electoral outcomes also speak to the research on the determinants of Eurosceptic voting (Becker et al., 2017; De Vries, 2018; Fetzer, 2019). This literature has associated Eurosceptic voting with immigration, economic insecurity, dissatisfaction with domestic politics, and demands for greater national control. We find that a positive non-economic factor — exposure to cultural content that reshapes per-

ceptions of Europe — increases support for pro-European parties at the expense of less pro-European parties.

Overall, our results qualify the notion that underlying differences in preferences or distributional interests constrain the feasible scale of political jurisdictions (Alesina & Spolaore, 1997; Bolton & Roland, 1997; Gancia et al., 2022). A policy implication of that literature is that sustaining larger political communities requires homogenizing citizens' values (Alesina et al., 2021). Our findings point to an alternative: individuals can come to perceive a broader political community as closer to them without convergence in their underlying values. Policies and events emphasizing that proximity can therefore foster both identification with that community and support for its institutions without trying to make its members more alike.

The remainder of the paper proceeds as follows. Section 2 provides background information on Eurovision, while Section 3 describes the data. Section 4 presents the empirical methodology. Section 5 investigates the effect of Eurovision on European identity, and Section 6 extends this finding. Section 7 explores the underlying mechanism. Section 8 analyzes the consequences for voting behavior. Section 9 concludes.

2 The Eurovision Song Contest in a Nutshell

The Eurovision Song Contest is an annual televised music competition organized by the European Broadcasting Union. Established in 1956, it has become one of Europe's largest and most visible cultural events. The show attracts an average of 160 million television viewers per year across nearly 40 countries (see Footnote 1), a figure comparable to the audiences of major sporting events. For example, the final of the UEFA Champions League, one of the most prestigious competitions in European football, drew 165 million viewers in 2018 (Wellings & Kalman, 2019). The contest's audience is also demographically balanced, especially compared with the audiences of many international sporting events: viewers are spread across age groups (European Broadcasting Union, 2022), and survey evidence indicates only modest gender differences in intended viewership (Ipsos, 2020).

In terms of format, each national broadcaster selects a song and a performer to represent its country. The competition consists of two semi-finals and a Grand Final.² The host nation and the Big Five (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom) qualify directly for the final, while all other countries compete in one of the semi-finals.³ Around 40 countries typically take part in the competition, with approximately 25 qualifying for the final. Once all songs have been performed, national juries and viewers award

²The contest introduced one semi-final in 2004 and a second in 2008.

³Excluding the host country and the Big Five from the sample leaves the results unchanged (see Section 5.2).

points to other countries’ entries, with voting for one’s own national entry prohibited. The country receiving the highest total number of points wins the contest.

The voting rules have changed repeatedly over the contest’s history, including shifts between jury voting, public televoting, and systems that combine both. In the past decade alone, the voting system has undergone at least four major revisions (in 2016, 2023, 2024, and 2026), as well as a series of smaller adjustments. These changes, however, do not bias our results because our estimates rely on comparisons within a given edition, and the voting rules are fixed at that level.

Eurovision is designed as a European event. The competition primarily brings together European countries, although participation formally depends on membership in, or invitation by, the European Broadcasting Union. While countries compete against one another as separate national entities, they do so within a common European framework that is explicitly centered on European values and the idea of a common cultural heritage (Yair, 2019; Carniel, 2025). This framing is also reflected in the contest’s recurring mottos, such as “We Are One,” “Building Bridges,” and “Celebrate Diversity.” Since 2023, “United By Music” has served as the permanent motto. The European Broadcasting Union similarly describes the contest as embedded in Europe’s collective culture and as an event that helps promote European unity (see Footnote 1).

Eurovision has been studied in its own right by, for example, Haan et al. (2005), Ginsburgh and Noury (2008), Spierdijk and Vellekoop (2009), Felbermayr and Toubal (2010), and Budzinski and Pannicke (2017), who focus on the voting patterns during the show to examine, among other things, expert judgments, cultural bias, and bilateral cultural proximity. By contrast, the starting point of our paper is that Eurovision represents an unusually salient form of mass exposure to European symbols, experienced simultaneously across most European countries, which we leverage to study whether exposure to the contest affects individuals’ attitudes toward Europe, as well as their electoral behavior.

3 Data

Our dataset combines information on three main dimensions: (i) countries’ performances at Eurovision, (ii) individuals’ sense of European identity, and (iii) voting behavior in the European Parliament (EP) elections.

3.1 Countries’ Performances at Eurovision

We collected information on countries’ performances at Eurovision using Eschome.net, an archival database providing detailed results and statistics for all editions of the contest.

For each country in our dataset, we record whether it participated in a Eurovision semi-final or Grand Final and, if so, the number of points it received and its ranking.

For our baseline analysis of the effect of Eurovision on European identity, which compares individuals interviewed around the Eurovision final, we focus on editions for which Eurobarometer fieldwork provides interviews both before and after the event. Standard Eurobarometer fieldwork is generally conducted in spring and fall, with waves commonly taking place around March/April, May/June, and October/November, while Eurovision typically takes place in May. For our pre-post comparison, we therefore focus on adjacent spring waves, namely the March/April and May/June waves.

To maximize the number of Eurovision editions for which interviews are available on both sides of the event, we use a two-month span around the contest. In Section 5.2, we show that our results are robust to alternative window lengths and to restricting the sample to waves that individually span Eurovision. In total, we can exploit 129,450 respondents across five Eurovision editions (1995, 1998, 2000, 2013, and 2014), covering 102 country-edition pairs (an average of 20.4 countries per edition), of which 67 (13.4 per edition) participated in the Eurovision final. Furthermore, all 28 European Union (EU) member states involved in the European integration process are included in our baseline sample, between once and five times. Column (1) of Appendix Table A.1 provides an overview of the country-edition coverage of our baseline sample. In a robustness check in Section 5.2, we relax the requirement that interviews be observed on both sides of the final, which allows us to leverage 375,981 respondents from 380 country-edition pairs across 18 Eurovision editions and 19 Eurobarometer waves spanning 1992 to 2024.

To investigate the impact of Eurovision on electoral support for the EU, we leverage the proximity between the contest and the EP elections, as well as the number of points a country receives in the semi-final, which determines the running variable in a regression discontinuity framework. Since semi-finals were first introduced in 2004 and EP elections occur every five years, with the most recent election held in 2024, we can draw on five Eurovision-EP election pairs (2004, 2009, 2014, 2019, and 2024). These cover 83 country-election pairs (an average of 16.6 countries per election), including 43 that participated in the Grand Final (see Column 2 of Appendix Table A.1 for an overview of the sample coverage).

3.2 European Identity and Other Individual Attitudes

We measure individual identity and attitudes using questions provided by the Eurobarometer, a large-scale representative opinion survey conducted several times a year across European countries.

Our main outcome of interest is respondents' sense of European identity, which we measure using the following question: "In the near future, do you see yourself as (1)

[nationality] only; (2) [nationality] and European; (3) European and [nationality]; or (4) European only?”⁴ This question is widely used to measure European identity in the literature (Polyakova & Fligstein, 2016) and is known as the Moreno scale (Moreno, 1988). Two features make it particularly well suited to our analysis: it is frequently included in Eurobarometer waves, and its wording has remained virtually unchanged since its introduction in 1992. Taken together, these features allow for a consistent measurement of European identity across countries and over time. In Section 5.2, we demonstrate that our findings are robust to an alternative measure of European identity based on different Eurobarometer questions.

We recode the four-category Moreno variable into a binary indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses any European identity (categories 2-4) and 0 if she identifies solely with her nationality (category 1). Besides being easier to interpret and standard in the literature (Carey, 2002; Depetris-Chauvin et al., 2020), this operationalization maps directly onto our main research question. Specifically, it captures whether Eurovision increases the propensity to adopt any dimension of European identity, either alongside or instead of one’s national identity. Section 5.2 shows that the results are robust to using the original four-category scale. Section 6.3 further explores how national and European identities interact.

Figure 1 offers a first look at the relationship between European identification and Eurovision, showing the distribution of responses separately for respondents interviewed before and after their country’s participation in the contest. Before participation, 44.3% of respondents do not express a European identity, while 55.7% do. Among those interviewed afterward, the share not reporting a European identity falls to 40.7%, while the share reporting one rises to 59.3%. These raw differences provide preliminary descriptive evidence of a positive association between Eurovision participation and European identification.

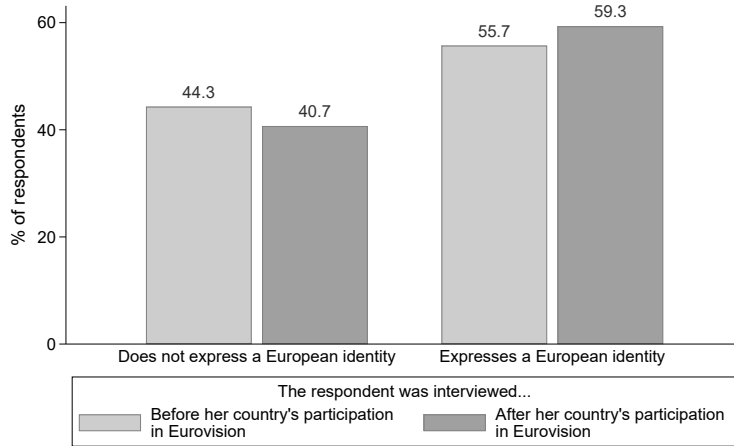
To shed light on the mechanisms underlying the effect of Eurovision on European identification, we also leverage a range of additional questions to investigate more broadly how the show affects respondents’ perceptions of Europe and the EU. First, we construct a measure of what respondents believe creates a sense of community among EU citizens using answers to the following question: “In your opinion, among the following issues, which are those that most create a feeling of community among European Union citizens?”⁵ Second, we use questions on social and political values to assess both the values respondents personally consider important and those they associate with the EU.⁶

⁴In the Standard Eurobarometer, this question is administered only in EU member states and Norway.

⁵Possible answers are: history, religion, values, geography, languages, legislation/the rule of law, sports, inventions/science/technology, the economy, health care/education/pensions, solidarity with poorer regions, culture, other, and two spontaneous options: “none, such a feeling does not exist” and “none.”

⁶Specifically, the questions ask: “And in the following list, which are the three most important values for you personally?” and “Which three of them best represent the European Union?” Possible answers

Figure 1: European Identity Before and After Eurovision Participation



Notes: European identification is measured through the question, “In the near future, do you see yourself as (1) [nationality] only; (2) [nationality] and European; (3) European and [nationality]; or (4) European only?” The variable is then recoded into a binary indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses any European identity (categories 2-4) and 0 if she identifies solely with her nationality (category 1).

Appendix Table A.2 reports the exact wording of each question we use.

Finally, we observe a standard set of predetermined socio-demographic characteristics that were consistently collected across waves, which we use as control variables. These include age, gender, marital status, employment status, and educational attainment. We group respondents into five age categories — under 18, 18-24, 25-44, 45-64, and 65 or older — and construct indicator variables for being male, being married, being unemployed, and having received no full-time education. Because these characteristics are predetermined with respect to the timing of Eurovision, they provide useful balance tests for our empirical design (see Section 4.2).

3.3 Voting in European Parliament Elections

We measure voting behavior in EP elections using voting data at both the individual and aggregate levels. At the individual level, we leverage the European Election Study (EES), a survey conducted after each EP election that records, among other information, the party each respondent reports voting for. We then complement these survey data with administrative records of the official aggregate vote shares received by each party in the corresponding EP elections.

Besides voting information, we need data on each party’s position on European integration to accurately assess voters’ support for European integration through their voting choices. To that end, we use two complementary sources: the Chapel Hill Expert Sur-

are: rule of law, respect for human life, human rights, individual freedom, democracy, peace, equality, solidarity and support for others, tolerance, religion, self-fulfillment, and respect for other cultures.

vey (CHES), which records country experts’ assessments on a 1–7 scale (Rovny et al., 2025), and the Euromanifesto Project, which derives parties’ positions from the content of their election manifestos on a 1–10 scale (Carteny et al., 2023). Both are coded so that higher values indicate greater support for European integration. By combining these measures of party positions with the EES and aggregate electoral data, we can assess the extent to which both individual vote choices and aggregate party support favor European integration.⁷

Both CHES and Euromanifesto are constructed on common cross-national scales. While this facilitates comparisons of parties’ positions across countries, it abstracts from the fact that voters can only choose among the set of parties available in their own country at a given election. To account for this, we standardize each measure within country and election year. The resulting score therefore captures how favorable a party is toward European integration relative to the average party competing in that country and election, that is, relative to the alternatives voters actually face. In Section 8.2.2, we show that our results are robust to using the original, unstandardized scores.

Because CHES and Euromanifesto rely on distinct sources of information and measurement procedures, we combine them to reduce source-specific measurement error. Our baseline measure is therefore the average of the two standardized scores. For 2024, for which Euromanifesto data are unavailable, we rely on the standardized CHES score alone. Estimating the effect separately for each measure, as well as excluding 2024 altogether, leaves our conclusions unchanged (see Section 8.2.2).

Finally, the EES provides a range of socio-demographic characteristics that we use as controls in the individual-level analysis. These controls include respondents’ age (under 18, 18-24, 25-44, 45-64, and 65 or older), gender, self-perceived social class (coded as an indicator equal to one for upper class), and political self-placement on a 0-10 left-right scale, which we enter categorically to avoid imposing a linear effect.

4 Empirical Framework

4.1 Identification Strategy

To identify the causal effect of Eurovision on European identification, we estimate the following regression:

$$\text{European Identity}_{i,c,e} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{Post} \times \text{GF Participation}_{i,c,e} + \beta_2' X_i + \lambda_{c,e} + \varepsilon_{i,c,e}, \quad (1)$$

⁷For 2004, the EES, CHES, and Euromanifesto Project use different party names and identification conventions. To be able to perform the matching across datasets, we therefore use an LLM to standardize party names and identifiers. Section 8 shows that our results are nevertheless very similar when excluding 2004 or when using administrative electoral data, which do not require any matching.

where

- The unit of observation is survey respondent i in country c and Eurovision edition e ;
- $European\ Identity_{i,c,e}$ is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent identifies as European, and 0 otherwise;
- $Post \times GF\ Participation_{i,c,e}$ is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country's participation in the Grand Final (GF), and 0 otherwise. In our baseline specification, we do not distinguish between countries that merely participated and those that won. In subsequent analyses, we decompose this variable into more granular measures to examine whether the effect varies with the performances of respondents' countries at Eurovision (see Section 6.2.2);
- X_i is a vector of individual characteristics (age category, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education);
- $\lambda_{c,e}$ denotes country $\times$ edition fixed effects.

We cluster standard errors at the country $\times$ edition level to account for potential correlation in outcomes among respondents from the same country interviewed around the same Eurovision edition. As robustness checks, we alternatively cluster standard errors at the country level to allow for arbitrary within-country correlation across editions. Inference is unchanged, as shown in Appendix Table B.1.

Our identification strategy relies on the inclusion of country $\times$ edition fixed effects, $\lambda_{c,e}$, so that β_1 is identified from variation in interview timing within a given country and Eurovision edition. In this sense, we treat Eurovision as a quasi-experiment and compare respondents interviewed shortly before their country's participation in the Grand Final with respondents from the same country interviewed shortly afterward. The country $\times$ edition fixed effects absorb all characteristics that are common to respondents from the same country around a given Eurovision edition, including time-invariant country characteristics and edition-specific factors. Under the identifying assumption that, conditional on these fixed effects and individual controls, interview timing around the Grand Final is unrelated to other determinants of European identification, β_1 captures the causal effect of Eurovision participation on European identity.

4.2 Validity of the Design

The assumption of exogenous interview timing underlying our identification strategy requires that two conditions hold. First, within each country and edition, interview timing should be quasi-random with respect to the Grand Final. In other words, Eurobarometer fieldwork schedules should be determined independently of Eurovision dates and respondents should not systematically select into pre- or post-Eurovision interview slots. Given the substantial logistical, coordination, and financial constraints involved in administering a large-scale survey such as the Eurobarometer, we consider this condition

plausible. Second, contemporaneous developments unrelated to Eurovision should not generate systematic differences in European identification between the pre- and post-final periods. Below, we conduct several validation exercises to support our exogeneity assumption.

