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OPERATING EUROVISION AND EURORADIO

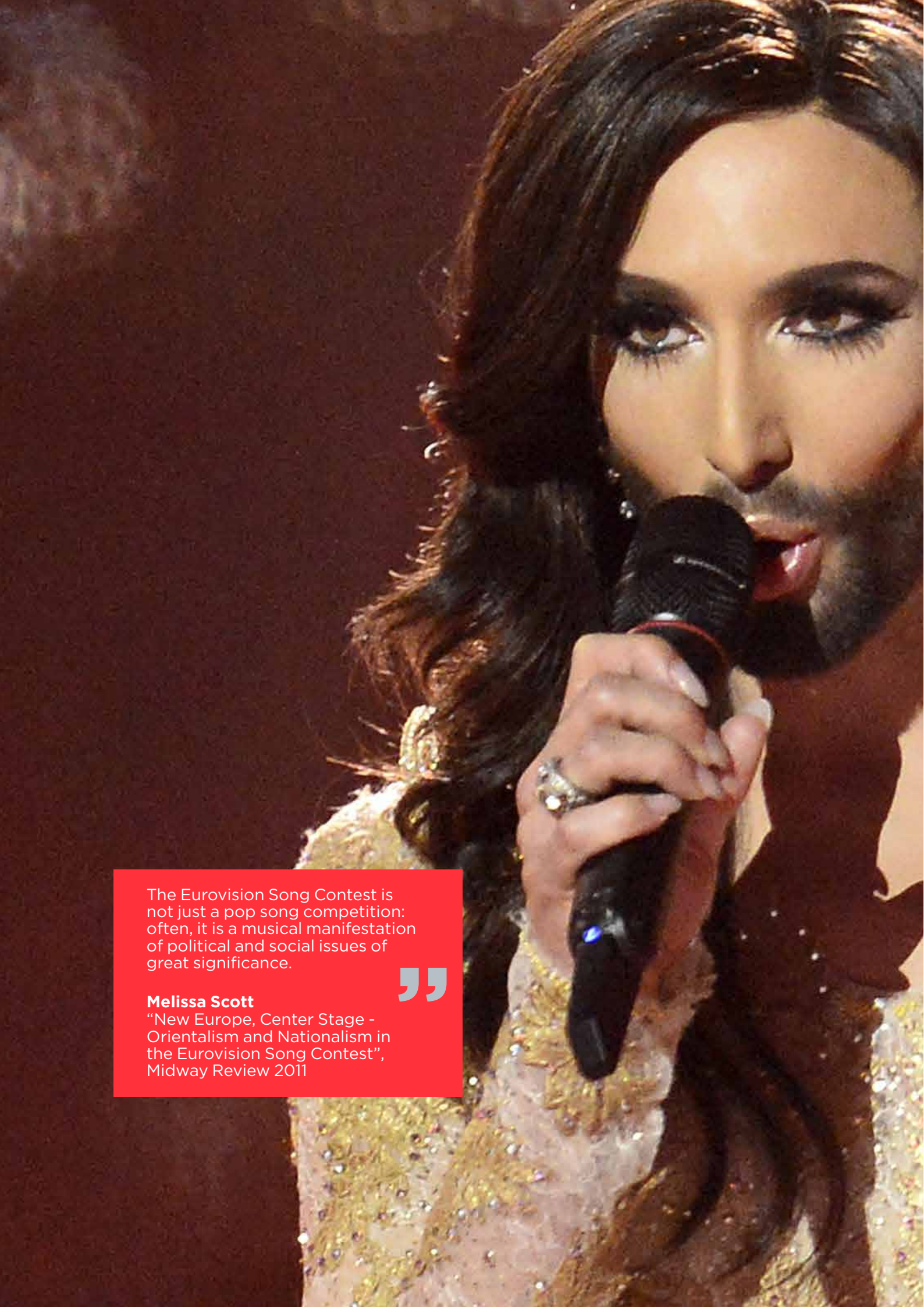
EURO[♥]vision

SONG CONTEST

60TH ANNIVERSARY PRESS PACK



#Eurovision60



The Eurovision Song Contest is not just a pop song competition: often, it is a musical manifestation of political and social issues of great significance.

”

Melissa Scott

“New Europe, Center Stage - Orientalism and Nationalism in the Eurovision Song Contest”, Midway Review 2011

INTRODUCTION

In 1956 the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) created the Eurovision Song Contest to foster closer ties between nations and to advance television technology.

