

# Is the Eurovision Song Contest the new 'Woke Olympics'?

**Author:** Nina Vivier Barte, Yacine Touileb

**Date:** June 16, 2024

## 1.Introduction

The Eurovision Song Contest, renowned for its vibrant performances and diverse participants, has recently faced scrutiny due to what some perceive as a growing emphasis on socio-political themes. This shift has sparked debates on whether Eurovision is evolving into the new “Woke Olympics,” a term drawn from public discourse to describe an increased visibility of progressive social themes rather than a normative position.

Studies indicate that songs addressing LGBTQ+ rights, climate change, and social justice have garnered significant attention and sparked conversations (Baker, 2017). But does this necessarily mean there are more such songs? **Is the Eurovision Song Contest increasingly prioritizing specific song themes in recent years?**

To answer these questions, this project aims to analyze the thematic content of Eurovision songs in recent years. We will examine whether there has been a measurable increase in songs with progressive themes. Our analysis involves collecting data on Eurovision participants and their songs' themes, comparing this with historical data to identify trends and shifts in focus. This approach will help us understand if Eurovision is indeed evolving into a more thematically driven contest, reflecting broader societal changes (Figure 1).



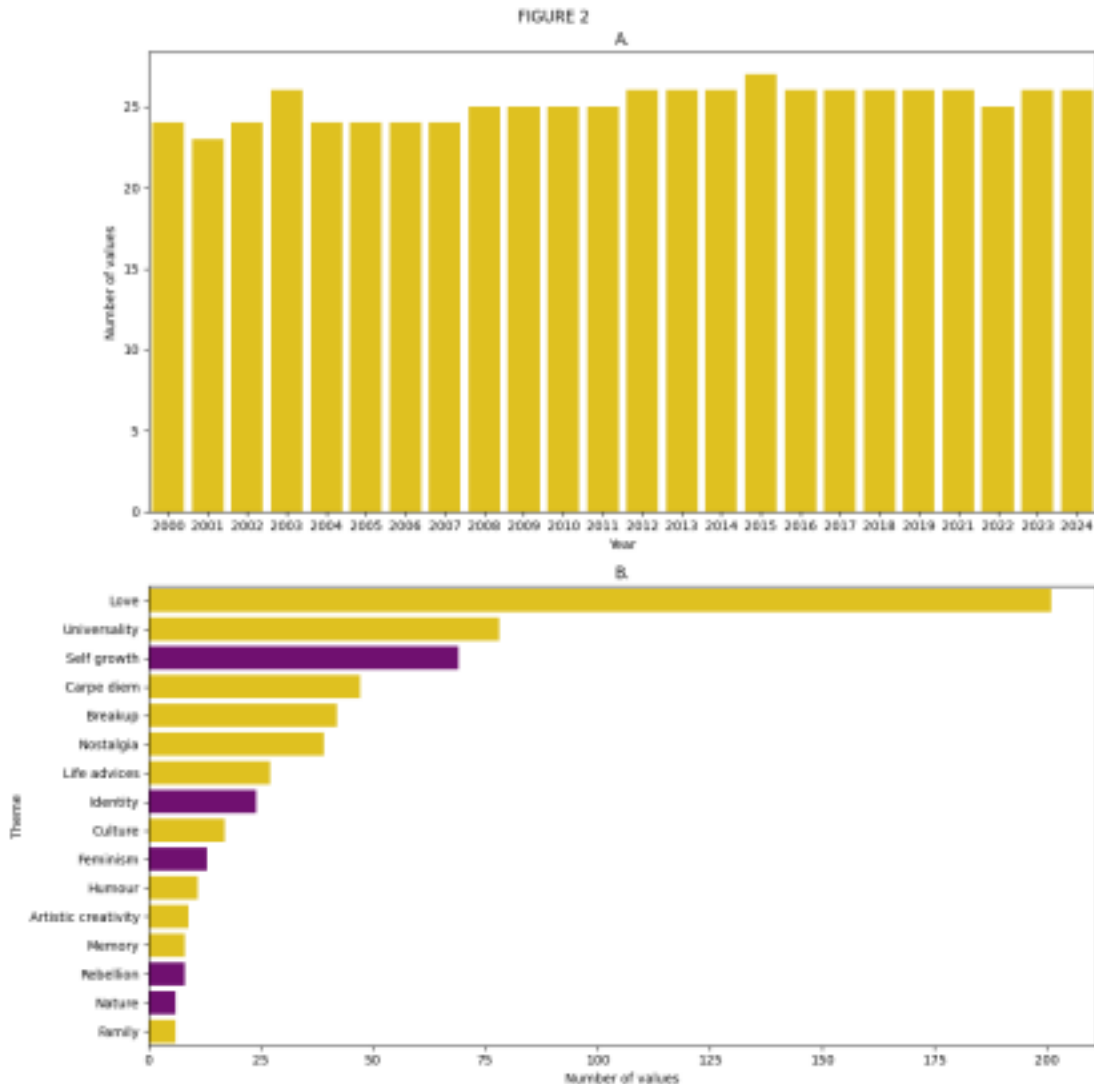
**Figure 1:** Directed acyclic graph illustrating the hypothesized relationships between year, political, social, economic and cultural context, and song themes in the Eurovision Song Contest.