First, we ask whether respondents interviewed before and after the Eurovision final are comparable on average. We focus on the following predetermined observable individual characteristics that may be correlated with both interview timing and European identity: gender, marital status, unemployment status, education, and age. The results, reported in Figure B.1 in Appendix B.1, show no systematic differences across these characteristics. The estimated differences are small in magnitude and statistically insignificant. Consistent with this evidence, a joint F -test fails to reject the null hypothesis that these characteristics do not jointly predict interview timing ($p = 0.132$).

Second, we investigate whether the number of interviews conducted each day within each country and Eurovision edition changes discontinuously around the Eurovision final. A sharp change in the daily number of interviews would point to changes in survey fieldwork or to respondents selecting into interview slots, either of which could bias our estimates. Reassuringly, Appendix Table B.2 shows no evidence of a discontinuity in the number of interviews at the threshold.

Third, we implement two placebo tests. We begin by examining whether Eurovision affects sub-national identification, measured by respondents' identification with their town or region. Since the contest should not plausibly affect identification below the national level, we should observe no effect on these outcomes. Consistent with this expectation, we find that respondents interviewed after the Eurovision final are not more likely to identify with their town or region than those interviewed beforehand (Appendix Table B.3). In our second placebo test, we assign placebo treatment dates one and two weeks before the actual Grand Final and re-estimate Equation (1), restricting the sample to respondents interviewed before the true final to avoid treatment contamination. Appendix Table B.4 shows no statistically significant effects around these placebo dates.

Fourth, we examine the presence of pre-trends that could bias our results. Specifically, we adapt Equation (1) into an event-study specification by replacing the post-participation indicator with a series of lead and lag indicators relative to treatment, estimated with the imputation approach of Borusyak et al. (2024). As depicted in Appendix Figure B.2, there is no evidence of pre-trends. Within each country and edition, European identity does not vary systematically among respondents interviewed in the days leading up to the Grand Final. In addition, a joint test of the pre-treatment coefficients fails to reject the null that they are jointly equal to zero ($p > 0.1$).

Finally, in Section 6.2, we show that the effect of Eurovision on European identity is smaller in countries where the contest is less salient and absent in countries that did not participate. These patterns are inconsistent with the possibility that a contemporaneous

Table 1: Eurovision Participation and European Identity

	Outcome: European identification? 0 (no) – 1 (yes)			
	LPM		Logit	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Post-participation	0.023*** (0.007)	0.020*** (0.007)	0.100*** (0.032)	0.089*** (0.030)
Post-participation marginal effect			0.023*** (0.007)	0.020*** (0.007)
Individual controls		✓		✓
Country × Edition FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mean, before Eurovision	0.554	0.554	0.554	0.554
Observations	129,550	129,450	129,550	129,450

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise; for more details on the variable construction, see Section 3. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country’s participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. In Columns (1) and (2), we estimate a linear probability model using OLS. In Columns (3) and (4), we estimate a logit model by maximum likelihood. The specification follows Equation (1). Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country × edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

event other than Eurovision drives the changes in European identity, as the effect of such an event should not depend on Eurovision itself.

Altogether, these validation exercises bolster our confidence that Eurobarometer interview timing is as good as random around the Eurovision final.

5 The Impact of Eurovision on European Identity

5.1 Baseline Results

We now turn to our baseline estimates of the effect of Eurovision on European identity, reported in Table 1. We start by estimating this relationship using a linear probability model, first without individual controls (Column 1) and then with individual controls (Column 2). In both specifications, the coefficient on the post-participation indicator is positive and statistically significant at conventional levels, indicating that respondents interviewed after their country’s participation in Eurovision are more likely to self-identify as European.

Focusing on our preferred specification in Column (2), Eurovision participation increases the probability of identifying as European by 2.0 percentage points, corresponding to roughly one additional person reporting a European identity for every 50 individuals. As a back-of-the-envelope extrapolation, if the effect were to apply uniformly across the 160 million people who watch the contest each year, it would imply around 3.2 million

additional people identifying as European, which illustrates the meaningful aggregate magnitude of the effect.

In Columns (3) and (4), we replicate the specifications from Columns (1) and (2) using logistic regression estimated by maximum likelihood rather than a linear probability model estimated by OLS. The resulting marginal effects are similar in sign, magnitude, and statistical significance. This indicates that our results are not sensitive to the choice of functional form and suggests that the linear probability model provides a good approximation in our setting. We therefore rely on OLS throughout the remainder of the analysis, given its more straightforward interpretation.

Taken together, these baseline estimates suggest that Eurovision participation increases individuals’ propensity to identify as European. This finding is consistent with the idea that highly visible, cross-national cultural events can strengthen a sense of belonging to a broader community.

5.2 Robustness of the Baseline Effect

In this section, we explore the robustness of our estimates along several dimensions. The results of these additional tests are reported in Appendix B.2.

Identity Metrics and Measurement. We begin by examining whether our findings are sensitive to alternative definitions of European identity. First, we show that treating European identity as an ordered four-category outcome rather than as a binary indicator yields similar conclusions (Appendix Table B.5). Second, we use an alternative measure of European identity. Specifically, we leverage a Eurobarometer question asking respondents to what extent the statement “You feel you are a citizen of the EU” corresponds to their own opinion. Responses are recorded on a four-category scale ranging from “yes, definitely” to “no, definitely not.” We obtain results similar to the baseline, whether we code this measure as a binary indicator equal to one for either affirmative response or retain its original ordered scale (Appendix Table B.6). Third, we consider two additional measures capturing related dimensions of European identification: perceived closeness to other Europeans and whether respondents view their country’s EU membership as a bad thing. We find that Eurovision increases the former and reduces the latter (Appendix Table B.7). Together, these findings indicate that our baseline results are robust to how European identity is measured and coded.

A General Mood Effect? The increase in European identification may reflect a broader improvement in respondents’ mood following Eurovision rather than a change in identity. For instance, individuals interviewed after Eurovision may feel more optimistic or euphoric, which could make them more positive in their survey answers. We find little

support for this interpretation. The estimated effects of Eurovision on the probability that respondents report more positive assessments of their current economic conditions and quality of life, as well as better expectations about their future economic conditions and their household’s future financial situation, are small and mostly statistically insignificant. Moreover, a joint Wald test fails to reject the null that the four effects are jointly equal to zero ($p = 0.258$; see Appendix Table B.8).

Model Specification. We next investigate the robustness of our findings to alternative specifications. Appendix Table B.9 shows that the results remain stable when we include day-of-week fixed effects (Column 1), control for the number of days to the show’s final (Column 2), use Eurobarometer survey weights (Columns 3 and 4), and reweight observations so that each country-edition pair contributes equally to the estimation (Column 5). These exercises address concerns that our estimates could reflect mechanical differences in the weekdays on which pre- and post-Eurovision interviews were conducted, variation in respondents’ proximity to the Grand Final during the survey fieldwork period, differences between the survey sample and the target population, or the disproportionate influence of country-editions with larger numbers of respondents.

Song Characteristics. The effect that we observe may be driven by differences in song characteristics that affect both the probability of making it to the final and European identity. We therefore explore how these characteristics may condition the effect of Eurovision. We use data from Nunes Amaral et al. (2026) to characterize the features of each song performed during the show. Specifically, we observe the song’s language (English versus the national language), sentiment (negative, neutral, or positive), duration, and several audio characteristics, including tempo and loudness. We then interact these features with the post-participation indicator in the baseline model. Appendix Figure B.3 reports the estimated coefficients. They are statistically insignificant at the usual threshold, implying that the effect of Eurovision on European identity is not contingent on song characteristics.

Social Desirability and Interview Privacy. If Eurovision makes *Europeanness* more salient or socially desirable, respondents interviewed after the final may be more likely to express a European identity even in the absence of a genuine change in self-identification. To rule out this possibility, we exploit information on the interview setting. In particular, we use the number of people present during the interview as a proxy for interview privacy and social pressure, on the premise that the presence of others may increase the pressure to provide socially desirable responses. The results, reported in Appendix Table B.10, suggest that this concern is unlikely to explain our findings. Third-party presence does not differ systematically before and after the Grand Final (Column 1), and restricting the

sample to respondents interviewed alone — and thus less exposed to social desirability pressure — leaves the baseline estimate virtually unchanged (Column 2).

As an additional check on response quality, we leverage the interviewer’s assessment of respondent cooperation in two ways: first, we show that there is no systematic difference in cooperation between respondents interviewed before and after the Grand Final (Column 1 of Appendix Table B.11); second, we show that controlling for it does not affect our baseline estimates (Column 2).

Timing and Fieldwork Windows. We also assess whether our findings are sensitive to how the pre- and post-Eurovision periods are defined. We provide three checks. First, we re-estimate the baseline model using alternative time windows around the final (Appendix Table B.12).

Second, we impose a stricter timing requirement by restricting the sample to Eurobarometer waves whose individual fieldwork periods span the Grand Final (Appendix Table B.13). While our baseline specification uses the March/April and May/June Eurobarometer waves to maximize the number of observations and Eurovision editions, this alternative definition identifies the effect by comparing respondents interviewed before and after the final within the same Eurobarometer wave, rather than relying on comparisons across adjacent spring waves. In both cases, the estimated effects remain quantitatively and qualitatively similar to the baseline results.

Third, we estimate an extended-sample specification in which we replace country $\times$ edition fixed effects with country fixed effects and country-specific linear time trends. Unlike our baseline specification, this model does not require both pre- and post-Eurovision interviews to be observed within the same country and edition. Identification instead relies on within-country comparisons between respondents interviewed before and after their country’s participation, with the trends absorbing the trajectory of European identification within each country over the period. Although less stringent than our baseline approach, this new specification provides a complementary check on a substantially larger sample, spanning 18 Eurovision editions and 19 Eurobarometer waves fielded between 1992 and 2024. As shown in Appendix Table B.14, the estimated effect remains positive and significant at conventional levels, although smaller.

Sample Composition. To assess whether our results are driven by particular countries or contest editions, we re-estimate our baseline specification using two separate leave-one-out approaches: excluding one Eurovision edition at a time (Appendix Figure B.4) and excluding one country at a time (Appendix Figure B.5). Moreover, in Appendix Table B.15, we test a specification in which we exclude the countries that qualify directly for the final, namely the host country and the Big Five (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the UK). The estimates remain stable across all these exercises.

The Potential Role of Semi-Finals. A final concern is that the effect of post-participation may partly capture exposure to the semi-finals (in editions featuring them). The semi-finals take place on Tuesdays and Thursdays, only a few days before the Saturday final, leaving too few observations to estimate their effect separately using the same before-and-after comparison as for the final. We therefore address this concern in two ways. First, we re-estimate the effect of the Eurovision final on European identity in two subsamples: one excluding countries that participated in the semi-finals, and another excluding countries that did not. As shown in Appendix Table B.16, the estimated effects are not statistically different across the two subsamples. Second, we show that our baseline results are robust to excluding respondents interviewed between the first semi-final and the final (Appendix Table B.17). The semi-finals thus do not appear to confound our baseline estimates.

6 Extensions of the Baseline Results

We now extend our main finding on the effect of Eurovision participation on European identity in four directions. First, we examine whether the effect varies with pre-existing levels of European identity. Second, we provide evidence that it operates through exposure to the event. Third, we examine how national and European identities interact. Fourth, we assess whether the effect of Eurovision persists over time.

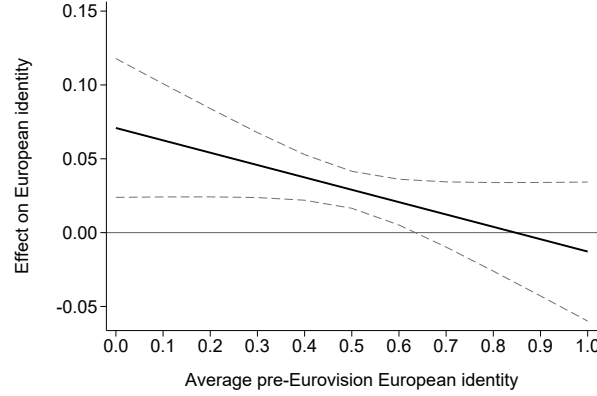
6.1 Heterogeneity by Pre-Eurovision European Identity

Our baseline estimates assume a common effect of Eurovision participation across respondents. In what follows, we relax this assumption by examining whether the effect varies with pre-existing levels of European identity. In particular, there may be greater scope for Eurovision to impact identity where initial levels of European identification are lower.

To examine this possibility, we construct a measure of pre-Eurovision European identity, which is computed as the average European identification among respondents interviewed before the contest in each country and edition. We then allow the effect of Eurovision participation to vary with this measure of pre-Eurovision European identity by interacting it with the post-participation indicator.

Figure 2 plots the marginal effect of post-participation on European identity as a function of pre-Eurovision European identity, together with 95% confidence intervals. The estimated effect declines with pre-Eurovision levels of European identity, which provides suggestive evidence that Eurovision generates larger increases in European identification where such identification is initially weaker.

Figure 2: Eurovision Participation and European Identity as a Function of Pre-Eurovision European Identity



Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. *Average pre-Eurovision European identity* is measured as the average European identification among respondents interviewed before the contest in each country and edition. The specification controls for respondents' age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education, and includes country $\times$ edition fixed effects. The solid line indicates marginal effects, and dashed lines indicate 95% confidence intervals based on standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ edition level.

6.2 Evidence of an Exposure Effect

The results presented so far show that individuals interviewed after their country's participation in the Eurovision final are more likely to identify as European. The Eurobarometer, however, does not report whether respondents actually watched the contest, so we cannot directly observe individual exposure. In this section, we address this limitation by examining whether the effect varies with the salience and outcomes of the contest. If the effect is driven by mere exposure to Eurovision, it should be larger where Eurovision draws more attention, but should not depend on how the respondent's country fared in it.

6.2.1 The Role of Eurovision Salience

Respondents are more likely to be exposed to Eurovision in countries where the show is more salient. We proxy salience in two ways: first by using viewership size,⁸ which captures direct exposure to the event; and then by relying on media coverage,⁹ which

⁸We collected data on each country's Eurovision viewership figures from Eurovisionworld.com and ESCplus, two websites dedicated to Eurovision news. Because viewership figures are unavailable for the Eurovision editions covered by our estimation sample, we use data from later editions (namely from 2018 to 2025) to construct a proxy for cross-country differences in Eurovision audience size. Appendix C.1 describes the construction and validity of this measure.

⁹Media coverage is measured as the number of Google News articles containing the term "Eurovision," scaled by the country's population. To avoid contamination by the treatment itself, our baseline measure focuses on the one-month period preceding the contest. Table C.3 in Appendix C.2 shows that the results

Table 2: Eurovision Saliency and European Identity

Interaction term	Outcome: European identification? 0 (no) – 1 (yes)		
	Full sample		Non-participants
	(1) Viewership size	(2) Media coverage	(3) None
Post-participation	0.019*** (0.007)	0.020*** (0.007)	
Interaction	0.009* (0.004)	0.006*** (0.002)	
Post-Eurovision			0.003 (0.015)
Individual controls	✓	✓	✓
Country × Edition FE	✓	✓	✓
Observations	118,903	97,310	24,890

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country’s participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. *Post-Eurovision* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. *Viewership size* is a country-level index of Eurovision audience per capita, built from 2018–2025 viewership data (see Appendix C.1), while *media coverage* measures the number of Google News articles per capita containing the term “Eurovision” during the month preceding the contest. Both measures are standardized to have mean zero and unit standard deviation. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country × edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

reflects indirect exposure through the broader information environment. If Eurovision affects identity through exposure, its impact should then be larger among individuals in countries where the contest attracts broader viewership or receives greater media attention.

We test this prediction by conditioning the post-participation indicator on our two measures of saliency, which are standardized to facilitate interpretation. The results are summarized in Columns (1) and (2) of Table 2. Consistent with an exposure channel, respondents in countries where Eurovision is more salient are more likely to report a European identity after their country’s participation in the final. Specifically, a one-standard-deviation increase in viewership raises the estimated treatment effect by approximately 50%, while a one-standard-deviation increase in media coverage raises it by about 29%.

In Column (3), we provide a complementary test by focusing on countries that did not take part in Eurovision. As shown in Appendix C, average viewership and media coverage in countries that did not take part in the final are, respectively, 53% and 13% lower than in those that participated in the final. Respondents in non-participating countries are therefore substantially less likely to be exposed to the contest. If the effect

are robust to alternative time windows.

operates through exposure, we should consequently observe a weaker — or no — increase in European identification in this group. In line with this prediction, the coefficient on post-Eurovision is smaller and statistically indistinguishable from zero.