In 2015 the 60th Eurovision Song Contest is being held in Vienna. Over the past six decades the Eurovision Song Contest has created a European identity far beyond the confines of political unions and continental boundaries.

The EBU is marking the event's 60th anniversary by celebrating not just the Contest's musical achievements but also its impact on the European public sphere in areas such as forming national and European identities, embracing diversity and building cultural insight and understanding.

ABOUT THE EBU

The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) was established in 1950 and is now the world's foremost alliance of public service media (PSM) with 73 Members in 56 countries in Europe and beyond. Between them, they operate over 1,700 television channels and radio stations reaching one billion people in around 100 languages.

The EBU's mission is to safeguard the role of PSM and promote its indispensable contribution to society. It is the point of reference for industry expertise and a core for European media knowledge and innovation.

The EBU operates EUROVISION and EURORADIO.

EUROVISION is the media industry's premier distributor and producer of top-quality live news, sport, entertainment, cultural and music content. Through EUROVISION, the EBU provides broadcasters with on-site facilities and services for major world events in news, sport and culture.

The EUROVISION satellite and fibre network is the largest and most reliable in the world.

EUROVISION's staff of experienced media professionals acquire and manage media rights on behalf of EBU Members for major sports and music events. They also provide network, transmission and events services for the broadcasting industry.

EURORADIO enhances and promotes public service radio. The EURORADIO Music Exchange gives Members automatic or pay-as-you-go access to the largest music exchange in the world.

EUROVISION SONG CONTEST: 60TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

In April the EBU organised a unique conference which brought together academics, media professionals and fans at BAFTA 195 Piccadilly in London to explore the social, political and cultural influences of the world's biggest entertainment show. Some of the topics discussed included:

- how the Song Contest has provided a platform for the creation of national and European identities
- how the event has embraced and celebrated diversity by showcasing minority communities
- how it has been used as nation branding tool by countries such as Estonia and Ukraine.

The conference also explored the role the contest has had in advancing development of television production techniques and satellite technology.

The reigning Eurovision Song Contest champion Conchita Wurst discussed her year in the spotlight and Executive Supervisor Jon Ola Sand and former Contest producers explored how the event has been at the forefront of innovation.

The full whole Conference can be watched on demand at Eurovision.tv

EUROVISION MILESTONES

The EBU has produced a series of 10 short films in co-operation with Swiss Member SRG SSR that celebrate significant milestones in the history of the Eurovision Song Contest.

THE MILESTONES ARE:



The first "pop" winner by France Gall in 1965



The four-way tie of 1969



ABBA's win in 1974



Johnny Logan's double win for Ireland in 1980 and 1987



Celine Dion's win for Switzerland in 1988 by just one point



The expansion of the Contest to Eastern Europe in 1993 and 1994 and the birth of Riverdance



The first Semi-Final and Ukraine's win ahead of the Orange Revolution in 2004



Alexander Rybak from Norway winning with the biggest points total to date in 2009



Loreen's win for Sweden at a controversial Contest in Azerbaijan in 2012



Conchita Wurst's win for Austria in 2014

Each 3-minute film uses archive from specific Contests. The films have been made available free of charge to EBU Members in a video and audio format to illustrate their coverage of the 60th anniversary. The videos can also be viewed on the official Eurovision Song Contest YouTube channel.

EUROVISION SONG CONTEST: MORE THAN MUSIC

The Eurovision Song Contest is about much more than just music. By closely tracing the path of post-Second World War institutions, politics and society over the past six decades the event has made a major contribution to the feeling of what it really means to be European.

This was one of the main messages to come out of the EBU's ground-breaking Eurovision Song Contest: 60th Anniversary Conference held in London in April. Experts, academics, journalists and fans gathered at BAFTA 195 Piccadilly to discuss the impact the Song Contest has had on the European public sphere over the last six decades.

Academics who have studied the power of the Song Contest, together with commentators and past performers examined how the contest has been used as a platform of expression for diverse communities, creating national and European identities and as a tool for nation branding.

For keynote speaker Dr Karen Fricker from Brock University in Canada, being European is more about how you feel than what you think. Europe is not a fixed entity on a map defined by its institutions, she said, it is a shifting, abstract concept that is made real each year by the Eurovision Song Contest.

"Watching Eurovision is often when people first realise that their nation is only one of many in Europe and around the World," she said. This helps viewers "feel" more European and plays an important part in forming contemporary European citizenship.

