

Dear Members of the Scientific and Organizing Committee of the 65th ERSA Congress 2026,

In relation to the Call for Special Session Proposals for the 65th ERSA Congress – “Global Challenges and Regional Responses in a Transition Era”, to be held from 25 to 28 August 2026 in Sofia, Bulgaria, we would like to propose the organization of a special session entitled:

Regional Perspectives and Policy Dynamics in Media Literacy and Local Cultural Policies for Sustainable Development

The session Regional Perspectives and Policy Dynamics in Media Literacy and Local Cultural Policies for Sustainable Development aims to bring together researchers, experts, local and regional policymakers, and practitioners working at the intersection of media literacy, local cultural policies and sustainable development in the context of a rapidly changing media, cultural policies and regional environment. The proposed themes include, among others:

- Media Literacy as a Democratic Competence: Educating Critical Audiences and Responsible Citizens
- Sustainability of Journalism: Economic Impact, Business Models and Public Trust
- The Impact of Algorithms and AI on News Production and Audience Autonomy
- Media and the Fourth Estate: Challenges to Independence and Public Accountability
- The role of regional and local authorities in the formulation and implementation of cultural policy
- Integration of cultural policy with local development: good practices and challenges
- Media and culture: interaction between regional cultural products and local media ecosystems
- Cultural and creative industries in a regional context: incentives, barriers, and economic impact
- Cultural heritage at the regional level: management, digitalization, and use for sustainable development
- Regional cultural strategies and their influence on social cohesion and identity
- Cultural diplomacy at local and regional level – new horizons and practices
- Decentralization, citizen participation, and the capacity of the cultural sector in regions
- The impact of European policies and programs on regional cultural priorities

The proposed session directly reflects the overall focus of the Congress on regional responses to global challenges by emphasizing democratic resilience, the quality of public debate, and the capacity of regions to develop innovative cultural and media policies. It is expected to attract both theoretical and empirical contributions, comparative studies and case-based papers from various European and non-European regions.

Further information regarding the session organizers, potential contributors and administrative details can be provided in line with the official guidelines for special sessions.

Yours sincerely,

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Economy