A potential concern is that audience size and media attention may themselves be higher in countries where European identity is already stronger. We address this possibility in two ways. First, we show that pre-Eurovision levels of European identity are uncorrelated with either measure of salience (Figure C.1 in Appendix C.3). Second, we show that the results are virtually unchanged when we allow the effect of Eurovision participation to vary with pre-existing levels of European identity (Appendix Table C.4). These exercises indicate that the heterogeneous effects documented above are unlikely to reflect a pre-existing relationship between European identity and Eurovision salience.

6.2.2 Ruling Out an Effect of Eurovision Outcomes

Past research documents that national performance in international competitions can shape individuals’ attitudes (Depetris-Chauvin et al., 2020; Rosenzweig & Zhou, 2021; Pinto, 2025). We therefore test whether the increase in European identity varies with the outcome of the contest. We distinguish two dimensions: the performance of the respondent’s own country and the identity of the winning country.

The results are presented in Table 3. In Columns (1) to (4), we focus on the performance of the respondent’s own country. We begin by asking whether winning the contest has an additional effect beyond participation itself. To do so, we interact the post-participation indicator with an indicator equal to one if the respondent’s country won the contest. The results, reported in Column (1), show that participation in the final without a victory increases European identification by 1.8 percentage points. The interaction term is positive but not statistically significant. We therefore find no evidence that winning the contest generates an additional increase in European identification beyond the effect of participation itself.

We then move beyond the distinction between winning and not winning and assess whether the identity response varies with other measures of performance in the Grand Final. Specifically, we examine the heterogeneous effects of post-participation along the number of points received by the country in the final (Column 2), as well as along separate measures of positive (Column 3) and negative (Column 4) surprise relative to bookmaker expectations. Positive surprise captures cases in which a country performs better than expected, while negative surprise captures cases in which it performs worse than expected. Across these specifications, the interaction terms are small and statistically insignificant, while the coefficient on the post-participation indicator remains positive and significant. The increase in European identification therefore does not appear to vary systematically with either realized performance or deviations from prior expectations. These results also

Table 3: Eurovision Outcomes and European Identity

Interaction term	Outcome: European identification? 0 (no) – 1 (yes)					
	Respondent's country				Winning country	
	(1) Victory	(2) Points	(3) Positive surprise	(4) Negative surprise	(5) Political distance	(6) Cultural distance
Post-participation	0.018** (0.007)	0.020*** (0.007)	0.019*** (0.007)	0.018** (0.007)	0.019*** (0.006)	0.018*** (0.007)
Interaction	0.042 (0.027)	0.000 (0.006)	0.001 (0.003)	0.007 (0.005)	0.005 (0.007)	-0.000 (0.007)
Individual controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Country × Edition FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	129,450	129,450	115,388	115,388	124,550	124,550

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country's participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. *Victory* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent's country won the contest. *Points* measures the total number of points received in the final, while *Positive* and *Negative surprise* capture the extent to which the country performed better or worse than predicted by bookmaker expectations, respectively. *Political distance* measures the disagreement between the respondent's country and the winning country in United Nations General Assembly voting, while *Cultural distance* measures the genetic distance between their populations. All moderating variables but *Victory* are standardized to have mean zero and unit standard deviation. Columns (5) and (6) exclude respondents whose own country won the contest. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country × edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

allow us to rule out a recognition channel in which individuals' identification is shaped by a form of approval that their country receives (Obradović et al., 2025).

Finally, in Columns (5) and (6), we focus on the winning country rather than the respondent's own country. We interact the post-participation indicator with two different measures of bilateral distance between the respondent's country and the winner: political distance, measured by the disagreement between their positions in United Nations General Assembly voting (Conte et al., 2022); and cultural distance, measured by the genetic distance between their populations (Spolaore & Wacziarg, 2018). Both interactions are small and indistinguishable from zero: the effect of participation does not vary with how close the respondent's country is to the winner, politically or culturally.

The results in this section are consistent with an exposure channel in which what matters is participation in the shared event, rather than how a country fared or the emotional responses associated with success or failure.

6.3 Interplay Between National and European Identity

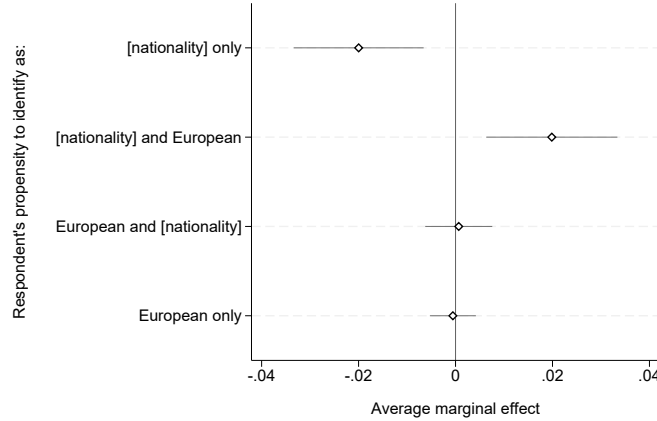
Because our primary interest lies in assessing whether Eurovision shapes individuals' European identification, throughout the paper we use a binary measure of European identity that distinguishes respondents who identify exclusively with their nationality from those who express any European component of their identity. While this operationalization is well suited to estimating whether Eurovision exposure increases European identification, it does not reveal how European and national identities interact. This distinction is theoretically important because Eurovision not only promotes a sense of *Europeanness* but also provides participating countries with an opportunity to celebrate and showcase their national cultures, while simultaneously placing them in competition with each other. Exposure to the contest may therefore affect European as well as national identification.

Research in psychology highlights two perspectives on how multiple identities may coexist within an individual: *identity switching* and *dual identity* (Ramarajan, 2014). On the one hand, the identity-switching perspective assumes that identities are hierarchically ordered, such that making one identity more salient causes other identities to recede. Applied to our setting, this mechanism would imply that strengthening European identity comes at the expense of national identity. On the other hand, the dual-identity perspective allows multiple identities to remain simultaneously salient. In our context, this means that individuals may develop a stronger European identity without necessarily weakening their attachment to their national identity.

To distinguish between these two perspectives, we disaggregate the overall treatment effect across the different identity categories captured by the Moreno question. Specifically, we re-estimate our baseline specification using an unordered multinomial probit model with the original four response categories as the outcome: “[nationality] only,” “[nationality] and European,” “European and [nationality],” and “European only.” This approach allows us to estimate how Eurovision participation affects respondents' probability of identifying with each category without imposing an ordinal structure on the responses.

Figure 3 reports the average marginal effects from the multinomial probit model. The results show that the effect of Eurovision on European identification is driven entirely by a decline in the probability of identifying as “[nationality] only” and a corresponding increase of approximately the same magnitude in the probability of identifying as “[nationality] and European.” We observe no shift toward categories in which European identity is primary or exclusive. This pattern is consistent with the dual-identity perspective: exposure to Eurovision adds a European dimension to respondents' identity without displacing national identity, which remains primary. This finding contrasts with the idea that strengthening one political identity can come at the expense of another (Clots-Figueras & Masella, 2013; Depetris-Chauvin et al., 2020), while aligning with

Figure 3: Eurovision Participation and National and European Identity



Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The figure reports average marginal effects from a multinomial probit model using respondents' identity as the outcome. The variable is coded into four categories: "[nationality] only," "[nationality] and European," "European and [nationality]," and "European only." The specification controls for respondents' age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education, and includes country $\times$ edition fixed effects. Markers indicate point estimates, and horizontal lines indicate 95% confidence intervals based on standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ edition level.

findings that higher- and lower-level identities can coexist (Gehring, 2022; Okunogbe, 2024).

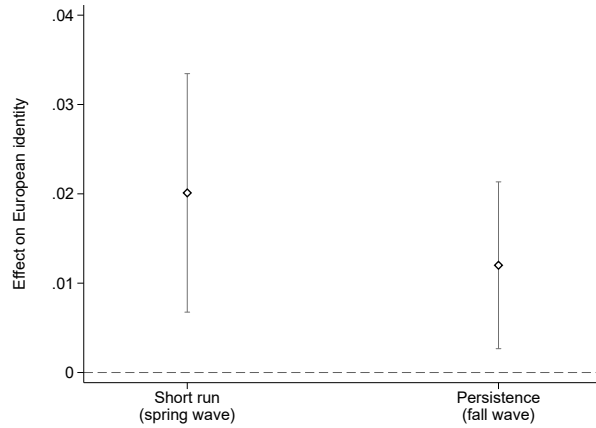
6.4 Persistence of the Effect

An important question is whether the increase in European identity persists beyond the immediate aftermath of Eurovision or is instead only transient. While our baseline analysis captures short-run changes among respondents interviewed around the contest, it is silent on whether the effect persists over time. To investigate this possibility, we supplement our baseline sample with the fall waves of the Eurobarometer, which are typically fielded in October and November. This allows us to compare, within each country and Eurovision edition, respondents interviewed in the spring wave preceding Eurovision, which takes place in May, with those interviewed in the subsequent fall wave, several months after the contest.

Figure 4 reports the persistence estimate from the fall wave, with the baseline short-run estimate from the spring wave shown for comparison. Even several months after Eurovision, the treatment effect remains positive and statistically distinguishable from zero, but is smaller than the short-run estimate. The increase in European identity therefore persists beyond the immediate aftermath of the contest, although it attenuates over time.

Admittedly, this finding relies on stronger identifying assumptions than the baseline

Figure 4: Persistence of the Effect of Eurovision Participation



Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. The short-run estimate corresponds to the baseline analysis using the spring wave, while the persistence estimate uses the subsequent fall wave, fielded several months after Eurovision. The specification controls for respondents' age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education, and includes country $\times$ edition fixed effects. Markers indicate point estimates, and vertical lines indicate 95% confidence intervals based on standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ edition level.

design because it compares respondents across more distant survey waves. If European identity across survey waves reflects time-specific factors unrelated to Eurovision, for instance if respondents systematically report a stronger European identity toward the end of the year than in the spring, the persistence results we document may be unrelated to Eurovision. To rule out that possibility, Appendix Table B.18 provides a placebo test: among respondents in countries that did not participate in Eurovision, we find no statistically significant differences in European identity between the spring and fall waves, thereby alleviating concerns that seasonal patterns drive our results.

7 Mechanism: Eurovision and Perceived Distance from Europe

Because Eurovision is a large-scale cultural event organized around *Europeanness* and serves as a platform for the expression of shared European values (Carniel, 2025), we argue that the show may modify European identification by changing how individuals perceive Europe and the values it represents.

Our interpretation builds on the economics of social identity. Akerlof and Kranton (2000) introduce identity into economic analysis by allowing individuals' utility to depend on their social categories and the norms associated with those categories. Shayo (2009) and Dehdari and Gehring (2022) further emphasize perceived distance between

individuals and social groups as a determinant of identification: holding other factors constant, when an individual perceives herself as closer to the attributes associated with a group, identification with that group becomes more attractive. This idea has been applied directly to national and European identities by Abramson and Shayo (2022), who model European identification as becoming more attractive as an individual’s perceived distance from Europe decreases.

In our setting, values constitute one dimension of the attributes individuals associate with Europe. As such, Eurovision may affect perceived distance in values by changing what individuals believe Europe stands for. Individuals have their own values, but they also hold beliefs about the values associated with Europe, and the two do not need to coincide. For instance, someone may personally attach importance to certain values without strongly associating them with Europe. If exposure to Eurovision leads that individual to update her beliefs and more strongly associate Europe with values she already holds, her perceived distance from Europe decreases and European identification becomes more attractive.

Importantly, our mechanism does not require Eurovision to change individuals’ values. Instead, we argue that the contest changes what values people associate with Europe. This distinction separates our interpretation from a standard persuasion mechanism, in which the show would lead individuals to adopt new values.

For this mechanism to be at play, three testable conditions must be met. First, Eurovision must convey recognizable information about values associated with Europe. Second, exposure to the show must affect individuals’ perceptions of the values Europe embodies without necessarily changing their own personal values. Third, the increase in European identification induced by the event must be concentrated among individuals whose own values align with those showcased by the contest. In what follows, we test these conditions in turn.

7.1 Eurovision as a Showcase of European Values

For Eurovision to affect what values people associate with Europe, it must first expose its audience to a discernible set of values understood to characterize Europe. We focus on six values that the literature identifies as central to Europe: peace, democracy, human rights, the rule of law, freedom or liberty, and tolerance (Manners, 2002; Checkel & Katzenstein, 2009). We refer to these collectively as *core European values*.

To assess whether and to what extent Eurovision showcases these core values, we conduct an LLM-based semantic analysis of its broadcasts. In doing so, we treat the LLM as a semantic classifier, following recent work that uses large language models for text annotation and classification tasks (Gilardi et al., 2023), including applications to economic and policy texts (Alonso-Robisco & Carbó, 2023; Çelebi & Penczynski, 2024;

Hansen & Kazinnik, 2024).

Our analysis proceeds in several steps. First, we collect the transcripts generated by YouTube’s automatic speech-recognition system for all Eurovision Grand Final broadcasts available on the contest’s official YouTube channel, covering the editions from 2004 to 2025. We lightly preprocess them by removing timestamps, stage directions, and repeated transcript markers, such as annotations indicating music or applause. We then divide the cleaned transcripts into fixed-length segments and use GPT-4o to identify the passages that substantively showcase one or more of the six core European values.¹⁰ The coding is multi-label, meaning that a single passage may be simultaneously associated with several values.

The classifier is instructed to identify substantive expressions of values rather than incidental mentions. For example, a procedural reference to voting does not qualify as democratic content unless the passage presents participation as a meaningful form of collective voice. Similarly, a passage can convey tolerance by emphasizing respect, inclusion, or coexistence, even when the word “tolerance” does not appear. This procedure thus captures semantic value content rather than merely counting keyword occurrences. The full prompt we used for this classification exercise is reported in Appendix D.1.

Because Eurovision broadcasts comprise musical performances, voting sequences, and spoken segments, we normalize the number of value mentions by the amount of discourse in which such values could plausibly be articulated. Eligible discourse, which is also classified using an LLM, includes host speech, official Eurovision or European Broadcasting Union statements, green-room exchanges, interviews, and participant speeches. We exclude song lyrics,¹¹ point announcements, voting and scoring procedures, and transcript noise. For each Eurovision edition e , we therefore compute

$$ValueRate_e = \frac{Mentions_e}{EligibleWords_e} \times 10,000, \quad (2)$$

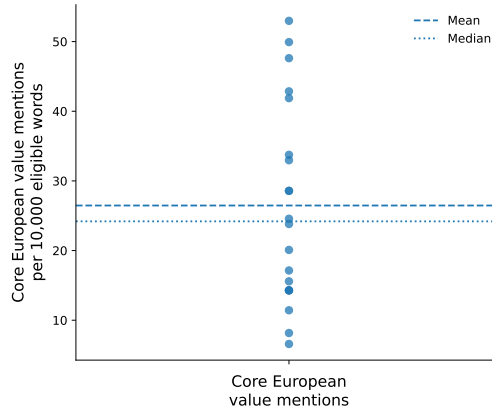
where $Mentions_e$ denotes the total number of mentions of core European values identified by the classifier in edition e , and $EligibleWords_e$ denotes the word count of eligible discourse in that edition. The resulting measure captures the intensity with which core European values are showcased relative to the amount of discourse in which such content can plausibly appear.

Figure 5 shows the distribution of this measure across Eurovision editions. Each dot represents a Eurovision edition and indicates the number of mentions of core Euro-

¹⁰We divide the transcripts into shorter segments so that classification is performed on localized passages rather than on the entire broadcast at once. This helps preserve local context and limit problems arising from context aggregation (Rodriguez et al., 2025).

¹¹We exclude song lyrics because YouTube’s automatic speech-recognition system captures them incompletely and inconsistently, particularly across languages. Our analysis therefore focuses on the values communicated through the spoken and official discourse of the show rather than through individual songs.

Figure 5: Core European Values in Eurovision Broadcasts



Notes: Each dot represents one Eurovision edition between 2004 and 2025. The vertical axis reports the number of mentions of the six core European values per 10,000 words of eligible discourse. Eligible discourse includes host speech, official Eurovision or European Broadcasting Union statements, green-room exchanges, interviews, and participant speeches. Song lyrics, point announcements, voting and scoring procedures, and transcript noise are excluded. The dashed line indicates the mean, and the dotted line indicates the median.

pean values per 10,000 eligible words. Across editions, Eurovision broadcasts regularly showcase core European values, with an average of 26.47 mentions per 10,000 eligible words and a median of 24.19. The contest therefore repeatedly exposes its audience to values associated with Europe. This finding supports the first empirical implication of our perceived-distance mechanism: Eurovision conveys recognizable information about European values.