Dr Fricker noted that major societal changes can be reflected at Eurovision level. For example, the arrival of the former Soviet states by the early 2000s turned the spotlight on the phenomenon of so called "bloc voting". And the Eurovision glitz and glamour is being noticeably toned down in these more austere times. These days, she concluded, the focus has shifted back to the music but argued that the Contest has never been just about the songs.

Dr Dean Vuletic from the University of Vienna also delivered a keynote tracing the life of the Eurovision Song Contest through links to the development of the inter-governmental institutions that have shaped Europe and the world since the end of the Second World War. The Song Contest would not have been possible had it not been for the EBU and its cooperation with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), he argued.

And, while the Eurovision Song Contest is a non-political event its impact on the political and world of international relations has been palpable since it began. Following its birth in 1956 as the Cold War began to heat up the Contest has attracted attention over the inclusion of non-liberal democracies like Spain and Portugal in the 1960s and the participation of Israel and Turkey in the 1970s. It also provided an international platform for the warring ex-Yugoslav nations in the early 1990s and included former Communist Eastern European countries a full 10 years before they joined the European Union. Latterly the Contest has also brought attention to the broader issue of human rights in Azerbaijan. Most recently, the success of Austrian winner Conchita Wurst in 2014 prompted Russian calls for an alternative contest to be established.

Dr Vuletic argued that the event not only provides a platform for the promotion of a country's pop music but also an "affirmation of their political belonging, legitimacy, modernity and power."

The Eurovision Song Contest has outlived all of the shifts in international relations in the post-war era. It has been held without fail every year since 1956 and so is a unique lens through which the changes in international cooperation, politics and society can be viewed. It is a Song Contest first and foremost but, as has been demonstrated, this 60 year old cultural landmark is about much more than just the music.

60TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

MICROSITE

A special website dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the ESC can be found online at 60th.eurovision.tv. The website features stories, photo and video material, as well as facts and figures from the past six decades, to give ordinary viewers, press and fans an entertaining overall perspective on the contest's rich legacy.

EUROVISION'S GREATEST HITS

The BBC marked the Eurovision Song Contest's 60th anniversary with a 90-minute TV celebration hosted by Irish TV presenter Graham Norton and Swedish personality Petra Mede. The concert featured former winners and performers and was a co-production with 26 other EBU Members who are broadcasting the concert during the anniversary year.

Participating broadcasters are: RTSH (Albania), ORF (Austria), VRT & RTBF (Belgium), BNT (Bulgaria), DR (Denmark), EER (Estonia), YLE (Finland), France Televisions (France), ARD (Germany), NERIT (Greece), RÚV (Iceland), RTÉ (Ireland), IBA (Israel), LTV (Latvia), NRK (Norway), RTP (Portugal), TVR (Romania), C1R (Russia), SMRTV (San Marino), RTS (Serbia), RTVSLO (Slovenia), SVT (Sweden), SRG SSR (Switzerland), RTVE (Spain).

EBU Associate Member SBS in Australia is also broadcasting the event.

The show consisted of live performances of the greatest Eurovision Song Contest hits by the original artists recorded in front of 5,000 fans at the Eventim Apollo Hammersmith in London on March 31 2015.

The artists who took part were winners Johnny Logan (IRE 1980 & 1987), Lordi (FIN 2006), Emmelie de Forest (DEN 2013), Bobbysocks! (NOR 1985), Herreys (SWE 1984), Conchita Wurst (AUS 2014), Nicole (GER 1982), Anne Marie David (LUX 1973), Brotherhood of Man (UK 1976), Dana International (ISR 1998), the Olsen Brothers (DEN 2000), Dima Bilan (RUS 2008) and Loreen (SWE 2012). Natasha St-Pier (FRA 2001) and Rosa López (SPA 2002) also performed.



Dima Bilan



Dana International and Conchita Wurst



Finale



Herreys



Lordi



Johnny Logan

	IRELAND	91		ISRAEL	93
	FINLAND	58		ITALY	78
	CYPRUS	15		NORWAY	123
	DENMARK	41		UNITED KINGDOM	100
	SPAIN	36		SWITZERLAND	39
	FRANCE	56		SWEDEN	103
	TURKEY	36		AUSTRIA	60
	BELGIUM	7		LUXEMBURG	37
	PORTUGAL	9		GREECE	15
	GERMANY	105			

Q&A ON THE EUROVISION SONG CONTEST

WHAT IS THE EUROVISION SONG CONTEST?

