

EUROVISION: A BRIEF HISTORY

In the mid-1950's, Europe was still recovering from the Second World War, economically, politically, and culturally. In hopes of creating programming to help Europe heal, the European Broadcasting Union set to work. It was Marcel Bezaçon who came up with the idea of taking Italy's San Remo Festival, a song contest that had started soon after the war that was already seeing much success throughout the country, and generalizing it to all of Europe. Since the programming branch of the EBU was already called Eurovision, why not simply name it the Eurovision Song Contest? In this new, pan-Europe Contest, EBU broadcasters from each country would submit songs to compete against each other.

1956 The very first Eurovision Song Contest was held in Lugano, Switzerland, the home of the European Broadcasting Union. At this Contest, seven countries, West Germany, Belgium, The Netherlands, France, Italy, Luxembourg, and Switzerland, each entered two songs in hopes of winning the title of best song in Europe. After all fourteen songs had been performed, a panel of 12 jurors (two from each country minus Luxembourg who gave the Swiss jurors permission to vote on their behalf) voted for the two songs they each thought was best. In the end, Switzerland's song *Refrain*, performed by Lys Assia, was announced as the winner. "Europe's favorite television show" (which was primarily on radio at the time) was born! Though, this would be the last year when broadcasters could submit multiple songs.

1958 The Eurovision Song Contest proved to be successful in its first two years, but with the addition of the United Kingdom, Denmark, Austria, and Sweden over the last two years, new rules were put into place. The original idea, to have the hosting rights rotate between broadcasters, was now viewed as impractical and too difficult to manage as the competition expanded. Instead, now the defending champion will be the default host for the following year. Additionally, the tradition of calling each country so that they could give their votes began in this year.

1969 This is a year that will forever live in infamy in the hearts of many ESC fans. The Contest was in Madrid after a controversial win for the Spaniards. But the preceding year's controversy was overshadowed by the results of 1969. After voting had finished, not one, not two, not three, but four countries were tied for first place, and without any formal tie-breaking procedure, all four were declared joint winners – the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Spain, and France. This caused a stir through the Contest and new tie-break rules were immediately put into place for the subsequent Contests. (This tie-break procedure is no longer relevant given the changes to the voting system in 1975). Since 1969, there has only been one other tie in the history of ESC, 1991 both Sweden and France scored 146 points. Under the tie-breaker rules at the time, Sweden was declared the winner.

1974 This year brought the (first) end to the language rule that had been in effect since 1965, allowing all participants to compete in any language of their choosing (which would stay in effect until 1977) and most chose English. Sweden immediately took advantage of this rule change, translating its national selection's winning song into English to increase its mass-appeal...and it worked! To date, the 1974 Contest's winning song is ESC's most successful international hit, the most recognized ESC song around the world, and the only artists whose international career success is fully attributed to winning the ESC. In 1974, a little known Swedish group called ABBA won with their song *Waterloo*.

1975 This year marks the first time the current voting system was used. From 1975 to today, every country awards ten others points ranging from 1-8, 10, and 12. This not only has drastically changed the point totals, but it also brought significance to the words that every competitor wants to hear: "douze points."

1990 In 1986, Belgium won the Contest with fourteen-year-old Sandra Kim, though they had told the EBU that she was 15. After her victory, participants' ages began to trend downward, with France sending an 11-year-old and Israel sending a 12-year-old in 1989. In response to fan outrage over child competitors, the EBU created a new age rule citing that all performers had to be at least 16 [on the day they compete in the ESC] (this last part was added a few years later to prevent the EBU from having to go back and retroactively disqualify offending nations).

1997 With the splitting of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s and several central European countries beginning to look westward, the 90s posed a challenge for the EBU, more countries than ever wanted to compete in the ESC. After qualifying rounds failed to win over the participating broadcasters (1993 saw a qualifying event for Central European and former-Yugoslav countries seeking entry into the ESC and 1996 saw an untelevised round of jury voting resulting in Germany being left out of the Final for the first and only time), a new system was implemented: relegation. The Top Ten countries from the preceding year automatically qualified to compete, while the last fifteen spots were decided upon using the results of the previous three years. This limited the participating countries to 25.