Our baseline measure relies on LLM-based semantic coding. As a robustness check, Appendix Figure D.1 presents an alternative dictionary-based measure that counts occurrences of keywords associated with core European values.¹² As expected, the dictionary-based measure produces a higher frequency of mentions because it also captures incidental and procedural uses of terms denoting values. Nevertheless, it yields the same qualitative conclusion: core European values recur throughout Eurovision broadcasts.

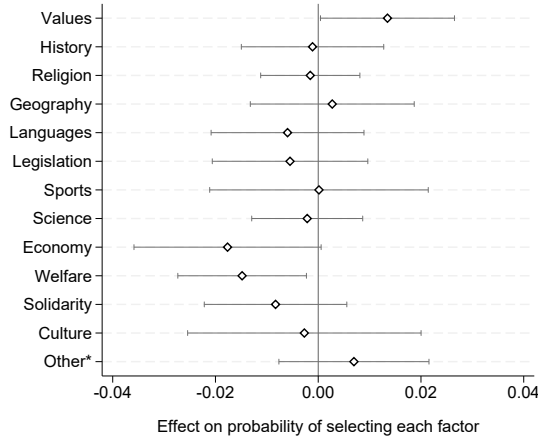
7.2 Eurovision and Perceptions of European Values

Having established that Eurovision exposes audiences to core European values, we next examine whether it changes which values individuals associate with Europe. We first test whether the show makes respondents more likely to view values as a key source of European belonging, and then whether it changes the specific values they regard as defining Europe.

We begin with a Eurobarometer question asking respondents to identify the factors

¹²See Baker et al. (2016) for a related application in economics.

Figure 6: Eurovision and Perceived Sources of European Belonging



Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The figure reports estimates based on the Eurobarometer question: “In your opinion, among the following issues, which are those that most create a feeling of community among European Union citizens?” Each response option is listed on the vertical axis. The specification controls for respondents’ age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education, and includes country $\times$ edition fixed effects. * Combines the responses “Other,” “None,” and “Don’t know.” Markers indicate point estimates, and horizontal lines indicate 95% confidence intervals based on standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ edition level.

that most contribute to a sense of community among EU citizens.¹³ This question is available in four Eurobarometer waves. Because respondents can choose from a broad range of options, including values, this item allows us to assess how Eurovision affects the relative importance they assign to each factor. Our mechanism makes a directional prediction. Because the show is centered on common European values, not on the other factors respondents can select, exposure to the treatment should increase the probability of selecting “values” but should not increase the probability of selecting any other factor. Those other options can therefore serve as placebos.

Figure 6 reports how the probability of selecting each factor responds to Eurovision participation. Consistent with our prediction, “values” is the only option for which the estimated effect is positive and statistically significant. Specifically, respondents interviewed after their country’s participation are approximately 1.3 percentage points more likely to select “values.” By contrast, we find no statistically significant effect for any of the other factors except “welfare,” whose decline is statistically significant. This is likely driven by the fact that respondents may select at most three options, so the increase in “values” mechanically comes at the expense of other factors. These results suggest that Eurovision increases the importance individuals attribute to shared values in fostering European belonging.

We then move beyond the perceived importance of values and focus on whether the

¹³See Section 3 for the exact wording of the question.

Table 4: Eurovision and Value Perceptions

	Probability that at least one value selected by the respondent is showcased by Eurovision	
	(1) Values best representing the EU	(2) Values personally important
Post-participation	0.017** (0.008)	0.007 (0.007)
Individual controls	✓	✓
Country $\times$ Edition FE	✓	✓
Observations	26,429	27,765

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). In Column (1), the dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if at least one of the values the respondent selects as best representing the EU is also showcased by Eurovision, and 0 otherwise. In Column (2), the dependent variable is defined analogously for the values the respondent selects as personally important. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country’s participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

show changes *which* values individuals associate with Europe. To do so, we use two additional Eurobarometer questions asking respondents to select, from a list of twelve values, the three that best represent the EU and the three that are most important to them personally.¹⁴ The available options are the rule of law, respect for human life, human rights, individual freedom, democracy, peace, equality, solidarity, tolerance, religion, self-fulfillment, and respect for other cultures.

For both questions, we construct an indicator equal to one if at least one of the values selected by the respondent is among those conveyed by Eurovision, and zero otherwise. Because both questions draw on the same set of items, we can compare the values respondents see as representative of Europe with those they consider their own. The comparison allows us to distinguish changes in what respondents perceive Europe to stand for from changes in their own normative priorities.

Table 4 summarizes the results. The first noteworthy finding is that respondents interviewed after their country’s participation are 1.7 percentage points more likely to say that at least one of the values that were showcased during Eurovision is among those that best represent the EU (Column 1). By contrast, the contest has no statistically significant effect on whether respondents consider these same values personally important (Column 2). These findings suggest that the show changes the values individuals associate with Europe without altering their own values, which is consistent with the perception channel.

The comparison reported in Table 4 requires both questions to appear in the same

¹⁴See Section 3 for the exact wording of the questions.

wave to improve comparability between the two outcomes, and our empirical strategy further restricts attention to editions for which Eurobarometer fieldwork provides interviews on both sides of the Grand Final. Only one wave satisfies both conditions. To assess whether our results are specific to that single wave, we also estimate the extended-sample specification used in the robustness analysis of our baseline results, which replaces country $\times$ edition fixed effects with country fixed effects and country-specific linear time trends. This allows us to exploit 10 Eurovision editions. The findings are very similar: the effect on values best representing the EU is 0.015 (s.e. = 0.005) and the effect on personally important values is 0.001 (s.e. = 0.005) (see Appendix Table D.1).

7.3 Value Proximity and European Identity

The final implication of our perceived-distance mechanism is that proximity between individuals' personal values and those they link to Europe should condition the effect of Eurovision on European identity, with stronger responses among those with greater proximity.

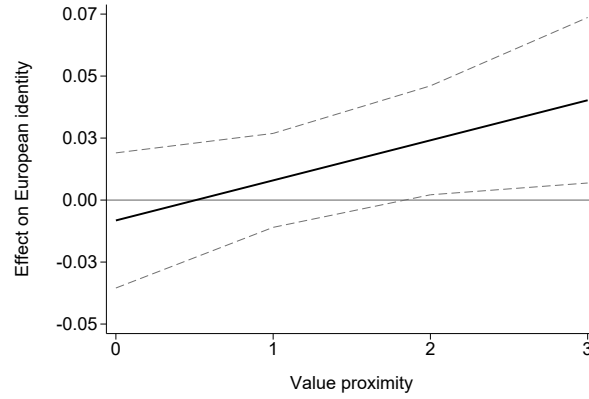
To test this prediction, we count how many of the values each respondent identifies as personally important are also showcased during Eurovision. In doing so, we proxy the proximity between respondents' personal values and the values they come to associate with Europe after their country's participation in Eurovision. Because respondents can select up to three personally important values, the resulting measure ranges from zero to three. We then interact this measure with the post-participation indicator and report the corresponding marginal effects in Figure 7. The plot shows that the impact of Eurovision on European identity increases with the degree of value proximity. Specifically, the estimated effect is close to zero at low levels of proximity but becomes positive and statistically significant when two or three of the respondent's personally important values are also emphasized during the show.

Overall, the results of this section sketch a consistent picture: Eurovision conveys a recurring set of core European values, increases the extent to which individuals come to view these as most representative of Europe, and has its strongest effect among individuals who personally endorse them. These findings are consistent with a mechanism based on a reduction in perceived distance, whereby, among people who already adhere to European values, Eurovision brings Europe's perceived values closer to their own and, in turn, strengthens their European identification.

8 The Impact of Eurovision on Voting

Past research has established that identities can shape political activity (Kalin & Sambanis, 2018; Shayo, 2020; Gehring, 2021). This raises the question of whether the

Figure 7: Eurovision Participation and European Identity as a Function of Value Proximity



Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. *Value proximity* is measured as the number of values each respondent identifies as personally important that are also showcased by Eurovision. The specification controls for respondents' age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education, and includes country $\times$ edition fixed effects. The solid line indicates marginal effects, and dashed lines indicate 95% confidence intervals based on standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ edition level.

effect of Eurovision remains confined to European identification and other attitudinal outcomes, or also extends to political behavior, in particular electoral support for European integration.

In this section, we investigate this possibility by examining how people vote in European Parliament (EP) elections in response to their country's participation in the Eurovision Grand Final. EP elections provide a particularly suitable setting for at least two reasons. First, Eurovision typically takes place in mid-to-late May, while EP elections are held simultaneously across all EU member states, generally in late May or early June. The two events therefore tend to occur within only a few weeks of one another, allowing us to examine electoral outcomes while the Eurovision experience is still relatively salient. Second, EP elections feature substantial variation across parties in their positions on European integration. This variation allows us to examine whether Eurovision participation shifts electoral support toward parties that are more favorable to European integration, which provides a direct behavioral measure of support for Europe.

Our analysis combines two complementary sources of evidence, one at the individual level and one at the party level. In what follows, we first present our identification strategy before turning to the two levels of analysis.

8.1 Empirical Framework

8.1.1 Identification Strategy

To identify the effect of Eurovision on electoral behavior, we exploit the qualification threshold for the Grand Final. In each semi-final, countries are ranked according to their scores, with only the top ten advancing.¹⁵ We use this rule in a regression discontinuity design (RDD) that compares voting outcomes in countries located just above and below the qualification threshold. At this margin, qualification is plausibly as good as random, allowing us to isolate its causal effect on electoral behavior.

Our RD design uses each country’s distance from the qualification threshold as the running variable, that is, its qualification margin. We define it as the difference between the number of points received by a country in the semi-final and the number of points received by the last qualifying country in that semi-final, scaled by the latter:

$$\text{Qualification Margin}_{c,t} = \frac{\text{Points}_{c,t} - \text{Points}_{c,t}^{LQ}}{\text{Points}_{c,t}^{LQ}}, \quad (3)$$

where $\text{Points}_{c,t}$ is the number of points received by country c in the Eurovision semi-final held in the EP election year t , and $\text{Points}_{c,t}^{LQ}$ is the number of points received by the last qualifying country in the semi-final in which country c competed that year. Scaling this point difference by the points of the last qualifying country makes the qualification margin comparable across semi-finals. For simplicity, our baseline RDD thus pools observations across semi-finals around a common normalized cutoff. We assess the robustness of our results using a multi-cutoff RDD that retains each semi-final’s original qualification threshold in Section 8.2.2. Since the qualification margin is centered at zero, weakly positive values indicate that a country qualified for the Grand Final, while strictly negative values indicate that it failed to do so.

8.1.2 Identification Assumption

Our RD approach rests on the assumption that the expected potential outcomes are continuous in the running variable at the cutoff. Under this condition, the RD estimate identifies the average treatment effect at the cutoff and reflects the causal effect of qualification for the final on electoral outcomes. The plausibility of this identifying assumption can be assessed by examining whether (i) predetermined covariates vary smoothly around the cutoff, (ii) sorting around the cutoff is absent, and (iii) no comparable discontinuities arise at alternative placebo cutoffs (Cattaneo, Idrobo, et al., 2020).

First, to assess whether covariates vary smoothly at the cutoff, we conduct a series of RD analyses using a range of individual socio-demographic and country-level charac-

¹⁵In 2009, the top nine countries in each semi-final qualified for the final, while the tenth was selected by a jury. We drop these two countries from our sample.

teristics as outcomes. The results of these regressions are reported in Appendix Figure E.1 and show no evidence of a discontinuity at the cutoff for any of these variables. This suggests that respondents and countries on either side of the threshold do not differ systematically in observable characteristics.

Second, sorting around the cutoff is unlikely given the mechanism generating the running variable, i.e., the number of points a country receives relative to those received by the last qualifying entry. Neither individual voters nor participating countries can precisely determine a country’s position relative to the qualification threshold. Semi-final points are determined by votes from viewers and, in some editions, national juries, while the threshold itself depends on the scores obtained by competing entries. Countries may be able to influence their expected performance, for instance through promotion, campaigning, or even bribery, but such influence provides at most imprecise control over their final position relative to the cutoff, whereas only precise control threatens the validity of the RD design (Lee & Lemieux, 2010). The manipulation test proposed by Cattaneo, Jansson, et al. (2020) ($p = 0.795$) and the corresponding density plot (Figure E.2 in the Appendix) further support the absence of sorting around the cutoff.

Finally, we assess whether discontinuities arise at points where none are expected, following Imbens and Lemieux (2008). Specifically, we split the sample at the true qualification threshold and estimate an RD separately on each side, so that treatment status remains constant within each subsample. We then set a placebo cutoff on each side at the first quartile of the distance from the threshold. We find no evidence of a discontinuity at either location (Table E.1 in the Appendix). Taken together, these results further support the validity of our RD design.

8.2 Individual-Level Evidence

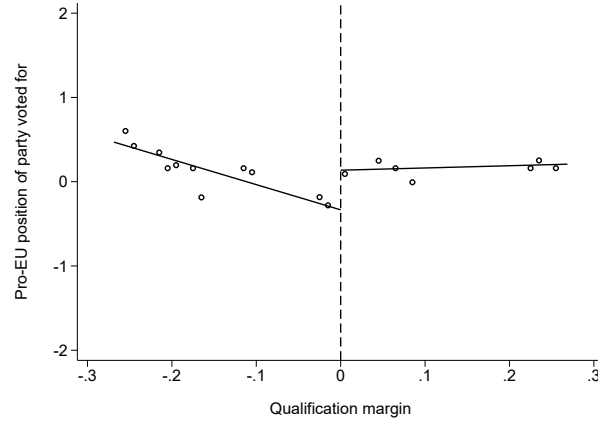
8.2.1 Changes in Reported Voting After Narrow Qualification

We first examine whether qualification for the Eurovision Grand Final affects individual voting behavior, as measured by the post-election European Election Study (EES) surveys. To that end, we estimate the following RD specification:

$$\begin{aligned} EU\ Position_{i,c,t} = & \alpha_0 + \tau Qualification_{c,t} + \beta_1 Qualification\ Margin_{c,t} \\ & + \beta_2 (Qualification_{c,t} \times Qualification\ Margin_{c,t}) \\ & + \gamma' X_i + \mu_c + \varepsilon_{i,c,t}, \end{aligned} \quad (4)$$

where i indexes survey respondents, c their countries, and t the EP election years. $EU\ Position_{i,c,t}$ denotes the position on European integration of the party respondent i voted for, measured as the average of the Chapel Hill Expert Survey (CHES) and Euro-manifesto scores standardized within country and election year. Higher values indicate

Figure 8: Pro-European Voting Around the Eurovision Qualification Threshold



Notes: RD plot. The unit of analysis is an EES survey respondent. The running variable is the country's qualification margin, normalized so that zero is the threshold for reaching the Eurovision Grand Final and non-negative values indicate qualification (see Equation 3). The dependent variable measures the position on European integration of the party the respondent voted for, using the average of the CHES and Euromanifesto scores standardized within country and election year. Higher values indicate a party that is more supportive of European integration relative to the other parties competing in that country and election. The plot is obtained after partialing out the covariates and country fixed effects of Column (1) of Table 5, and the plotting window is MSE-optimal (Calonico et al., 2014).

that the respondent voted for a party that is more supportive of European integration relative to the other parties competing in that country and election. $Qualification_{c,t}$ is an indicator equal to 1 if the country qualified for the Eurovision final, and 0 otherwise, and $Qualification\ Margin_{c,t}$ is defined as above. Finally, X_i is a vector of individual socio-demographic characteristics (age, gender, self-perceived social class, and political self-placement dummies), while μ_c denotes country fixed effects. In Section 8.2.2, we demonstrate that our results are fairly insensitive to the exclusion of control variables.

The coefficient of interest, τ , captures the discontinuity at the qualification threshold in the pro-European orientation of respondents' vote choice. To allow for arbitrary correlation among respondents within the same country and EP election year, we cluster standard errors at the country $\times$ year level. Clustering instead at the country level does not change our conclusions, as discussed in Section 8.2.2.