The Eurovision Song Contest is the world's largest non-sporting live TV event. It is a musical competition between public broadcasting organisations which are Members of the EBU. The event has been held annually since 1956. In 2015 it celebrates its 60th anniversary.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Broadcasters that choose to take part each send an original song of no longer than 3 minutes to represent their country.

Two Semi-Finals are held in the week preceding the Grand Final. Votes cast in the countries participating in their respective Semi-Final determine which songs will qualify. The top 10 songs from each Semi-Final go through to the Grand Final.

The result of each Semi Final and the Grand Final is decided by a jury and viewers in each country. In 2015, 40 countries will take part in the 60th Eurovision Song Contest, with 27 countries represented in the Grand Final on 23 May 2015.

Professional juries determine 50% of the outcome. The jury is made up of five music professionals selected by the country's broadcaster. The other 50% is decided by telephone votes cast by viewers of the competition during a 15 minute voting window after all songs have been performed.

The host country, which won the previous year, together with France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom (who make a substantial financial contribution to the EBU) automatically qualify for the Grand Final, bringing the total number of songs to 26.

Exceptionally in 2015, to mark the 60th anniversary of the Contest, there will be 27 songs in the Grand Final to allow Australia to participate.

Once all songs have been performed in the Grand Final, votes are cast in every participating country to decide which song will win the competition.

The 10 songs ranked the most popular in each country are all awarded points in ascending order from 1 to 7 and then 8, 10 and the maximum 12 points. Voters cannot vote for their own country's song. The song, and country, that finishes the competition with the highest number of points wins.

HOW MANY VIEWERS?

In 2014 over 195 million people saw the event in more than 45 countries.

WHERE DID THE IDEA COME FROM?

The idea of bringing Europe together, 10 years after WWII, in a televised, pan-European musical competition came from the EBU's then Director General Marcel Bezençon in 1955.

The new event, originally named the Eurovision Grand Prix, was inspired by the Italian Sanremo Festival and intended as an ambitious experiment to broadcast live to several countries at the same time.

WHEN WAS THE FIRST CONTEST?

The Swiss national public broadcaster (SRG SSR) organized the first Grand Prix, held on 24 May 1956 at the Teatro Kursaal in Lugano.



Seven countries were represented in 1956: the Netherlands, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Belgium and Switzerland. They all submitted two songs each; the only time this has happened.

HOW DID THE CONTEST DEVELOP?

The appeal of the Contest grew, with more and more countries wanting to join in the one-night event. By the 1980s, between 20 and 23 countries were represented each year.

In the 1990s, when Intervision, the Eastern European network of radio and television broadcasters was disbanded, broadcasters from the old Soviet bloc joined the EBU. With around 20 new Members now eager to take part, various selection methods were employed to decide which nations would be eligible each year.

WHEN WERE THE SEMI-FINALS INTRODUCED?

The first Semi-Final was introduced in 2004 so that all interested member countries could take part every year.

In 2008, a second Semi-Final was added. Under the current rules, up to 20 participants can compete in each Semi-Final.

WHO DECIDES THE WINNER?

Between 1956 and 1996, professional juries in each country determined the outcome of the competition. Televoting was introduced in some countries in 1997 and from 1999 to 2008 the results in nearly all participating countries were decided by public vote.

In 2009 the EBU re-introduced juries, who now get a 50% stake in the outcome of the Final. The audience vote makes up the other 50%. Since 2010 juries have also contributed 50% to the outcome of the Semi-Finals.

HOW IS THE HOST CITY SELECTED?

Traditionally, the EBU Member broadcaster in the winning country is invited to host the following year's Contest and choose an appropriate venue.

WHO PAYS FOR THE EVENT?

The cost of staging the Eurovision Song Contest is covered by various sources of funding: participant broadcasters pay a fee to take part, the broadcaster staging the event makes a contribution and there is some commercial sponsorship. Revenues from televoting also contribute to the cost.

HOW MANY COUNTRIES WILL TAKE PART THIS YEAR?

In 2015, 40 countries will take part in the 60th Eurovision Song Contest, with 27 countries, including Australia, represented in the Grand Final on 23 May 2015.

WHERE DO PEOPLE WATCH THE EUROVISION SONG CONTEST?

