

Europe Spirit Songwriting - ESOS 25 Report

Supported by Baden-Württemberg Foundation *Nouveaux horizons*



Songwriting-Seminar : 10.07.- 22.07.2025, 6 seminar units online

Songwriting-Seminar : 28.08.-31.08.2025, live in Centre Culturel St.Thomas Strasbourg

International concert Bretten/Strasbourg/Birmingham/St.Gallen/Acri - 01.11.2025

The Europe Spirit Songwriting Seminar 2025

The Europe Spirit Songwriting Seminar 25 was advertised on the basis of the seminar and concert events from 2012 to 2024. In public calls for applications, musicians and authors were invited to write new songs about living together in Europe. The seminar took place from 10 to 22 July, initially in online sessions. From 28 to 31 August, the musicians then met live at the Centre Culturel St. Thomas in Strasbourg to work together on songs and record them using mobile studio technology. With 30 participants live in Strasbourg and three participants online at the same time, the seminar was fully booked. This time, eleven musicians came from France, ten from Germany, two from Switzerland and one from Italy. This meant that for the first time, there was a small French majority among the participants. The venue in Strasbourg made it easier for students living there to take part in the seminar.

In collaboration with Dr Volkmar Baumgärtner from KulturRegion Karlsruhe, the online sessions in July focused on the theme of "Create The Change".

In his online session, Baumgärtner encouraged participants to consider the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals. As a human ecologist and musician, he was the ideal person to lead this seminar, and the authors responded enthusiastically to his ideas. Many of the songs that were written incorporated the theme of 'change' or even focused on it as their central theme.



In August, the focus at the Centre Culturel St. Thomas in Strasbourg was on coaching and recording, and 27 new songs were written and recorded. The songwriters were guided and supported by five producers from Germany, France, Switzerland and the United Kingdom to ensure high-quality results. Four young, experienced participants were entrusted with the role of junior tutors to recognise their expertise and bring fresh ideas to the seminar.

The atmosphere among the participants developed very well. Thanks to the preparatory online sessions, the participants already knew each other a little when they met in person. A sense of community was immediately established and team spirit developed optimally. The group of songwriters is special because music and lyrics allow you to explore profound topics. This makes it easier to tackle major, socially relevant issues, such as this year's theme of 'change'. It also deepens international cooperation, because these issues are equally important across borders.

Programme and results:

This year's theme, 'Create The Change', was received with great interest by the songwriters. They incorporated the ideas into their songs in different ways, and the young participants from 'Generation Z' in particular showed great commitment to the sustainability goals.

The creative collaboration and mutual support within the group once again flowed naturally. The tutors again had the impression that the quality of the seminar atmosphere and the lyrical and musical results had improved even further this year.

The songs were published on the homepage and taken home by the authors, where they can be presented on various occasions. Twenty-seven new songs were created, which were immediately recorded using mobile studio technology. Pictures and all songs can be found on the following website: www.europespirit.eu/SW25/SW25

Internationally networked concert:

On 1 November 2025, a concert was held that connected five European cities. Two concerts took place simultaneously in Bretten and Strasbourg, which were linked live online. In addition, there were video contributions from Acri/Italy, Birmingham/UK and St. Gallen/Switzerland.

Thanks to the networking, local concertgoers were able to experience both live performances on site and contributions from other countries on a big screen. The concert can be viewed on YouTube for an unlimited period of time.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/live/04yAXjxNIKg>



Evaluation and impact:

The aim of the project is cross-border cooperation between young musicians and cultural exchange. Once again, this worked very well. Songwriting is an ideal medium for this, as songs and lyrics convey much more than language alone could. The group atmosphere has developed in the best possible way because we deliberately exclude competition and rivalry and place great value on successful cooperation.

The songwriters are happy to support each other. The seminar also results in contacts that are maintained. These can also be easily continued with the European songwriter network that has been set up for this purpose.

The cooperative atmosphere among the musicians is inspiring every time. This project brings to life a community that no longer knows any national borders. And the musical results are so authentic that they not only build cultural bridges, but may even contribute to giving Europe a soul.

The seminar evaluation took place at the closing conference at the end of the seminar, where the feedback was exclusively good to very good. In this round, all the song results were listened to together, which always marks the highlight of the seminar.

Outlook for 2026:

Due to the success of the project, all project partners are interested in continuing to support the Europe Spirit Songwriting Project. The Jazz Community Church Birmingham is the UK project partner. However, it is not easy to find participants from the UK who are willing to make the trip to Strasbourg. And intensifying concert promotion is also an ongoing task that is influenced by the social climate.

At present, it is becoming increasingly difficult to obtain public funding for cultural projects. We are therefore looking for committed and interested partners who want to build cultural bridges with our unique project in order to support the all-important understanding between peoples. Music is particularly good at achieving this.

Project partners 2025:

- Stadt Bretten/D, Project sponsor
- Evang. Kirchenbezirk Bretten-Buchsal/D, Project sponsor
- Jazz Community Church, Birmingham/UK
- Temple Neuf, Strasbourg/F
- Centre Culturel St.Thomas, Strasbourg/F
- Université Strasbourg/F
- Evangelical Reformed Church of St. Gallen/CH
- Hello Music Academy Aciri/I
- KulturRegion Karlsruhe/D

Sponsors and supporters 2025:

- Baden-Württemberg Stiftung, *Nouveaux horizons*/D
- Lions Club Bruchsal/D
- Lions Club Bretten-Stromberg/D
- Volksbank-Kraichgau-Stiftung /D
- Citizen Award Bretten 2024, Sparkasse Kraichgau/D

**Thank you very much
for your support!**

Best regards

A. Paul Douglas
& Gunter Hauser

Europe Spirit Songwriting