Before turning to the RD estimates, we provide an initial sense of the effect of qualification on voting by plotting binned averages of $EU\ Position_{i,c,t}$ against $Qualification\ Margin_{c,t}$ on either side of the cutoff. The results, depicted in Figure 8, show a clear positive discontinuity. This provides a first piece of evidence that when an individual's country narrowly qualifies for the Eurovision Grand Final, she votes in the EP election for a political party that is more favorable to European integration relative to other parties in her country that year.

Table 5 reports the estimates from the RD specification presented in Equation (4).

Table 5: Qualification for the Eurovision Final and Pro-European Voting

	Outcome: Pro-European position of party voted for (standardized)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Discontinuity estimate	0.506*** (0.057)	0.331*** (0.047)	0.543*** (0.083)
Robust CI	[0.364, 0.648]	[0.230, 0.448]	[0.338, 0.723]
Individual controls	✓	✓	✓
Country FE	✓	✓	✓
Bandwidth (left/right)	0.265 / 0.693	0.199 / 0.520	0.332 / 0.866
Mean, left of threshold	0.168	-0.045	0.229
Observations	12,204	8,176	15,237

Notes: Local linear RD estimates using a triangular kernel. The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The model specification follows Equation (4). The dependent variable measures the position on European integration of the party the respondent voted for, using the average of the CHES and Euromanifesto scores standardized within country and election year. The treatment is qualification of the respondent’s country for the Eurovision Grand Final. In Column (1), the optimal bandwidth is computed following the cluster-robust mean squared error optimal bandwidth selector of Calonico et al. (2014), which allows for separate optimal bandwidths below and above the cutoff. Columns (2) and (3) use 75% and 125% of these optimal bandwidths, respectively. Standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ year level are reported in parentheses. Square brackets indicate 95% robust bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico et al. (2014). Individual controls include the respondent’s age, gender, self-perceived social class, and political self-placement. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

We follow standard practice and report non-parametric estimates from local linear regressions fitted separately on either side of the cutoff (Gelman & Imbens, 2019). Column (1) uses the cluster-robust mean squared error (MSE) optimal bandwidth selector of Calonico et al. (2014), allowing for separate optimal bandwidths below and above the cutoff, while Columns (2) and (3) assess sensitivity to this choice by reducing and increasing these bandwidths by 25%. Following the recommendations of Calonico et al. (2014), we also report robust bias-corrected confidence intervals (in square brackets), which provide valid coverage at the MSE-optimal bandwidth (see Appendix Table E.4 for results using alternative bandwidth selectors).

Across all bandwidth choices, the estimated discontinuity is consistently positive and statistically significant at conventional levels, ranging from 0.331 to 0.543 standard deviations. This indicates that marginal qualification shifts votes toward parties with stronger support for European integration within the respondent’s national party system. In substantive terms, these estimates correspond to an increase of roughly 6 percentage points in the share of respondents who voted for a party that is more pro-European than the average party in their country.

8.2.2 Extensions and Robustness Checks

We next consider a series of extensions and robustness checks to our baseline RD estimates. The corresponding results are reported in Appendix E.2.

Alternative Measures of Parties’ Pro-European Position. We start by examining whether our findings depend on how parties’ positions on European integration are constructed. We first estimate the effect separately using the standardized CHES and Euromanifesto measures rather than their average. We then re-estimate the specifications using the original, unstandardized scores from each source. Across these alternative measures and samples, the resulting estimates remain in line with our baseline results (see Table E.2 in the Appendix).

Multi-Cutoff RDD. Our baseline RDD pools observations across semi-finals by expressing each country’s score relative to the qualification threshold in its semi-final. As a robustness check, we instead implement the multi-cutoff RDD approach of Cattaneo et al. (2016), which explicitly accommodates the presence of multiple qualification thresholds and uses the raw number of points received as the running variable. The resulting multi-cutoff estimates are similar in magnitude to our baseline estimates, as detailed in Appendix Table E.3, showing that our findings are not driven by treating the different semi-final cutoffs as a single normalized threshold.

Other Robustness Checks. Finally, we show that our baseline RD estimates are robust to a range of alternative specification choices. These include (i) using alternative optimal bandwidth selectors (Appendix Table E.4); (ii) excluding the control variables (Appendix Table E.5); (iii) varying the polynomial order and kernel function (Appendix Table E.6); (iv) excluding one EP election at a time (Appendix Figure E.3); (v) excluding one country at a time (Appendix Figure E.4); and (vi) clustering standard errors at the country level (Appendix Table E.7).

8.3 Aggregate Electoral Evidence

We now shift the level of analysis from individual vote choices to actual electoral outcomes, using aggregate voting information from EP elections at the party level in each country. This approach has two main advantages. First, it captures actual electoral behavior rather than respondents’ self-reported vote choices, which may be subject to the standard reporting and recall biases. Second, because both CHES and Euromanifesto already report parties’ vote shares alongside their positions on European integration, it avoids the dataset-matching procedure we used for the EES, which may itself introduce measurement error and noise. For this reason, we use the CHES and Euromanifesto measures of parties’ support for European integration separately in our aggregate analysis below.

Our objective is to examine how qualification for the Eurovision Grand Final affects the distribution of votes across parties with different positions on European integration.

To do so, we first classify each party according to whether it is more supportive of European integration than the average party competing in the same country and election. We then extend our RD framework to allow for heterogeneity in the treatment effect, as considered in Calonico et al. (2025). Specifically, we estimate the following specification:

$$\begin{aligned} Vote\ Share_{p,c,t} = & \alpha_0 + \tau Qualification_{c,t} + \theta Pro\ EU_{p,c,t} \\ & + \kappa Qualification_{c,t} \times Pro\ EU_{p,c,t} \\ & + f(Qualification\ Margin_{c,t}) + \mu_c + \varepsilon_{p,c,t}, \end{aligned} \quad (5)$$

where p indexes parties, c countries, and t EP election years. Accordingly, $Vote\ Share_{p,c,t}$ denotes the share of votes (ranging from 0 to 100) received by party p in country c and election year t . The key variable is $Pro\ EU_{p,c,t}$, which is an indicator equal to one if the party is more pro-European than the average party competing in that country and election, and zero otherwise. The remaining variables are defined as above, and the function $f(\cdot)$ captures the local linear RD terms, allowing the relationship with the qualification margin to differ on either side of the cutoff and across the two groups of parties. The coefficient of interest, κ , is the coefficient on the interaction between $Qualification_{c,t}$ and $Pro\ EU_{p,c,t}$; it captures the difference in the effect of narrow qualification on the vote shares of more and less pro-European parties. A positive κ thus indicates that qualification shifts vote shares toward parties that are more favorable to European integration than the average.

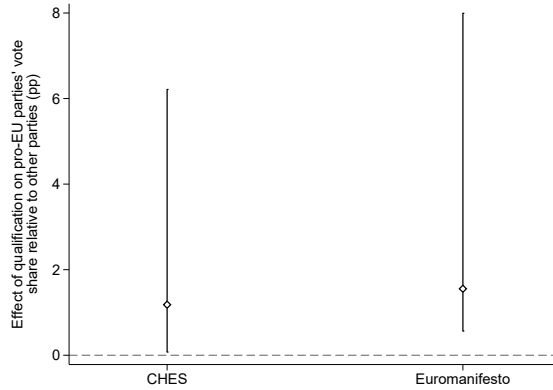
Figure 9 reports the estimated interaction coefficient κ separately for the CHES and Euromanifesto measures. In both cases, the interaction is positive and statistically significant, with estimates of 1.18 and 1.58, respectively. This implies that narrow qualification moves the composition of electoral support toward more pro-European parties. In substantive terms, their vote shares increase by approximately 1.2 to 1.6 percentage points relative to the other parties.

Overall, the results of this section show that the effect of exposure to Eurovision is not confined to stronger European identification, but also extends to electoral behavior by increasing the vote shares of more pro-European parties. This electoral shift thus reflects stronger support for European integration.

9 Conclusion

This paper examines whether a shared supranational cultural experience can strengthen supranational identity and political support. Using the Eurovision Song Contest as a setting, we show that a country's participation in the Grand Final increases European identification among its residents, without weakening national identity, and that this effect persists beyond the immediate aftermath of the event. Furthermore, the effect is

Figure 9: Qualification for the Eurovision Final and Vote Share for Pro-EU Parties



Notes: The unit of analysis is a political party. The figure reports the estimated interaction coefficient κ from Equation (5), separately using the CHES and Euromanifesto measures of parties' positions on European integration. The dependent variable is the share of votes received by each party in the corresponding EP election. Parties are classified as pro-European if their position is above the average among parties competing in the same country and election. Markers report point estimates, and vertical lines indicate 95% robust bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico et al. (2014), based on standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ year level.

driven by exposure rather than performance in the contest and is stronger in countries where European identification is initially weaker.

We also document a key mechanism. Eurovision does not change people's values but changes the values they associate with Europe, and European identification increases when the two become more closely aligned. Finally, we show that these effects extend to political behavior, with qualification for the final increasing the share of votes for parties more favorable to European integration.

These findings have implications for policies aimed at fostering political integration. They suggest that institutions need not rely solely on policies that seek to harmonize citizens' preferences or weaken national attachments (Alesina et al., 2017; Alesina et al., 2021). Instead, facilitating shared cross-border experiences that make common values more salient may strengthen attachment to supranational communities and support for their institutions. Although the extent to which these findings generalize beyond Eurovision remains an open question, they highlight a potentially complementary channel through which political integration can be supported.

Overall, our findings suggest that shared cultural experiences can contribute to political integration by changing how individuals perceive a broader political community, rather than by making their underlying preferences more similar.

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Supplemental Appendix to “Singing Integration: How Shared Experiences Build Supranational Identity and Political Support”

Abel François, Nicolas Lagios, and Pierre-Guillaume Méon

A Data

Table A.1: Country-Year Coverage in the Baseline Survey Sample

	(1) Eurobarometer (European identity)	(2) European Election Study (Elections)
Austria	1995, 1998, 2000, 2013, 2014	2014, 2019, 2024
Belgium	1995, 1998, 2000, 2013, 2014	2009, 2014, 2019, 2024
Bulgaria	2013, 2014	2009
Croatia	2013, 2014	2019, 2024
Cyprus	2013, 2014	2004, 2009, 2019, 2024
Czech Republic	2013, 2014	2009, 2019, 2024
Denmark	1995, 1998, 2000, 2013, 2014	2004, 2009, 2019, 2024
Estonia	2013, 2014	2004, 2009, 2014, 2019, 2024
Finland	1995, 1998, 2000, 2013, 2014	2004, 2014, 2019, 2024
France	1995, 1998, 2000, 2013, 2014	NA
Germany	1995, 1998, 2000, 2013, 2014	NA
Greece	1995, 1998, 2000, 2013, 2014	2004, 2009, 2014, 2019, 2024
Hungary	2013, 2014	2009, 2014, 2019
Ireland	1995, 1998, 2000, 2013, 2014	2009, 2014, 2019, 2024
Italy	1995, 1998, 2000, 2013, 2014	NA
Latvia	2013, 2014	2004, 2009, 2014, 2019, 2024
Lithuania	2013, 2014	2004, 2009, 2014, 2019, 2024
Luxembourg	1995, 1998, 2000, 2013, 2014	2024
Malta	2013, 2014	2009, 2014, 2019, 2024
Netherlands	1995, 1998, 2000, 2013, 2014	2004, 2009, 2014, 2019, 2024
Norway	1995	NA
Poland	2013, 2014	2009, 2014, 2019, 2024
Portugal	1995, 1998, 2000, 2013, 2014	2004, 2009, 2014, 2019, 2024
Romania	2013, 2014	2009, 2014, 2019
Slovakia	2013, 2014	2009
Slovenia	2013, 2014	2004, 2009, 2014, 2019, 2024
Spain	1995, 1998, 2000, 2013, 2014	NA
Sweden	1995, 1998, 2000, 2013, 2014	2009, 2014, 2019
United Kingdom	1995, 1998, 2000, 2013, 2014	NA

Table A.2: Question Wording

Variable	Question	Waves (year)
European identity	“In the near future, do you see yourself as (1) [nationality] only; (2) [nationality] and European; (3) European and [nationality]; or (4) European only?” The variable is binarized in the baseline analysis, with 0 indicating an exclusively national identity (response category 1) and 1 indicating at least some European identity (response categories 2-4).	43.1 (1995) 49.0 (1998) 53.0 (2000) 79.3 (2013) 81.2 (2014) 81.4 (2014)
Sense of European belonging	“In your opinion, among the following issues, which are those that most create a feeling of community among European Union citizens?” Possible answers are: history, religion, values, geography, languages, legislation/the rule of law, sports, inventions/science/technology, the economy, health care/education/pensions, solidarity with poorer regions, culture, other, and two spontaneous options: “none, such a feeling does not exist” and “none.”	67.2 (2007) 79.3 (2013) 94.3 (2021) 95.3 (2021)
EU and personal values	“And in the following list, which are the three most important values for you personally?” and “Which three of them best represent the European Union?” Possible answers are: rule of law, respect for human life, human rights, individual freedom, democracy, peace, equality, solidarity and support for others, tolerance, religion, self-fulfillment, and respect for other cultures.	79.3 (2013)
Close to Europeans	“I would like you to tell me how close you feel to the following groups of people. - Fellow Europeans.” Possible answers are: “Very close,” “Quite close,” “Not very close,” and “Not at all close.” The scale is reverse-coded so that higher values indicate greater feelings of closeness to fellow Europeans.	57.2 (2002)
EU membership: Bad	“Generally speaking, do you think that (OUR COUNTRY)’s membership of the EU is...?” Possible answers are: “A good thing,” “A bad thing,” and “Neither a good thing nor a bad thing.” The variable is binarized such that respondents who consider their country’s EU membership “a bad thing” are coded 1, while the others are coded 0.	31.0 (1989) 31.A (1989) 41.0 (1994) 41.1 (1994) 43.0 (1995) 43.1 (1995) 43.1bis (1995) 47.1 (1997) 47.2 (1997) 49.0 (1998) 53.0 (2000) 55.1 (2001) 63.4 (2005) 67.2 (2007) 75.3 (2011) 97.3 (2022)
Vote in the EP elections	“Which party did you vote for in the European Parliament elections?”	EES 2004 EES 2009 EES 2014 EES 2019 EES 2024
Better assessment of current economic conditions	“I am now going to ask you to talk me about different aspects of your everyday life. For each of them, could you tell me if this aspect of your life is very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad? - The situation of the (nationality) economy and - the situation of the European economy.” The variable is binarized such that respondents assessing their country’s or the EU’s economic situation as “fairly good” or “very good” are coded 1, and 0 otherwise.	63.4 (2005) 75.3 (2011) 79.3 (2013) 81.2 (2014) 81.4 (2014) 94.3 (2021) 95.3 (2021)

(continued)

Better assessment of current quality of life	“I am now going to ask you to talk me about different aspects of your everyday life. For each of them, could you tell me if this aspect of your life is very good, fairly good, fairly bad or very bad? - Your quality of life in (our country) and in the EU.” The variable is binarized such that respondents assessing the quality of life in their country or in the EU as “fairly good” or “very good” are coded 1, and 0 otherwise.	81.2 (2014)
		81.4 (2014)
Better expectations about future economic conditions	“What are your expectations for the year to come (the next twelve months): will (...) be better, worse or the same, when it comes to the economic situation in (our country) and in the EU?” Possible answers are: “better,” “worse,” and “same.” The variable is binarized such that respondents expecting the country’s or the EU’s economic situation to be “better” are coded 1, and 0 otherwise.	75.3 (2011)
		79.3 (2013)
		81.2 (2014)
		81.4 (2014)
		94.3 (2021)
		95.3 (2021)
Better expectations about household financial situation	“What are your expectations for the year to come (the next twelve months): will (...) be better, worse or the same, when it comes to the financial situation of your household?” Possible answers are: “better,” “worse,” and “same.” The variable is binarized such that respondents expecting their household’s financial situation to be “better” are coded 1, and 0 otherwise.	63.4 (2005)
		67.2 (2007)
		73.4 (2010)
		73.5 (2010)
		75.3 (2011)
		75.4 (2011)
		79.3 (2013)
		79.4 (2013)
		81.2 (2014)
		81.4 (2014)
		81.5 (2014)
		94.3 (2021)
		95.3 (2021)

B The Impact of Eurovision on European Identity

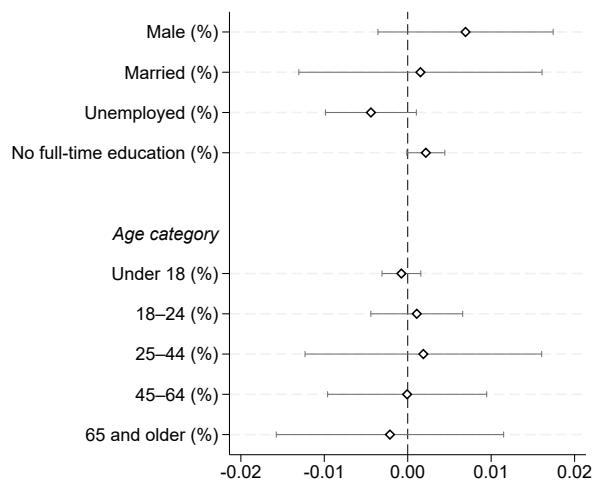
B.1 Validity of the Design

Table B.1: Eurovision Participation and European Identity – Alternative Clustering

	Outcome: European identification? 0 (no) – 1 (yes)	
Clustering level	(1) Country $\times$ Edition	(2) Country
Post-participation	0.020*** (0.007)	0.020*** (0.007)
Individual controls	✓	✓
Country $\times$ Edition FE	✓	✓
Observations	129,450	129,450

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country's participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors are reported in parentheses. Column (1) clusters standard errors at the country $\times$ edition level, while Column (2) at the country level. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Figure B.1: Covariate Balance



Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. Each specification regresses the characteristic indicated on the y-axis on an indicator for being interviewed after the Eurovision final and includes country $\times$ edition fixed effects. The markers report point estimates, and the horizontal lines indicate 95% confidence intervals based on standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ edition level.