The competition has been broadcast in all participating countries over the last 60 years, but also in Australia, China, Canada, Egypt, Hong Kong, India, Jordan, South Korea, New Zealand and the USA. It is now also watched by millions online on the official eurovision.tv website.

Thanks to the commitment of its fans, and the numerous websites dedicated to the event, the Eurovision Song Contest has become a truly global phenomenon.



EUROVISION THROUGH THE DECADES



1950s

The Eurovision Song Contest debuted in the Swiss resort of Lugano on Thursday 24 May 1956.

Although Marcel Bezençon is credited with creating the Eurovision Song Contest, much of the format that we recognize today came from the British actor Michael Brennan who, in March 1954, came up with the idea of a song contest that featured regional juries and a scoreboard. This idea eventually became the Festival Of British Popular Songs, which was first screened on 7 May 1956.

Seven countries took part in the first Contest: Netherlands, Switzerland, Belgium, Germany, France, Luxembourg and Italy, with each country presenting two songs. It was the second Swiss song of the evening, Refrain by Lys Assia, that became the first-ever winner of the Eurovision Song Contest. It was chosen by a jury comprising two members from each of the seven countries taking part. However, the voting scores were not made public on the night and have since been lost in the mists of time. Lys Assia continues to this day to be associated with the Contest, making guest appearances in recent Contests, as well as trying to represent Switzerland again in 2012.

In the first few years the Eurovision Song Contest was mostly a radio show as few European families had a television set at that time. The first show lasted 1 hour and 40 minutes, with subsequent Contests in the 1950s running to around just over an hour. Nowadays the Grand Final is around three and half hours long.

The contest in the 1950s was still finding its way in terms of the rules. The 1957 Italian entry, Corda Della Mia Chitarra, performed by Nuzio Gallo, lasted five minutes and nine seconds. This led to the introduction of a three-minute maximum duration for any entry.

A recording of the fifth heat of the Festival Of British Popular Songs was shown to the EBU in the autumn of 1956, and the idea of using juries and a scoreboard was incorporated into the 1957 Contest, and has remained ever since.

Another rule was that only solo artists or duets could take part. A few groups managed to get around this rule by having one (or two) of their singers named, and the remaining members of the group appearing as backing vocalists.

The next few years brought more participants, from the original seven countries to twelve, with United Kingdom, Austria, Denmark, Sweden and Monaco joining the event, which brought more excitement and of course, new winners.

Although some of the songs did not win, they did become worldwide hits: the Italian Nel Blu Dipinto Di Blu from 1958 (better known as Volare) and its 1959 entry Piove (famous as Ciao Ciao Bambina), both sung by Domenico Modugno, went on to become classics.

1960s

The Eurovision Song Contest grew more glamorous and exciting in the 1960s as more countries began to take part and European superstars, including Cliff Richard, Françoise Hardy and Nana Mouskouri, took to the stage in what was now one of the must-see TV nights of the year.

Early Contests had been held on various weekdays, but from 1963, the event was held on a Saturday for the first time, a tradition that has continued ever since.

The host with the record for presenting the most finals is Katie Boyle for the United Kingdom who first undertook the task in 1960 and went on to host the Contest in 1963, 1968 and 1974.

The list of participating countries grew to 18, with Norway, Spain, Finland, Yugoslavia, Portugal and Ireland swelling the ranks. This also resulted in more popular hits, like Congratulations and the Puppet On A String, both representing the United Kingdom. The latter sung by a barefooted Sandie Shaw won with one of the largest margins ever witnessed in the history of the Eurovision Song Contest as the song garnered more than twice as many votes as the runner-up, Ireland. But it wasn't just the juries who were charmed by Sandie Shaw's song. It became a huge success all over Europe and remains one of the Contest's biggest success stories.

The Eurovision Song Contest also witnessed major technical advances during this decade. The 1968 contest was the first to be produced and broadcast in colour by the BBC, despite the fact that very few TV viewers across Europe owned colour TV sets at the time. Even in the United Kingdom just over half a million viewers saw the colour transmission when it was repeated on the only colour channel the following afternoon.

Growing competition between participants led to the record-breaking four winners in 1969 when France, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom all got 18 points. Since there was no solution for this situation, all four countries were declared winners. Luckily, there were enough medals available for the winning singers – the medals had been intended for the winning singer and three winning songwriters.

However, having four winners caused lots of criticism from the media and several TV channels reconsidered participating in the first Eurovision Song Contest of the 1970s.