We hypothesize that if this trend is accurate, we should observe:

**Prediction 1:** Over the years, an increase in 'woke' themes.

## 2. Data

We scraped the dataset from Wikipedia pages covering the Eurovision Song Contest from the year 2000 to 2024 (N = 605). The dataset includes participant's characteristics such as year of participation (see Figure 2.A). Each song was meticulously annotated based on its thematic content (see Figure 2.B).



*Figure 2: Distribution of songs based on (A), the year of participation (B), and on the song theme.*

## 3. Methods

To test our predictions, we grouped the song themes into **two categories: woke and non woke**. We then conducted a **simple logistic regression** to compare the proportion of woke and non-woke songs over the years (**P1**).

## 4. Results

There has been an increase over the years in songs with 'woke' themes (in 2000, 4.16% of songs were 'woke', and by 2024, this figure rose to 42.30%; see Figure 3). Furthermore, **this difference is statistically significant** (coefficient = 0.075, p-value  $\approx$  0.00, and R-squared = 0.043).



*Figure 3: Proportion of 'woke' songs based on the year of participation.*

## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, our analysis suggests a discernible association between the year and the thematic content of songs at the Eurovision Song Contest. **Over recent years, there appears to have been an increase in songs addressing progressive themes.** This observation prompts consideration of whether Eurovision is evolving into a more thematically driven event, reflecting contemporary societal trends.

It's important to acknowledge the correlational nature of our study. **While we observe a rise in 'woke' themes, we cannot assert causation.** There may be **additional unexplored factors influencing this trend**, such as the socio-economic, political, and cultural contexts that shape songwriting and performance choices. Future research could explore these factors further to provide a more comprehensive understanding.

## 6. References

**BAKER, Catherine.** *The 'gay Olympics'? The Eurovision song contest and the politics of LGBT/European belonging.* European Journal of International Relations, 2017, vol. 23, no 1, p. 97-121.

# BONUS

## 7. Introduction

Having analyzed the thematic evolution of Eurovision songs over recent years on our previous analysis, we observe a discernible trend towards an increasing prevalence of 'woke' themes. This trend suggests that the Eurovision Song Contest is progressively becoming more theme-driven, reflecting broader societal shifts towards socio-political engagement through music. Given this trend, we can ask ourselves: **do songs addressing 'woke' themes achieve higher rankings than their counterparts that do not engage with progressive issues?**

To further investigate this hypothesis, we delve into the correlation between song themes and Eurovision rankings. Our analysis aims to determine whether songs categorized as 'woke' exhibit a statistical advantage in achieving better ranks compared to songs that do not explicitly address progressive themes (see Figure 4).