Table B.2: Discontinuity in Daily Interview Volume Around the Eurovision Final

	Outcome: Number of daily interviews (1)
Discontinuity estimate	6.241 (4.590)
Country $\times$ Edition FE	✓
Bandwidth	14.15
Observations	2,817

Notes: The table reports the estimated discontinuity in interview volume around the Eurovision final using a local linear regression discontinuity design. The running variable is the number of days relative to the final, with the cutoff occurring on the day of the event. The dependent variable is the number of interviews conducted per day. Bandwidth selection and robust bias-corrected inference follow Calonico et al. (2014). Standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.3: Eurovision Participation and Sub-National Identity

	(1) Local identity	(2) Regional identity
Outcome		
Post-participation	0.002 (0.011)	0.011 (0.008)
Individual controls	✓	✓
Country $\times$ Edition FE	✓	✓
Observations	25,069	25,069

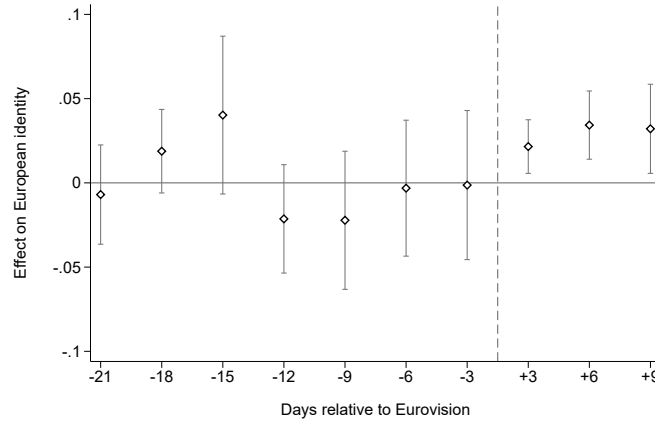
Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). In Column (1), the dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a local identity and 0 otherwise. In Column (2), it takes the value 1 if the respondent expresses a regional identity and 0 otherwise. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country's participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.4: Eurovision Participation and European Identity – Placebo Cutoffs

	Outcome: European identification? 0 (no) – 1 (yes)	
	(1) 1 week before	(2) 2 weeks before
Placebo estimate	0.000 (0.014)	0.009 (0.009)
Individual controls	✓	✓
Country × Edition FE	✓	✓
Observations	87,811	87,811

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. In Column (1), the placebo cutoff is set one week before the actual Eurovision final; in Column (2), it is set two weeks before the final. The sample is restricted to respondents interviewed before the actual Eurovision final. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country × edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Figure B.2: Event Study of the Effect of Eurovision on European Identity



Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The figure reports estimates obtained by replacing the post-participation indicator in Equation (1) with a series of lead and lag indicators relative to treatment, following the imputation approach of Borusyak et al. (2024). Estimates are averaged over three-day bins for presentation. The markers report point estimates, and the vertical lines indicate 90% confidence intervals based on standard errors clustered at the country × edition level.

B.2 Additional Results

Table B.5: Eurovision Participation and European Identity – Ordered Dependent Variable

	Outcome: European identification? (Ordered, 1–4)	
	(1) OLS	(2) oLogit
Post-participation	0.020** (0.010)	0.071*** (0.027)
Individual controls	✓	✓
Country × Edition FE	✓	✓
Observations	129,450	129,450

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). The dependent variable is respondents’ sense of European identity, which is measured through the question: “In the near future, do you see yourself as (1) [nationality] only; (2) [nationality] and European; (3) European and [nationality]; or (4) European only?” *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country’s participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country × edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.6: Eurovision Participation and European Identity – Alternative Identity Measure

	Outcome: European identification?	
	(1) Binary	(2) Ordered
Post-participation	0.025*** (0.007)	0.061*** (0.016)
Individual controls	✓	✓
Country × Edition FE	✓	✓
Observations	108,135	108,135

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The outcome is an alternative measure of European identity based on the Eurobarometer question asking respondents to what extent the statement “You feel you are a citizen of the EU” corresponds to their own opinion. Responses are recorded on a four-category scale: “yes, definitely,” “yes, to some extent,” “no, not really,” and “no, definitely not.” In Column (1), the dependent variable is a binary indicator equal to 1 for either affirmative response and 0 otherwise. In Column (2), the four response categories are retained and ordered from weakest to strongest European identification. The specification follows Equation (1). *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country’s participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country × edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.7: Eurovision Participation and European Identity – Other Attitudes

	(1) Close to Europeans	(2) EU Membership: Bad
Post-participation	0.087** (0.033)	-0.024** (0.011)
Individual controls	✓	✓
Country × Edition FE	✓	✓
Observations	6,660	269,038

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). The dependent variable is reported at the top of each column. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country’s participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country × edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.8: Eurovision Participation and Mood Outcomes

	(1) Assessment of current economic conditions	(2) Perceived quality of life	(3) Expectations about future economic conditions	(4) Expectations about the household’s future financial situation
Post-participation	0.010 (0.006)	0.008 (0.010)	0.012* (0.007)	0.001 (0.004)
Individual controls	✓	✓	✓	✓
Country × Edition FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	147,848	48,687	122,503	311,528
<i>Joint test: all Post-participation coefficients equal zero</i>				
<i>F</i> -statistic	$F(4, 192) = 1.34$			
<i>p</i> -value	0.258			

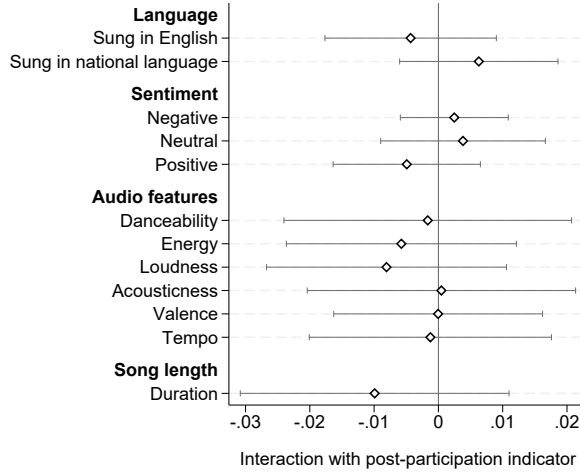
Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). The dependent variable of each specification is reported at the top of the corresponding column. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country’s participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country × edition level are reported in parentheses. The joint test evaluates the null hypothesis that the four *Post-participation* coefficients are jointly equal to zero. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.9: Eurovision Participation and European Identity – Other Specifications

	Outcome: European identification? 0 (no) – 1 (yes)				
	Eurobarometer weights				
	(1) Day-of-week FE	(2) Days to the Eurovision final	(3) Post- stratification	(4) Population size	(5) Equal country $\times$ edition weights
Post-participation	0.017** (0.007)	0.017** (0.007)	0.017** (0.008)	0.020** (0.008)	0.020*** (0.006)
Individual controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Country $\times$ Edition FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	129,450	129,450	129,450	125,578	129,450

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country's participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Figure B.3: Eurovision Participation and Song Characteristics



Notes: Each marker reports the interaction between the post-participation indicator and one characteristic of the song performed by the respondent's country. Data come from Nunes Amaral et al. (2026). The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. All characteristics are standardized to have mean zero and unit standard deviation. All specifications control for respondents' age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education, and include country $\times$ edition fixed effects. Horizontal lines indicate 95% confidence intervals based on standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ edition level.

Table B.10: Eurovision Participation and European Identity – Third-Party Presence

	(1)	(2)
Outcome	Third-party presence	European identity
Post-participation	0.007 (0.009)	0.019*** (0.007)
Sample	Baseline	Respondents interviewed alone
Individual controls	✓	✓
Country × Edition FE	✓	✓
Observations	129,352	103,228

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). In Column (1), the dependent variable is the number of people present during the interview. In Column (2), the dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country’s participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country × edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.11: Eurovision Participation and European Identity – Controlling for Interviewer’s Assessment of Respondent Cooperation

	(1)	(2)
Respondent cooperation as	Outcome variable	Control variable
Post-participation	-0.005 (0.011)	0.020*** (0.007)
Individual controls	✓	✓
Country × Edition FE	✓	✓
Observations	129,371	129,371

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. In Column (1), the dependent variable is the interviewer’s assessment of respondent cooperation. In Column (2), the dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country’s participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country × edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.12: Eurovision Participation and European Identity – Alternative Time Windows

	Outcome: European identification? 0 (no) – 1 (yes)		
Time window	(1) 7 days	(2) 15 days	(3) 30 days
Post-participation	0.020** (0.008)	0.018** (0.008)	0.017** (0.008)
Individual controls	✓	✓	✓
Country × Edition FE	✓	✓	✓
Observations	31,066	45,398	73,901

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country’s participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country × edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.13: Eurovision Participation and European Identity – Within-Wave Variation

	Outcome: European identification? 0 (no) – 1 (yes)
	(1)
Post-participation	0.017** (0.008)
Individual controls	✓
Country × Edition FE	✓
Observations	74,670

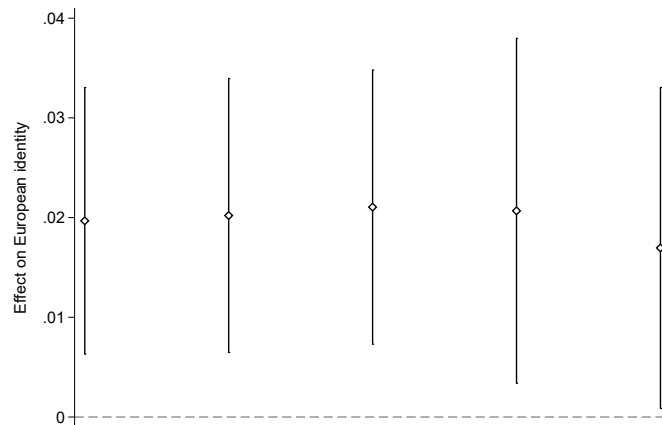
Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country’s participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country × edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.14: Eurovision Participation and European Identity – Extended-Sample Specification

	Outcome: European identification? 0 (no) – 1 (yes)
	(1)
Post-participation	0.012* (0.006)
Individual controls	✓
Country FE	✓
Country-specific time trends	✓
Observations	375,981

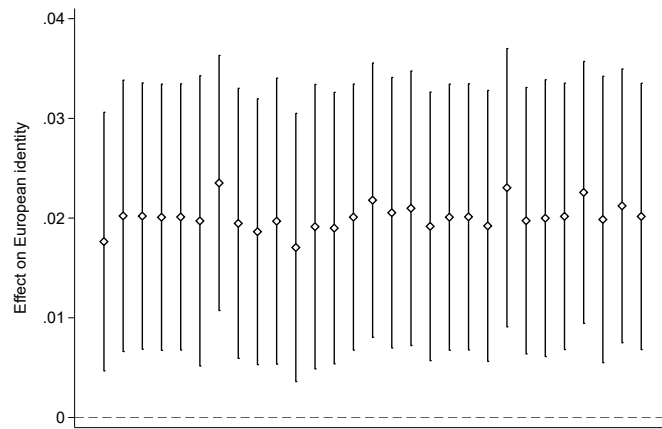
Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country’s participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Figure B.4: Eurovision Participation and European Identity – Excluding One Edition at a Time



Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The figure reports estimates from a leave-one-out exercise in which one Eurovision edition is excluded at a time. The specification controls for respondents’ age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education, and includes country $\times$ edition fixed effects. The markers report point estimates, and the vertical solid lines indicate 95% confidence intervals based on standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ edition level.

Figure B.5: Eurovision Participation and European Identity – Excluding One Country at a Time



Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The figure reports estimates from a leave-one-out exercise in which one country is excluded at a time. The specification controls for respondents' age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education, and includes country $\times$ edition fixed effects. The markers report point estimates, and the vertical solid lines indicate 95% confidence intervals based on standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ edition level.

Table B.15: Eurovision Participation and European Identity – Excluding the Host Country and the Big Five

Outcome: European identification?	
0 (no) – 1 (yes)	
	(1)
Post-participation	0.017** (0.008)
Individual controls	✓
Country $\times$ Edition FE	✓
Observations	96,875

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country's participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.16: Eurovision Participation and European Identity by Semi-Final Participation

	Outcome: European identification? 0 (no) – 1 (yes)		
	(1) Excluding countries participating in the semi-finals	(2) Excluding countries not participating in the semi-finals	(3) (2) - (1)
Post-participation	0.023** (0.010)	0.018* (0.009)	-0.005 (0.014)
Individual controls	✓	✓	
Country × Edition FE	✓	✓	
Observations	82,481	46,969	

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country's participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country × edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.17: Eurovision Participation and European Identity – Dropping Respondents Interviewed Between the First Semi-Final and the Final

	Outcome: European identification? 0 (no) – 1 (yes)
	(1)
Post-participation	0.023*** (0.008)
Individual controls	✓
Country × Edition FE	✓
Observations	118,918

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country's participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country × edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table B.18: Test for Seasonality in European Identity

	Outcome: European identification? 0 (no) – 1 (yes)
	(1)
Fall wave	0.001 (0.008)
Individual controls	✓
Country × Edition FE	✓
Observations	64,366

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. *Fall wave* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed during the Eurobarometer fall wave. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country × edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

C Evidence of an Exposure Effect

C.1 Eurovision Viewership

We obtained viewership figures for the Eurovision final from Eurovisionworld.com¹ and ESCplus,² two websites dedicated to Eurovision news. The data cover Eurovision editions from 2018 to 2025. We use these data for two purposes. First, we compare audience size in countries that participated in the final with audience size in countries that did not. Information on countries that did not participate in the contest at all is unfortunately unavailable. Second, we use these data to construct a proxy for cross-country differences in Eurovision viewership for the earlier editions in our estimation sample, for which audience data are unavailable.

Comparing Viewership Between Finalists and Non-Finalists

To quantify differences in viewership between countries that participated in the final and those that did not qualify, we estimate the following regression:

$$\log\left(\frac{Viewers_{ie}}{Population_{ie}}\right) = \alpha_0 + \beta NonFinalist_{ie} + \gamma Host_{ie} + \mu_i + \lambda_e + \varepsilon_{ie}, \quad (C.1)$$

where i indexes countries and e indexes Eurovision editions. $Viewers_{ie}$ denotes the number of people in country i who watched the Eurovision final in edition e , while $Population_{ie}$ denotes the country's population in the same year. $NonFinalist_{ie}$ is an indicator equal to one if country i did not participate in the final of edition e , and zero otherwise, while $Host_{ie}$ indicates whether the country hosted the contest. The terms μ_i and λ_e denote country and edition fixed effects, respectively, allowing us to account for persistent cross-country differences in Eurovision interest and common edition-specific shocks.