1970s

The 1970s started with a major drop in participation numbers. Only 12 countries decided to take part in 1970 due to the "voting scandal" from the previous year which resulted in four winners. A new rule was devised; if two or more songs gained the same number of points, each song had to be performed once more and all the other juries had to select their favourite song. If there was still a tie, they would both share first place.

The rule of performing either solo or as a duet was abolished in 1971: groups of up to six persons are now allowed to perform in the Eurovision Song Contest and many groups have won the Contest since then.

More changes were in the air. Between 1971 and 1973 there was a short-lived voting system, involving just two jurors from each participating country, awarding between 1 and 5 votes to each song. This confusing system led to some countries awarding more votes than others and the system was quickly discredited.

Another important rule change for the 1973 Eurovision Song Contest was that the participants were free to choose the language in which they wanted to sing their songs. This rule remained in place until 1976, although exceptions were permitted for the 1977 Contest. The "free language" rule was brought back in 1999 and continues today.

The current voting system was first used in 1975 (when the contest was first held in Sweden). Juries in each country would give 1-12 points to their 10 favourite songs, with the famous 12 (douze) points going to their favourite song, then 10 to their second choice, 8 to their third, 7 to their fourth, and so on, ending with 1 point for their tenth favourite. For the rest of the decade the votes were cast in the order the songs were performed.

The 1970s saw many Eurovision winners become worldwide hits including Ireland's All Kinds Of Everything by Dana, Luxembourg's Après Toi by Vicky Leandros, Ding-A-Dong by Teach-In from The Netherlands, Save Your Kisses For Me by the UK's Brotherhood of Man and the song that was chosen to be the best Eurovision Song Contest entry ever (in 2005) - Waterloo by the world-famous Swedish foursome ABBA who won in 1974.

ABBA had actually already tried to enter the 1973 Eurovision Song Contest with the song Ring Ring, which later became a hit for them in many European countries, but they only reached third place in the Swedish national selection.

Big stars also appearing in Eurovision in this decade included Olivia Newton John for the UK in 1974, Julio Iglesias for Spain, Gianni Morandi for Italy in 1970, and disco acts Silver Convention and Baccara for Germany and Luxembourg respectively in 1977 and 1978.

Malta, Israel, Greece and Turkey also entered the contest for the first time in the 1970s. Israel triumphed in 1978 and 1979. They were the second country that decade to win two successive Contests. Luxembourg won in both 1972 and 1973.

More and more countries all over the world decided to broadcast the Eurovision Song Contest, including Brazil, Chile, Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Dubai and Thailand.



1980s

1980 saw the 25th Song Contest but the event had a last minute organizer: Dutch broadcaster NOS stepped in after Israel's refusal to host the competition twice in a row. In fact, Israel didn't even take part the year after winning with Hallelujah as the selected date clashed with one of its national holidays. The first, and so far the last, time a country has not returned the year after winning.

A special silver anniversary event took place the year after in Norway, where most of the Contest's winners performed at a special concert in Momarkedet in Mysen.

The 1980s brought more up-tempo winners than in the past, like Norway's first victory with La Det Swinge in 1985. Another first time winner was Germany with Ein Bißchen Frieden, composed by the legendary Ralph Siegel and performed by Nicole who finally claimed victory for her country in 1982. Belgium also won the Eurovision Song Contest in this decade with 13 year-old Sandra Kim's J'aime La Vie. However the lyrics of Sandra's song said she was 15. Shortly before breaking up, Yugoslavia finally won in 1989 with Rock Me by the Croatian group Riva.

Writing himself into Eurovision history was Australian-born Irish artist Johnny Logan, who secured Ireland's second victory in 1980 with What's Another Year and again in 1987 with Hold Me Now. From then on he'd be known as 'Mr Eurovision', especially after Linda Martin won the contest with another Johnny Logan song Why Me? in 1992, making Logan the only person to have won the contest three times.

More superstars launched their careers at the Eurovision Song Contest in the 1980s. For Céline Dion, winning the 1988 Eurovision Song Contest was just another step on her way to becoming a household name. Germany and Austria both had entries in 1989 written by the German pop titan Dieter Bohlen, who became famous in Germany as one half of the duo Modern Talking.

As the performances became more visual, so did the presentation. The contest in Gothenberg in 1985 was hosted by former participant Lill Lindfors who shocked the audience when it appeared that her skirt was torn off. This was of course well rehearsed - she had another dress underneath. It remains one of the most remembered highlights in the history of the Eurovision Song Contest.