1998 Other than the extremely close result and Israel achieving its third victory with the first out trans performer, this Contest is significant for three reasons. One, it marked the last year the Language Rule was in effect. This has resulted in only two (Serbia 2007 and Portugal 2017) and a half (Ukraine 2016) non-English winners since and has yielded three entries in constructed languages – Belgium's 2003 entry achieved second place. Two, it was the last year the orchestra was in use (the following year it became an optional element for the host broadcaster who didn't offer it to cut down on expenses). Now all entries must use a pre-approved backing track. Third, this was the first year that most countries used televoting to determine their votes. By 2000, countries were required to use televoting (though, the juries had to be in place in case of technical error).

2000 When Germany missed the 1996 Contest, ESC lost Europe's biggest television audience. Additionally, the German broadcasters were bitter that they had to give more money in dues than most other countries and were not able to take advantage of their investment. With Germany and the United Kingdom (who thought that the Contest's continued success rested on maintaining Germany's involvement) both threatening to withdraw from the ESC, the EBU created the Big Four rule. The four countries that pay the most in dues and also have the largest television audiences of Europe, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, and Spain, would always qualify for the Final, regardless of their finishing position in previous years. The Big Four expanded to the Big Five in 2011 when Italy rejoined the Contest.

2004 The 2004 Contest took place in Istanbul after Turkey's narrow victory over Belgium the year before. 2004 also marked a new era for the Contest. After fan and broadcaster discontent with the relegation system and the addition of even more competitors as former USSR countries began to join the Contest, the EBU developed a new system for qualifying for the Final: a televised Semi-Final round. The only countries that would automatically qualify for the Final would be the previous year's Top Ten and the Big Four. Ten qualifiers from the Semi-Final would then join these fourteen countries; all participating countries had to air and vote in both the Semi-Final and the Grand Final.

2008 The Contest in Belgrade marked yet another new direction for the Contest. Due to the ever-increasing number of participants, broadcasters and fans began to complain that the Semi-Final was too long (in 2007, twenty-seven songs competed in the semi-final). Additionally, fans and broadcasters complained that, due to the fact that Eastern Europe had many more countries and historical ties to each other (the former Yugoslav nations and the former USSR) the Semi-Final was effectively shutting Western European and Nordic countries out of the Final as the Eastern Europe countries all voted for each other. The 2008 Contest marked the introduction of two Semi-Finals. Countries were randomly divided in half and could only vote in their own Semi-Final and the Grand Final. The Big Four and the host country became the only automatic qualifiers to the Final and were randomly split to see who voted in which semi-final.

2009 After claims that Russia's victory the preceding year was obtained due to "clear neighbor and Diaspora voting," the EBU extended the juries' reach beyond the semi-finals and into the Grand Final. This was done by crafting a 50/50 system in which the top ten from the jury and the top ten from the public vote would be combined to determine for each country's points. In 2010, this 50/50 system would be extended to the semi-finals in order to stymie anger from countries that were kept from the Final due to the wildcard (particularly Macedonia who was prevented from advancing in both 2008 and 2009). The record for points won in a single Contest was also set in this year. Norway accumulated 387 points shattering Finland's 2006 record of 292. Norway also went on to set records for largest margin of victory in points and percentage, most "douze points" awarded (in number and percentage), and the most top three points collected (in number and percentage).

2013 When the Contest returned to Sweden, the host broadcaster, SVT, wanted to make the ESC more like its uber-successful national selection, *Melodifestivalen*. Producers introduced a new element to the Contest year: human-decided running order. Since 1956, the running order was decided by random draw. Starting this year, the producers build the running order to maximize the show's entertainment value. Each entry is randomly drawn into either the first or second half of the show and then the producers determine the exact running order (which the EBU then approves). The host country has its exact position drawn at random for the Grand Final.