The results are reported in Table C.1. The coefficient on $NonFinalist$ is -0.748 and statistically significant at the one-percent level. This estimate implies that viewership per capita is approximately 53% $((e^{-0.748} - 1) \times 100)$ lower in countries that did not qualify for the final than in countries that did. The sizable difference indicates that exposure to the Eurovision final is substantially lower when a country's entry does not reach the final.

Because viewership data are observed only for countries that participated in Eurovision, either in a semi-final or the final (unlike media coverage data, which we describe in Appendix C.2), the 53% gap reported in Table C.1 is estimated by comparing finalists with countries that participated in the contest but did not qualify for the final. Since

¹<https://eurovisionworld.com>.

²<https://www.esc-plus.com>.

audience size is likely even lower in countries that did not participate at all, this estimate should be interpreted as a lower bound on the viewership difference between finalists and non-participating countries.

Table C.1: Difference in Viewership Between Finalists and Non-Finalists

	Outcome: Log final audience per capita (1)
Non-finalist	-0.748*** (0.091)
Country FE	✓
Edition FE	✓
Observations	173

Notes: The unit of analysis is a country–edition pair. The specification follows Equation (C.1). The dependent variable is the log of Eurovision final viewership per capita. The specification includes an indicator for whether the country hosted the contest, as well as country and edition fixed effects. Standard errors clustered at the country level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Constructing a Eurovision Viewership Index

Because viewership figures are unavailable for the Eurovision editions covered by our estimation sample, we use more recent audience data to construct a proxy for persistent cross-country differences in Eurovision audience size. The objective is to capture whether the contest systematically attracts relatively larger audiences in some countries than in others.

We construct the index in two steps. First, we residualize the 2018-2025 audience figures with respect to edition fixed effects and host-country status. The resulting residuals capture whether audience size in a given country and edition is higher or lower than expected after accounting for common edition-specific shocks and the additional attention associated with hosting the contest. Second, we average these residuals within countries. Higher values of the resulting index therefore indicate countries where Eurovision tends to attract a larger share of the population.

Using this measure as a proxy for earlier editions requires cross-country differences in Eurovision audiences to be reasonably persistent over time. We assess this assumption by constructing the index separately for the 2018-2019 and 2024-2025 editions. The two measures have a Spearman correlation of 0.79, indicating substantial stability in countries’ relative audience sizes across the two periods. This persistence supports the use of recent viewership data as a proxy for cross-country differences in Eurovision viewership during the earlier editions covered by our estimation sample.

C.2 Eurovision Media Coverage

We collected information on Eurovision media coverage from Google News. For each country in our dataset, we retrieved local news articles containing the term “Eurovision” for each edition between 2000 and 2025. We measure media coverage as the number of such articles published within a given window around the final.

Comparing Media Coverage Between Finalists and Non-Finalists

We compare Eurovision media coverage in finalist and non-finalist countries (including semi-final participants that did not qualify and non-participating countries) using an empirical approach analogous to the viewership analysis. Here, the outcome is the number of Eurovision-related articles published during the week following the final. Because the dependent variable is a count and includes zeros, we estimate a Poisson model, controlling for each country’s population. Table C.2 shows that media coverage is approximately 13% ($(e^{-0.134} - 1) \times 100$) lower in countries that did not take part in the Eurovision final than in countries that did.

Table C.2: Difference in Media Coverage Between Finalists and Non-Finalists

	Outcome: No. of articles containing the term “Eurovision” (1)
Non-finalist	-0.134** (0.053)
Country FE	✓
Edition FE	✓
Observations	1,176

Notes: The unit of analysis is a country–edition pair. The dependent variable is the number of local news articles containing the term “Eurovision.” The specification includes an indicator for whether the country hosted the contest, as well as country and edition fixed effects. Standard errors clustered at the country level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Alternative Media Coverage Time Windows

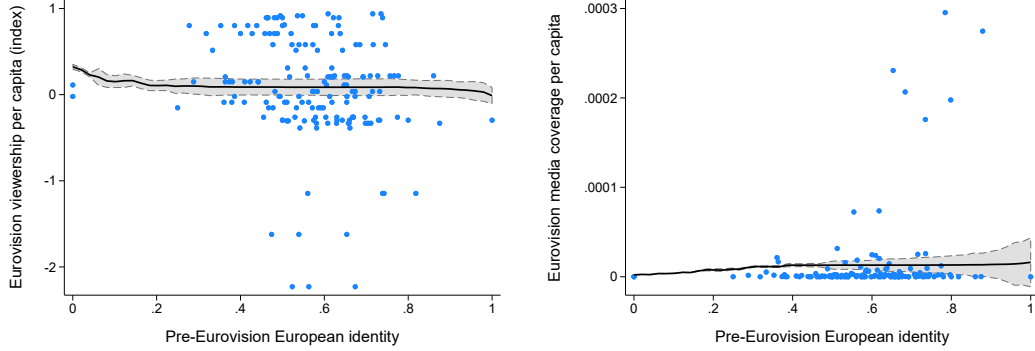
Table C.3: Eurovision Participation and European Identity – Alternative Media Coverage Time Windows

Outcome: European identification? 0 (no) – 1 (yes)					
Time window (in days)	(1) [−14, −1]	(2) [−30, −7]	(3) [−60, +60]	(4) [+1, +7]	(5) [+1, +30]
Post-participation	0.020*** (0.007)	0.020*** (0.007)	0.020*** (0.007)	0.020*** (0.007)	0.020*** (0.007)
Interaction	0.005*** (0.002)	0.008*** (0.003)	0.008*** (0.003)	0.007*** (0.001)	0.006*** (0.002)
Interaction term	Media coverage	Media coverage	Media coverage	Media coverage	Media coverage
Individual controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Country × Edition FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	97,310	97,310	97,310	97,310	97,310

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country’s participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Media coverage measures the number of Google News articles per capita containing the term “Eurovision” during the time window indicated at the top of each column. The measure is standardized to have mean zero and unit standard deviation. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country × edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

C.3 Additional Results

Figure C.1: Correlation Between Pre-Eurovision European Identity and Eurovision Salience



Notes: Each dot represents a country-edition. Lines show local polynomial fits with 95% confidence intervals.

Table C.4: Eurovision Salience – Allowing the Treatment Effect to Vary with Pre-Eurovision European Identity

	Outcome: European identification? 0 (no) – 1 (yes)	
	(1)	(2)
Post-participation	0.020*** (0.006)	0.021*** (0.007)
Interaction	0.008* (0.005)	0.007*** (0.002)
Interaction term	Viewership size	Media coverage
Individual controls	✓	✓
Country × Edition FE	✓	✓
Observations	118,903	97,310

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The specification follows Equation (1). The dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent expresses a European identity and 0 otherwise. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country’s participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. *Viewership size* is a country-level index of Eurovision audience per capita, built from 2018–2025 viewership data (see Appendix C.1), while *media coverage* measures the number of Google News articles per capita containing the term “Eurovision” during the month preceding the contest. Both measures are standardized to have mean zero and unit standard deviation. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country × edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

D Mechanism: Eurovision and Perceived Distance from Europe

D.1 Semantic Text Analysis of Eurovision Broadcasts

LLM prompt for value detection

You are coding Eurovision Song Contest transcript chunks for an academic study.

The study examines whether Eurovision showcases core European values.

Core European values to code:

1. Peace:

The passage showcases peace, reconciliation, non-violence, harmony between peoples or countries, opposition to war, or cross-border friendship when clearly framed in terms of reconciliation, harmony, or conflict reduction.

Code as peace when the passage presents peace, reconciliation, harmony, or conflict reduction as a positive collective value.

Do not code general unity, togetherness, or Europe coming together as peace unless the passage clearly suggests peace, reconciliation, non-violence, conflict reduction, or harmony between peoples or countries.

2. Democracy / democratic values:

The passage showcases democracy or values associated with democratic societies, including collective voice, public participation, pluralism, openness, inclusion, freedom of expression, freedom of information, representation, or people or audiences having a meaningful say.

Code as democracy/democratic values when the passage presents people, audiences, citizens, or societies as participating, being heard, deciding together, expressing themselves freely, or living in an open and pluralistic society.

A passage may be coded as democracy/democratic values even if the word "democracy" is not used, as long as it clearly showcases democratic values such as pluralism, openness, inclusion, public voice, free expression, or meaningful participation.

Do not code purely technical voting instructions as democracy/democratic values. For example, do not code "call this number," "send an SMS," "voting is open," "voting is closed," or "you cannot vote for your own country" unless the passage also frames participation in terms of collective voice, public choice, openness, or democratic inclusion.

3. Human rights:

The passage showcases human rights or values closely associated with human rights, including human dignity, equal worth of persons, equality, non-discrimination, protection of minorities or vulnerable groups, respect for basic freedoms, safety from persecution or violence, or the right to live openly and safely.

Code as human_rights when the passage emphasizes that people deserve dignity, equality, protection, respect, or freedom from discrimination because of who they are.

The phrase "human rights" does not need to appear if the passage clearly showcases dignity, equal worth, non-discrimination, protection of vulnerable groups, or basic freedoms.

Do not code generic kindness, friendship, or inclusion as `human_rights` unless the passage clearly refers to dignity, equality, non-discrimination, protection, or basic freedoms.

4. Rule of law:

The passage showcases legality, justice, fairness, equal application of rules, transparency, accountability, impartial supervision, or institutional integrity.

Code as `rule_of_law` when the passage presents rules, fairness, transparency, impartial supervision, legality, or accountability as safeguards or public values.

Do not code ordinary Eurovision voting rules as `rule_of_law` unless fairness, transparency, supervision, accountability, or rules are presented as values or safeguards rather than merely as technical contest procedures.

5. Liberty / freedom:

The passage showcases freedom, liberty, freedom of expression, self-expression, autonomy, authenticity, or being free to be oneself.

Code as `liberty_freedom` when the passage emphasizes individual freedom, artistic freedom, self-expression, autonomy, authenticity, or the freedom to live or express oneself.

Do not code procedural phrases such as "you are free to vote" as `liberty_freedom`.

6. Tolerance:

The passage showcases tolerance, acceptance, respect for difference, openness, inclusion, coexistence, diversity as a positive value, or respect across differences.

Code as `tolerance` when the passage emphasizes acceptance, coexistence, respect, inclusion, appreciation of difference, or diversity as a positive value.

The word "tolerance" does not need to appear if the passage clearly showcases acceptance, inclusion, coexistence, or respect for difference.

General coding principle:

A passage can be coded even if the exact value word is not used, as long as the passage clearly showcases the underlying value. However, do not infer values from Eurovision in general; use only the text in the chunk.

Multi-label rule:

A passage may showcase more than one value. For example, a passage about people being free to express diverse identities in an open society may be coded as `liberty_freedom`, `tolerance`, and `democracy`.

Primary value rule:

`primary_value` should be the most direct or central value in the passage. `values_showcased` should include all values that are clearly showcased.

Task:

You will receive one Eurovision transcript chunk at a time. The user message provides:

- year
- chunk_id
- chunk_text

For the given chunk, identify exact passages in `chunk_text` that showcase one or more of the core European values above.

Coding rules:

- Return one object per passage that showcases one or more values.
- Code only substantive instances of value showcasing.
- Do not code a value merely because a related word appears.
- Do not infer values from Eurovision in general; use only the text in the chunk.
- Ignore artist introductions, jokes, technical announcements, song lyrics, casual host talk, point announcements, and purely technical voting instructions.
- Every positive case must include an exact quote copied from chunk_text.
- If the chunk contains no substantive showcasing of core European values, return an empty list.
- Do not add any values other than: peace, democracy, human_rights, rule_of_law, liberty_freedom, tolerance.
- Set include_in_main_measure = 1 for every passage returned under the coding rules above.

Return the result using the provided JSON schema.

LLM prompt for eligible discourse classification

You are classifying Eurovision Song Contest transcript chunks for an academic study.

The goal is to identify which parts of the transcript are eligible for the analysis of Eurovision's showcasing of core European values.

You will receive one Eurovision transcript chunk at a time. The user message provides:

- year
- chunk_id
- chunk_text

Classify the chunk into exactly one of the following categories:

1. host_or_official_discourse:

The chunk is mainly host speech, official Eurovision/EBU speech, opening or closing remarks, interval framing, presenter discourse, or general broadcast framing.

2. participant_or_greenroom_discourse:

The chunk is mainly interviews, green-room discussion, spokesperson greetings, artist reactions, or participant statements.

3. audience_participation_framing:

The chunk frames viewers, audiences, or people across Europe as collectively deciding, judging, voting, choosing, or having a voice. This includes non-technical discussion of televoting as collective participation, public choice, or people across Europe having their say.

4. voting_or_scoring_procedure:

The chunk is mainly technical voting instructions, phone/SMS instructions, voting rules, point announcements, scoreboard updates, country-by-country results, or spokesperson point delivery.

5. song_lyric_or_performance:

The chunk is mainly song lyrics, performance text, musical interlude text, repeated performance captions, or lyrics transcribed from the show.

6. technical_or_noise:

The chunk is mainly timestamps, applause, music markers, stage directions, transcript noise, fragmented words, or technical transitions.

7. mixed_or_unclear:

The chunk contains multiple types and no single type clearly dominates, or the content is unclear.

Coding rules:

- Classify the chunk based on its dominant content.
- Do not classify a chunk as eligible merely because it contains core European values.
- The denominator classification must be independent of whether the chunk showcases core European values.
- Use denominator_include = 1 for chunks that are eligible for the analysis of core European value showcasing.
- Use denominator_include = 0 for chunks that should be excluded from the denominator.

Set denominator_include as follows:

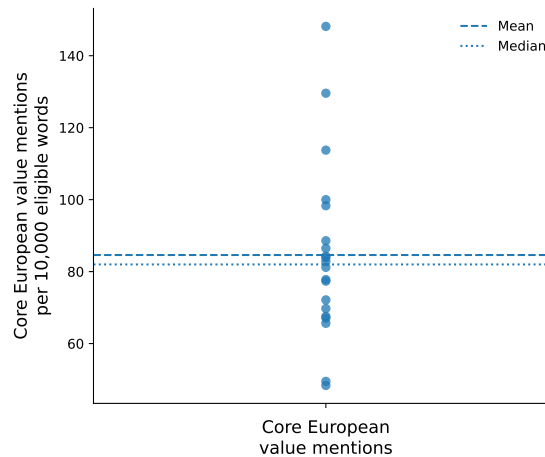
- host_or_official_discourse: 1
- participant_or_greenroom_discourse: 1
- audience_participation_framing: 1
- mixed_or_unclear: 1 only if it contains substantial host, official, participant, or audience-participation discourse; otherwise 0
- voting_or_scoring_procedure: 0
- song_lyric_or_performance: 0
- technical_or_noise: 0

Important distinctions:

- "Call this number," "send an SMS," "voting is open," "voting is closed," point announcements, and country-by-country results are voting_or_scoring_procedure.
- "You are the judges," "Europe decides," "millions of viewers have their say," or similar passages emphasizing collective participation should be audience_participation_framing.
- If a chunk contains both technical voting instructions and broader audience-participation framing, classify it based on the dominant content. If the participation framing is substantial, use audience_participation_framing.

Return the result using the provided JSON schema.

Figure D.1: Core European Values in Eurovision Broadcasts – Dictionary-Based Method



Notes: Each dot represents one Eurovision edition between 2004 and 2025. The vertical axis reports the number of mentions of the six core European values per 10,000 words of eligible discourse. Eligible discourse includes host speech, official Eurovision or European Broadcasting Union statements, green-room exchanges, interviews, and participant speeches. Song lyrics, point announcements, voting and scoring procedures, and transcript noise are excluded. The dashed line indicates the mean, and the dotted line indicates the median.