The list of participants grew again in 1980s. For the first time in its history an African country, Morocco, took part in 1980. Samira, a star in all Arabic-speaking countries, sang Bitakat Hob which ended up in 18th position with just 7 points. Cyprus and Iceland also joined the Eurovision party in the 1980s.



1990s

This decade saw arguably the greatest changes in the competition since its inception, changes that led to the Eurovision Song Contest as we know it now.

Slovenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, Romania, Slovakia, Lithuania, Hungary, Russia, Poland and FYR Macedonia joined the Eurovision family in the 1990s.

The enlargement of the contest led to new challenges. The show still had to be around three hours long, which was hard to achieve when more than 25 countries decided to take part. Several solutions were found.

Seven countries from Eastern Europe took part in a preliminary heat in Ljubljana in 1993. Three of them went on to the final in Milstreet, Ireland. An audio pre-selection in which 22 countries out of 29 were selected to go through to the Final in Oslo was used in 1996.

In 1997 the average results of all countries in the last five song contests were calculated and the 25 countries that had performed the best qualified for the final in Dublin. This method of selection continued until the early 2000s.

It was also decided that France, Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom, as the highest paying European Broadcasting Union subscribers, would automatically be allowed to take part every year, irrespective of their five-year point average.

After the participation of two children in 1989 for France and Israel caused some controversy, it was decided that from 1990 the minimum age requirement would be to turn 16 in the year of participation. The UK's Emma took advantage of this rule change in 1990.

The rule has been modified since then: now performers must be aged at least 16 on the day of the Final, while younger singers are able to participate in the Junior Eurovision Song Contest launched in 2003.

Malta returned to Eurovision in 1991 after an absence of 16 years.

In 1999, the long-standing rule that each country had to sing in one of its own national languages was abolished. Having an orchestra also became optional in 1999 and no orchestra has appeared on stage since.

Televoting was introduced in the United Kingdom, Sweden, Austria, Switzerland and Germany in 1997 and was extended to almost all participating countries the following year.

The 1990s were halcyon days for Ireland, which won the Contest four times in total including three times in a row: 1992, 1993, 1994 and then also in 1996.

The Contest also produced some big hits in this decade, such as Gina G's Ooh Ahh...Just A Little Bit for the UK in 1996 and the 1998 winner Diva by Israel's Dana International.

However, the biggest commercial success of the 1990s wasn't one of the songs but the interval act in Dublin in 1994, Riverdance, which later became a hit worldwide touring show.



2000s

The new millennium saw a continuous rise in the popularity of the Eurovision Song Contest all over Europe, leading to more format changes.

With Latvia and Ukraine joining the Contest in 2000 and 2003 respectively, and with Belarus, Serbia & Montenegro, Albania and Andorra on the waiting list, the system of choosing who would take part each year was already overstretched.

So, for the first time in its history, a televised Semi-Final was introduced for the 2004 Eurovision Song Contest.

The Big-4 (Germany, the UK, France and Spain), the host country, and the ten best-placed countries from the previous contest would directly qualify for the Final, while all lower-ranked countries, as well as new participating broadcasters had to perform in the Semi-Final and be in the top 10 to qualify for the Final. This system was big step forward, as it allowed all countries to participate every year, without taking a one year break after a bad result.

The Semi-Final system also introduced a new element of suspense, not just for TV viewers. At the end of the Semi-Final, the 10 qualifiers are announced. Now artists and fans hold their breath to see if they have made it through to Saturday's Grand Final.

This decade saw the first of the eastern European countries who joined in the 1990s win the competition. Estonia took the title with Tanel Padar, Dave Benton & 2XL's Everybody in 2001. That kicked off a whole series of first-time victories from 2002 through till 2008, with Marie N winning for Latvia, Sertab for Turkey, Ruslana for Ukraine, Helena Paparizou for Greece, Lordi for Finland, Marija Šerifovic for Serbia, and Dima Bilan for Russia.

More and more countries expressed an interest in sending their own entry to the Eurovision Song Contest: Bulgaria and Moldova joined the show in 2005, Armenia followed suit in 2006, then Montenegro, Serbia, Georgia and the Czech Republic in 2007 and Azerbaijan and San Marino in 2008.