2016 The late 2000s brought many voting changes, including the reintroduction of juries to the Contest (2008), the inception of the 50/50 voting (2009), and ranked voting procedure (2013). 2016 brought yet another element of *Melodifestivalen* to the Eurovision Song Contest, split jury and televote. The final scores are still 50/50 jury and televoting, and they are still determined by ranking all the countries within each group. The difference is, the votes will not be combined within countries, but instead Europe-wide. This effectively doubles the points available for countries to earn. The voting sequence, which is determined based on the jury votes, will reveal ONLY the jury votes. After which, the televoting results will be revealed en masse.

2020 After breaking its drought in Tel Aviv, the Netherlands was set to host the ESC for the first time since 1980 - bringing the Contest to Rotterdam for the first time. However, due to the novel coronavirus COVID-19 pandemic, the ESC was canceled for the first time in its 65-year history. Fan sites and media outlets created a deluge of replacement content to honor the 41 songs selected to compete, including the EBU's *Eurovision Home Concerts* and *Europe Shine a Light*. At the time of cancellation, Bulgaria, Lithuania, Iceland, and Switzerland were atop the betting odds.

Country Debuts by Year:

Year	Country making its debut entry
1956	Belgium, France, (West) Germany, Italy, Luxembourg^, Netherlands, Switzerland
1957	Austria, Denmark, United Kingdom
1958	Sweden
1959	Monaco^
1960	Norway
1961	Finland, Spain, Yugoslavia*
1964	Portugal
1965	Ireland
1971	Malta
1973	Israel
1974	Greece
1975	Turkey^
1980	Morocco^

Year	Country making its debut entry
1981	Cyprus
1986	Iceland
1993	Bosnia & Herzegovina^, Croatia, Slovenia
1994	Estonia, Hungary^, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia^
1998	(North) Macedonia
2000	Latvia
2003	Ukraine
2004	Albania, Andorra^, Belarus, Serbia & Montenegro*
2005	Bulgaria, Moldova
2006	Armenia^
2007	Czech Republic, Georgia, Montenegro^, Serbia
2008	Azerbaijan, San Marino
2015	Australia

*defunct country ^not currently participating

EUROVISION RULES

Participation:

The participants of the Eurovision Song Contest are not people, they're not even countries, they're broadcasters. In order to participate, a broadcaster must be an "active" (i.e., due paying) member of the European Broadcasting Union. This is a confederation of broadcasters that lie within the European Broadcasting Area. The European Broadcasting Area as defined by the International Telecommunication Union:

"The "European Broadcasting Area" is bounded on the west by the western boundary of Region 1, on the east by the meridian 40° East of Greenwich and on the south by the parallel 30° North so as to include the western part of the USSR, the northern part of Saudi Arabia and that part of those countries bordering the Mediterranean within these limits. In addition, Iraq, Jordan and that part of the territory of Turkey lying outside the above limits are included in the European Broadcasting Area."

Thus allowing Israel and Morocco to compete without actually being in Europe. Australian broadcaster, SBS, is the lone exception, as it has broadcasted the Contest since the early seventies. It joined as a competitor, first just as a special guest in 2015, but has continued participating due to its popularity. Beyond the geographical limitations on participation, broadcasters must provide free, nation-wide service.

Liechtensteiner broadcaster 1FLTV tried to get around this rule in 1964, creating a song to enter into the Contest. The EBU quickly rejected this entry, as the 1FLTV1 was (and still is) not in the EBU.

Broadcasters have until the December immediately preceding the Contest to file the appropriate paperwork for participation and pay the entry fee. There can only be one entry per country. However, broadcasters can work together within a country to supply a joint entry. Countries then have until mid-March, when the heads of the various delegations meet in the host city, to submit their official entry (lyrics, backing track, and performing artist). Additionally, all participants must broadcast their semi-final (or the semi-final they are obliged to vote in if they are automatic qualifiers) and the Grand Final in full as well as support televoting/SMS-voting.

Lebanese broadcaster Télé Liban was set to debut in 2005 and was a favorite to win. However, Lebanon was forced to withdraw in late December due to the fact that they would have had to show the Israeli entry (something they normally would omit), which would break Lebanese law.