D.2 Additional Results

Table D.1: Eurovision and Value Perceptions – Extended-Sample Specification

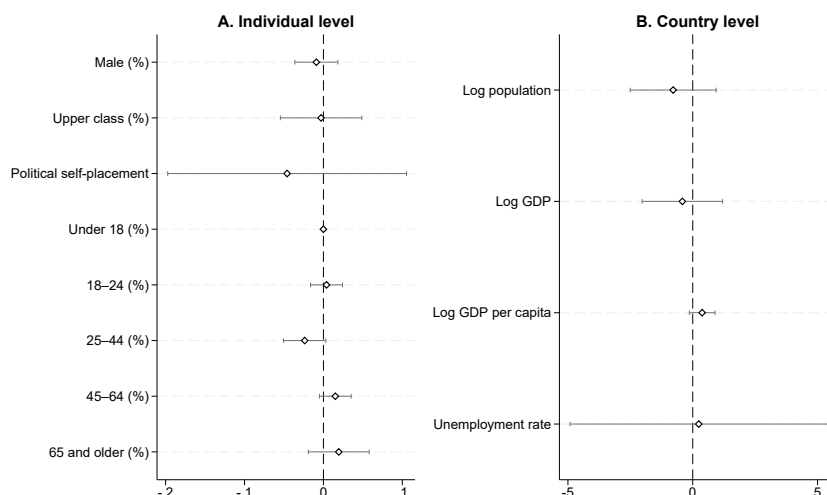
	Probability that at least one value selected by the respondent is showcased by Eurovision	
	(1) Values best representing the EU	(2) Values personally important
Post-participation	0.015*** (0.005)	0.001 (0.005)
Individual controls	✓	✓
Country FE	✓	✓
Country-specific time trends	✓	✓
Observations	285,959	275,281

Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. In Column (1), the dependent variable is an indicator equal to 1 if at least one of the values the respondent selects as best representing the EU is also showcased by Eurovision, and 0 otherwise. In Column (2), the dependent variable is defined analogously for the values the respondent selects as personally important. *Post-participation* is an indicator equal to 1 if the respondent was interviewed after her country's participation in the Eurovision final and 0 otherwise. Individual controls include age, gender, marital status, unemployment status, and education. Standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ edition level are reported in parentheses. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

E The Impact of Eurovision on Voting

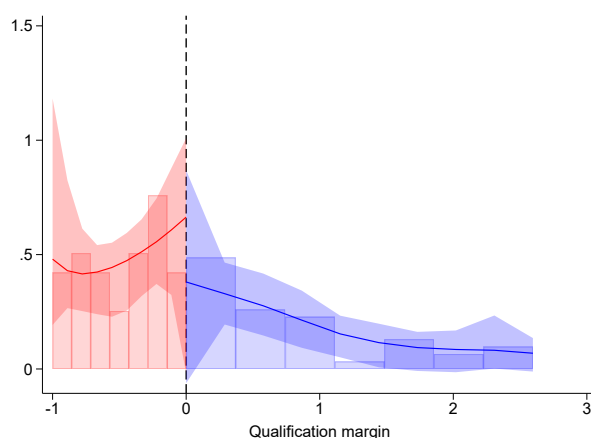
E.1 Validity of the RD Design

Figure E.1: Covariate Smoothness at the Cutoff



Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent in Panel A and a country-year in Panel B. Each specification consists of an RD regression using the variable indicated on the y-axis as the outcome. The treatment is qualification of the respondent's country for the Eurovision Grand Final. For each specification, the bandwidth is selected using the cluster-robust mean squared error optimal bandwidth selector of Calonico et al. (2014), allowing for separate optimal bandwidths below and above the cutoff. Panel A includes country fixed effects. The markers report point estimates, and the horizontal solid lines indicate 95% confidence intervals based on standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ year level.

Figure E.2: Density of the Running Variable Around the Cutoff



Notes: The unit of analysis is a country-year observation. The y-axis represents the estimated density of observations, and the x-axis the qualification margin. The qualification margin is defined as the difference between the points received by a country and those received by the last qualifying country in its semi-final, scaled by the latter (see Equation 3). Countries below zero failed to qualify for the Eurovision Grand Final, whereas countries at or above zero qualified.

Table E.1: Placebo Cutoffs

	Outcome: Pro-European position of party voted for (standardized)	
	(1) Left of the cutoff	(2) Right of the cutoff
Discontinuity estimate	-0.836* (0.476)	-0.116 (0.177)
Robust CI	[-2.42, 0.585]	[-1.30, 0.699]
Individual controls	✓	✓
Country FE		✓
Bandwidth (left/right)	0.292 / 0.132	0.255 / 0.569
Observations	7,307	6,563

Notes: Local linear RD estimates using a triangular kernel. The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The dependent variable measures the position on European integration of the party the respondent voted for, using the average of the CHES and Euromanifesto scores standardized within country and election year. Higher values indicate a party that is more supportive of European integration relative to the other parties competing in that country and election. Column (1) estimates a placebo RD below the actual qualification threshold, while Column (2) estimates a placebo RD above it. Within each side of the threshold, the placebo cutoff is set at the first quartile of the distance to the actual threshold. The optimal bandwidth is computed using the cluster-robust mean squared error optimal bandwidth selector of Calonico et al. (2014), allowing for separate optimal bandwidths below and above each placebo cutoff. Country fixed effects are included in Column (2) but omitted in Column (1) due to degrees-of-freedom constraints. Standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ year level are reported in parentheses. Square brackets indicate 95% robust bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico et al. (2014). Given the relatively small number of clusters, inference is based on the CR3 cluster-robust variance estimator, following Pustejovsky and Tipton (2018), to mitigate finite-sample distortions in cluster-robust inference. Individual controls include the respondent's age, gender, self-perceived social class, and political self-placement. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

E.2 Extensions and Robustness Checks

Table E.2: RD Estimates – Alternative Measures of Parties’ Pro-European Position

Outcome:	Standardized		Original, unstandardized	
	(1) CHES	(2) Euromanifesto	(3) CHES (1–7 scale)	(4) Euromanifesto (1–10 scale)
Discontinuity estimate	0.433*** (0.0521)	0.495*** (0.0729)	0.857*** (0.166)	0.904*** (0.222)
Robust CI	[0.315, 0.574]	[0.403, 0.677]	[0.431, 1.16]	[0.046, 1.34]
Individual controls	✓	✓	✓	✓
Country FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bandwidth (left/right)	0.268 / 0.636	0.260 / 0.845	0.268 / 0.756	0.340 / 0.377
Mean, left of threshold	0.236	0.243	5.24	7.54
Observations	11,484	8,977	12,527	8,223

Notes: Local linear RD estimates using a triangular kernel and the baseline sample. The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The model specification follows Equation (4). The dependent variable measures the position on European integration of the party the respondent voted for. Columns (1) and (2) use the CHES and Euromanifesto measures, respectively, standardized within country and election year, while Columns (3) and (4) use the corresponding original, unstandardized scores. The treatment is qualification of the respondent’s country for the Eurovision Grand Final. In each specification, the optimal bandwidth is computed following the cluster-robust mean squared error optimal bandwidth selector of Calonico et al. (2014), which allows for separate optimal bandwidths below and above the cutoff. Standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ year level are reported in parentheses. Square brackets indicate 95% robust bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico et al. (2014). Individual controls include the respondent’s age, gender, self-perceived social class, and political self-placement. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table E.3: RD Estimates – Multi-Cutoff RDD

	Outcome: Pro-European position of party voted for (standardized)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Discontinuity estimate	0.710*** (0.113)	0.332*** (0.054)	0.628*** (0.121)
Robust CI	[0.489, 0.930]	[0.227, 0.437]	[0.391, 0.865]
Individual controls	✓	✓	✓
Country FE	✓	✓	✓
Bandwidth (left/right)	13.42 / 47.94	10.07 / 35.96	16.78 / 59.93
Observations	10,867	7,391	13,144

Notes: Local linear RD estimates using a triangular kernel. The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The dependent variable measures the position on European integration of the party the respondent voted for, using the average of the CHES and Euromanifesto scores standardized within country and election year. The treatment is qualification of the respondent’s country for the Eurovision Grand Final. In Column (1), the optimal bandwidth is computed following the cluster-robust mean squared error optimal bandwidth selector of Calonico et al. (2014), which allows for separate optimal bandwidths below and above the cutoff. Columns (2) and (3) use 75% and 125% of these optimal bandwidths, respectively. Standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ year level are reported in parentheses. Square brackets indicate 95% robust bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico et al. (2014). Individual controls include the respondent’s age, gender, self-perceived social class, and political self-placement. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table E.4: RD Estimates – Alternative Bandwidth Selectors

	Outcome: Pro-European position of party voted for (standardized)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Discontinuity estimate	0.488*** (0.065)	0.351*** (0.047)	0.372*** (0.066)
Robust CI	[0.360, 0.697]	[0.180, 0.430]	[0.195, 0.522]
Individual controls	✓	✓	✓
Country FE	✓	✓	✓
Bandwidth selector	mserd	certwo	cerrd
Bandwidth (left/right)	0.269 / 0.269	0.214 / 0.558	0.217 / 0.217
Observations	9,082	9,914	7,150

Notes: Local linear RD estimates using a triangular kernel. The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The dependent variable measures the position on European integration of the party the respondent voted for, using the average of the CHES and Euromanifesto scores standardized within country and election year. Higher values indicate a party that is more supportive of European integration relative to the other parties competing in that country and election. The treatment is qualification of the respondent's country for the Eurovision Grand Final. Column (1) uses a common mean squared error (MSE) optimal bandwidth on both sides of the cutoff (**mserd**); Column (2) uses separate coverage error rate (CER) optimal bandwidths below and above the cutoff (**certwo**); and Column (3) uses a common CER optimal bandwidth on both sides of the cutoff (**cerrd**); see Calonico et al. (2017). Standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ year level are reported in parentheses. Square brackets indicate 95% robust bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico et al. (2014). Individual controls include the respondent's age, gender, self-perceived social class, and political self-placement. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table E.5: RD Estimates – No Controls

	Outcome: Pro-European position of party voted for (standardized)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Discontinuity estimate	0.567*** (0.074)	0.408*** (0.063)	0.530*** (0.093)
Robust CI	[0.437, 0.788]	[0.273, 0.551]	[0.321, 0.766]
Country FE	✓	✓	✓
Bandwidth (left/right)	0.269 / 0.953	0.202 / 0.715	0.336 / 1.19
Observations	14,493	10,698	18,250

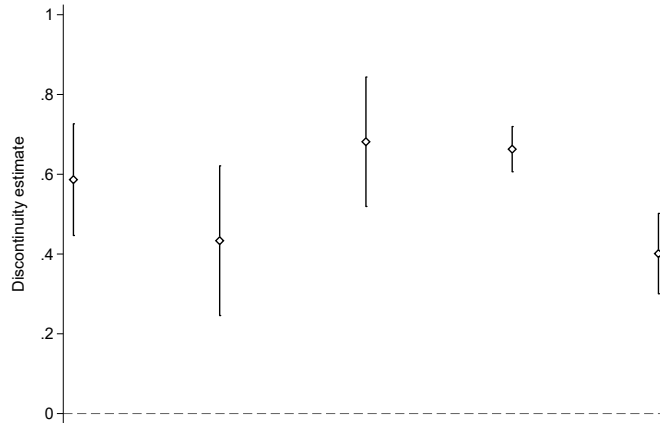
Notes: Local linear RD estimates using a triangular kernel. The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The dependent variable measures the position on European integration of the party the respondent voted for, using the average of the CHES and Euromanifesto scores standardized within country and election year. Higher values indicate a party that is more supportive of European integration relative to the other parties competing in that country and election. The treatment is qualification of the respondent's country for the Eurovision Grand Final. In Column (1), the optimal bandwidth is computed following the cluster-robust mean squared error optimal bandwidth selector of Calonico et al. (2014), which allows for separate optimal bandwidths below and above the cutoff. Columns (2) and (3) use 75% and 125% of these optimal bandwidths, respectively. Standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ year level are reported in parentheses. Square brackets indicate 95% robust bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico et al. (2014). * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Table E.6: RD Estimates – Alternative Polynomial Degrees and Kernel Functions

	Outcome: Pro-European position of party voted for (standardized)			
	Polynomial order		Kernel function	
	(1) Quadratic	(2) Cubic	(3) Uniform	(4) Epanechnikov
Discontinuity estimate	0.656*** (0.121)	0.395*** (0.103)	0.360*** (0.053)	0.371*** (0.051)
Robust CI	[0.416, 0.957]	[0.250, 0.868]	[0.073, 0.373]	[0.085, 0.359]
Individual controls	✓	✓	✓	✓
Country FE	✓	✓	✓	✓
Bandwidth (left/right)	0.395 / 0.702	0.317 / 0.856	0.171 / 0.330	0.217 / 0.607
Observations	14,474	14,279	6,180	10,408

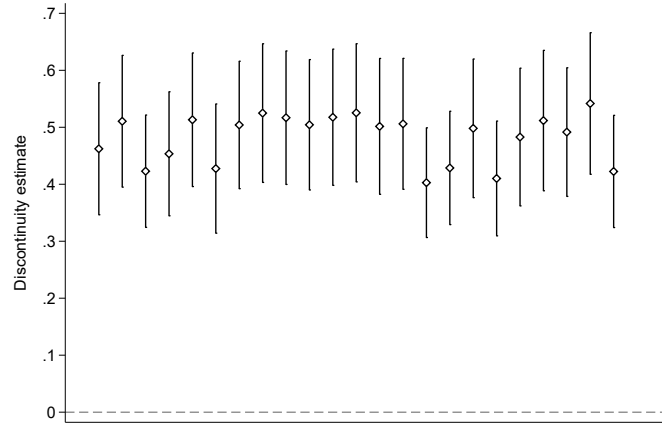
Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The dependent variable measures the position on European integration of the party the respondent voted for, using the average of the CHES and Euromanifesto scores standardized within country and election year. Higher values indicate a party that is more supportive of European integration relative to the other parties competing in that country and election. The treatment is qualification of the respondent's country for the Eurovision Grand Final. In each specification, the optimal bandwidth is computed following the cluster-robust mean squared error optimal bandwidth selector of Calonico et al. (2014), which allows for separate optimal bandwidths below and above the cutoff. Standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ year level are reported in parentheses. Square brackets indicate 95% robust bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico et al. (2014). Individual controls include the respondent's age, gender, self-perceived social class, and political self-placement. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

Figure E.3: RD Estimates – Excluding One Year at a Time



Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The figure reports RD estimates from a leave-one-out exercise in which one election year is excluded at a time. The dependent variable measures the position on European integration of the party the respondent voted for, using the average of the CHES and Euromanifesto scores standardized within country and election year. Higher values indicate a party that is more supportive of European integration relative to the other parties competing in that country and election. The specification controls for the respondent's age, gender, self-perceived social class, and political self-placement and includes country fixed effects. The markers report RD point estimates, and the vertical solid lines indicate 95% confidence intervals based on standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ year level.

Figure E.4: RD Estimates – Excluding One Country at a Time



Notes: The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The figure reports RD estimates from a leave-one-out exercise in which one country is excluded at a time. The dependent variable measures the position on European integration of the party the respondent voted for, using the average of the CHES and Euromanifesto scores standardized within country and election year. Higher values indicate a party that is more supportive of European integration relative to the other parties competing in that country and election. The specification controls for the respondent's age, gender, self-perceived social class, and political self-placement and includes country fixed effects. The markers report RD point estimates, and the vertical solid lines indicate 95% confidence intervals based on standard errors clustered at the country $\times$ year level.

Table E.7: RD Estimates – Clustering Standard Errors at the Country Level

	Outcome: Pro-European position of party voted for (standardized)		
	(1)	(2)	(3)
Discontinuity estimate	0.374*** (0.022)	0.341*** (0.024)	0.510*** (0.056)
Robust CI	[0.231, 0.352]	[0.176, 0.431]	[0.322, 0.562]
Individual controls	✓	✓	✓
Country FE	✓	✓	✓
Bandwidth (left/right)	0.220 / 0.455	0.165 / 0.341	0.275 / 0.568
Observations	9,459	6,180	11,119

Notes: Local linear RD estimates using a triangular kernel. The unit of analysis is a survey respondent. The dependent variable measures the position on European integration of the party the respondent voted for, using the average of the CHES and Euromanifesto scores standardized within country and election year. Higher values indicate a party that is more supportive of European integration relative to the other parties competing in that country and election. The treatment is qualification of the respondent's country for the Eurovision Grand Final. In Column (1), the optimal bandwidth is computed following the cluster-robust mean squared error optimal bandwidth selector of Calonico et al. (2014), which allows for separate optimal bandwidths below and above the cutoff. Columns (2) and (3) use 75% and 125% of these optimal bandwidths, respectively. Standard errors clustered at the country level are reported in parentheses. Square brackets indicate 95% robust bias-corrected confidence intervals following Calonico et al. (2014). Individual controls include the respondent's age, gender, self-perceived social class, and political self-placement. * $p < 0.10$, ** $p < 0.05$, *** $p < 0.01$.

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