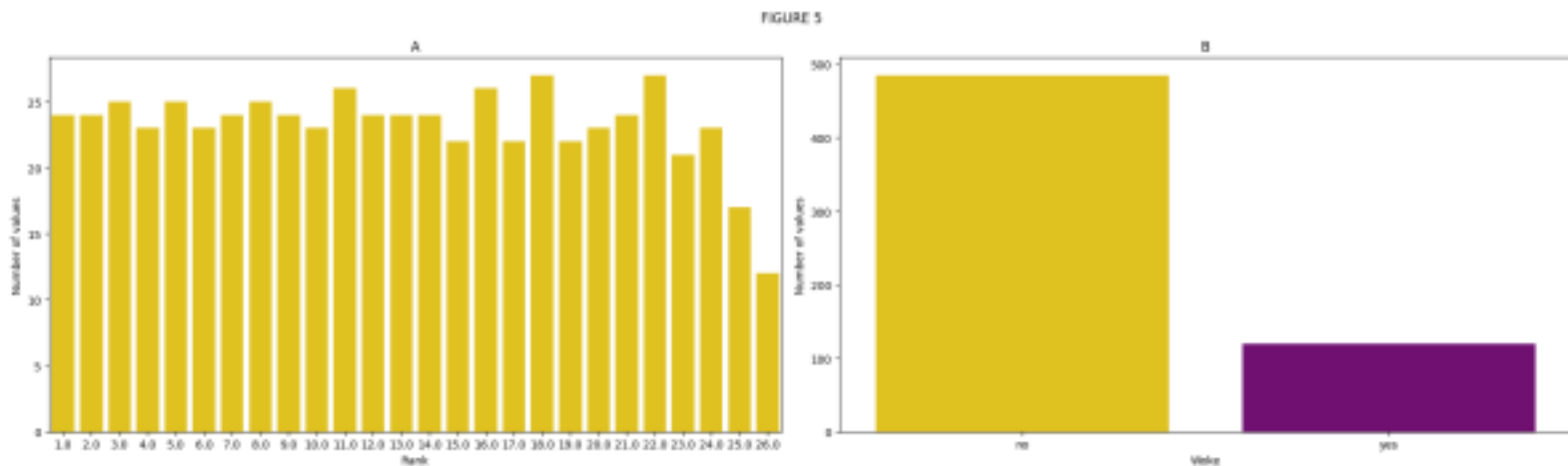
**Figure 4:** Directed acyclic graph illustrating the hypothesized relationships between song themes and ranking in the Eurovision Song Contest.

We hypothesize that if this trend is accurate, we should observe:

**Prediction 2:** 'woke' song themes should be ranked higher than others.

## 8. Data

We scraped the dataset from Wikipedia pages covering the Eurovision Song Contest from the year 2000 to 2024 (N = 605). Each song was meticulously annotated based on its thematic content (see Figure 2.B and 5.B). The dataset also includes information on participants' songs and ranks (see Figure 5.A).



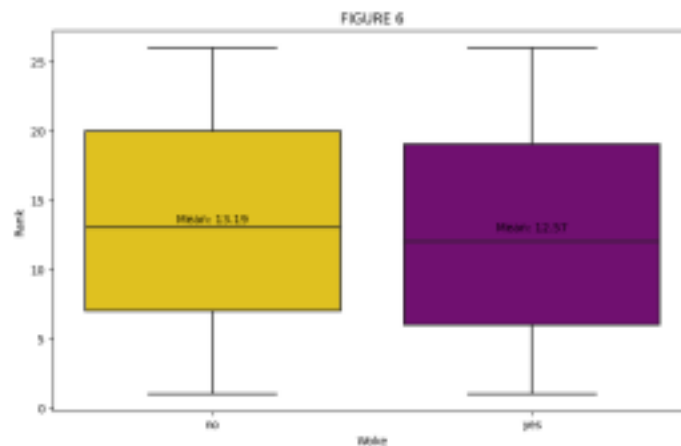
**Figure 5:** Distribution of songs based on (A), on ranking (B), and on the song theme.

## 9.Methods

To test our prediction, we conducted a t-test comparing the ranks of 'woke' songs with those that are not 'woke' in the Eurovision Song Contest (**P2**).

## 10. Results

'Woke' songs appear to have a better rank than 'non-woke' songs (woke songs have an average rank of 12.57 compared to non-woke songs with an average rank of 13.19, see Figure 6). However, the difference is not significant (t-test = -0.83, p-value = 0.40).



*Figure 6: Boxplot showing the distribution of ranks for 'woke' and 'non-woke' songs.*

## 11. Conclusion

In summary, based on our analysis, there is no conclusive evidence that a song addressing progressive themes correlates with achieving a higher ranking at the Eurovision Song Contest. **Therefore, asserting a direct link between a song's thematic content and its performance in terms of ranking may not be warranted.**

It's important to note the correlational nature of our study. While we observed trends in the prevalence of 'woke' themes over recent years, we did not establish causation between these themes and ranking outcomes. **Factors beyond thematic content, such as performance quality, cultural appeal, and geopolitical influences, could significantly impact a song's success in the contest.** Future research could delve deeper into these factors to provide a more nuanced understanding of how themes and other variables interact to influence Eurovision rankings.