The high level of interest led to a situation in 2007 where 27 countries were fighting for only 10 available spots in the Grand Final. A Second Semi-Final was introduced in 2008. Now, only the Big-4 and the host country would automatically qualify for the Final. All other countries had to gain a top 10 place in one of the two Semi-Finals.

Televoting was the sole decisive force in the contest for 10 years, but in 2008 the national jury system was reintroduced alongside viewer votes to decide the winner. That year only the top 9 countries in the televote of the two Semi-Finals qualified for the Final. The tenth qualifier in each show was the highest-ranked entry in the jury vote that had not yet been part of the televoting qualifiers.

The juries began to have a say in the Final in 2009, when in each country, a 50/50 combination of televoting scores and jury scores was used to calculate the traditional Eurovision ranking, culminating in "douze" points. From 2010, the same way of combining televotes and jury scores was also introduced in the Semi-Finals.



2010s

In 2011, Italy returned to the Eurovision Song Contest after a 13-year absence and joined, what is now, the Big-5 countries who automatically qualify for the Grand Final. The Contest also journeyed to its most eastern host city when Azerbaijan won, taking the Contest to Baku in 2012.

Competing songs also started to enjoy chart success across the world again with both Germany's winner Satellite by Lena in 2010 and Loreen's 2012 winner for Sweden, Euphoria, becoming big hits around Europe.

In 2014, runners-up the Netherlands also proved to have cross-over appeal with their entry Calm After The Storm by The Common Linnets climbing the charts in many countries.

Finally, Austria saw its first win since 1966 when bearded drag queen Conchita Wurst swept all before her to take the title in Copenhagen in 2014 with Rise Like A Phoenix.

The EBU is immensely proud of the Eurovision Song Contest and the impact it has had in the last 60 years. This is truly an event that builds bridges between nations, unites the people of Europe and encapsulates the values of public service media. The Eurovision Song Contest showcases the diversity, innovation and excellence that are the hallmarks of what the EBU stands for. In this anniversary year it is with pride that we look back at how the Contest has influenced the public sphere in Europe and look forward to the event remaining a huge part of its cultural landscape for many more years to come.

Ingrid Delténre
Director General, European
Broadcasting Union



ARCHIVE

The EBU regularly receives requests for archive material of the Eurovision Song Contest, to be used in news reports, documentaries and print media. Generally, the EBU's archives are not open to the public and access to material is only given under extraordinary circumstances.

For archive material of a specific Eurovision Song Contest you can contact the EBU at archive@eurovision.tv

In early 2012, the EBU officially kicked off the Eurovision Song Contest archive project. The EBU has now digitized and improved the quality of all Eurovision Song Contests, and made the content available to its Members and media professionals.

For more information about the archive project, please contact Jeroen Depraetere at archive@eurovision.tv.



It is an incredible privilege to celebrate the anniversary of the world's greatest entertainment event that has united people across Europe and beyond for six decades. Throughout this time it has been a platform for diversity and national pride but, more than that, having grown from seven participating countries in 1956 to 40 this year; it has become a true European institution that has led the way in TV entertainment.

Jon Ola Sand
Executive Supervisor,
Eurovision Song Contest



ESC IN NUMBERS



62
winners since 1956



51
countries have
competed at least
once - some no
longer exist!



195
million viewers saw
the 2014 Contest



40
cities have played
host in



26
countries have won
at least once



21
entries from Germany's
Ralph Siegel make
him Eurovision's most
prolific songwriter.



43
countries took part
in Dusseldorf in 2011
- the largest number
to date



25
different countries



19
countries have
scored "nulpoints"
at least once



7
Irish wins in total
make them the most
successful Eurovision
nation



3
wins for Ireland's Johnny
Logan as singer in
1980 and 1987 and as
composer in 1992 make
him the most successful
participant



100s
of versions of Nel Blu
Di Pinto Di Blu (Volare),
have been recorded
selling



29
winning songs have
been performed
entirely in English



4
countries won in 1969
because no tiebreak
rule existed at the
time. They were The
Netherlands, The UK,
France and Spain



8
times - the UK
has hosted the
Contest on the most
occasions



22
million units in total.
The song came 3rd
for Italy in 1958



1
point decided the 1968
and 1988 Contests.
Spain and Switzerland
both triumphed over
the UK. Celine Dion
was the Swiss winner
in 1988

NOTES

60TH

EURO♡VISION

SONG CONTEST

60TH

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SONG CONTEST

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