Entries:

Each broadcaster has free reign in choosing their entry and its performer(s). There is no restriction on the songwriters, composers, or performers set at the EBU-level (though, many broadcasters set restrictions). Additionally, since 1999, there has been no restriction on the language of entries set by the EBU (again, broadcasters can set their own restrictions, and many do). The EBU does require that all countries make their selection process transparent, whether it is done through a public vote or an internal selection by the broadcaster.

Belgium has twice taken full advantage of the open language rule, entering songs in a fictional language, in 2003 and 2008. 2003's Sanomi by Urban Trad came in second by two points.

The EBU has some restrictions, however. Starting in 1965, the EBU has restricted all entries to a maximum run time of three minutes. The EBU also has certain restrictions on the lyrics of songs: nothing that is political (though songs promoting general peace or environmental action have been deemed okay), nothing that is vulgar, nothing that is explicitly sexual, and nothing that "will bring the EBU into controversy." Additionally, entries are not allowed to have been publically available (this means the song cannot have been performed, released – on an album or as a single, or leaked) before September 1st of the year immediately preceding the Contest. In 2013, this rule was amended to allow songs with limited release to participate after a review by the EBU.

In 2009, after initially withdrawing from the Contest due to the South Ossetia conflict with host nation Russia, Georgia announced that they would participate in ESC2009 after all, choosing I Don't Wanna Put In as its entry. When the EBU deemed that the lyrics were too political ("put it" was pronounced "poot-in" like the Russian leader), Georgia withdrew the entry as opposed to rewrite the lyrics.

Performances:

There are several restrictions regarding the performance of an entry.

- There can be no more than six unique persons on the stage for a given act. Meaning that even if all six performers run off the stage, new folks cannot replace them.
- All performers must be human (i.e., no animals) and at least sixteen years of age on the day of the televised show. So, a performer in the Second Semi-Final, can celebrate their Sweet 16 on Thursday night.
- All music must be provided using a pre-approved backing track. This includes whistling effects.
- Performers (lead singers, backing singers, instrumentalists, and backing dancers) cannot compete for more than one country in a given year (though, this restriction does not apply to lyricists or composers).
- All human voices must be provided live. Precedent has been set that even synthesized vocals are banned. Though, 2021 will be a trial year for allowing some generic backing vocals to be pre-recorded in order to “preserve the original intent of the composer.”

In 1999, Croatia was retroactively penalized a third of its points when it was revealed that its backing track contained a synthesized choir. The EBU ruled that this broke “the spirit” of the live vocals rule.

EUROVISION SONG CONTEST – DEFINITIONS

EBU – European Broadcasting Union; the EBU is a confederation of national broadcaster throughout Europe, Northern Africa, and the western portion of the Middle East. The programming branch of the EBU is called Eurovision. Eurovision, amongst other things, holds several pan-European music competitions, the Eurovision Song Contest (a song competition), the Junior Eurovision Song Contest (a song competition for people aged 10-15), Eurovision Young Musicians Contest (prodigies ages 10-15 compete against one another, held biennially), and the Eurovision Young Dancers Contest (solo dance competition for those between 15-20, held biennially).

Eurovision Theme – the tune that plays ahead of all EBU programming; it is a snippet from the prelude of Charpentier’s arrangement of *Te Deum*.

Opening Act – The first thing we see when the show starts after the *Eurovision Theme* plays. Traditionally, for the Grand Final, it is a reprise of the previous year’s winning song by the winning artist. Sometimes the artist also performs a second song.

The “Big Five” – The five countries that automatically qualify for the Grand Final without having to compete in a semi-final. They are the five countries that contribute the largest amounts of money to the EBU and have some of the largest television audiences of Europe. They are France, the United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, and Italy. Prior to Italy’s return in 2011, they were known as the “Big Four.”

Postcards – These occur during the approximately 32 seconds between the performances of each entry. Instead of showing the stagehands furiously breaking down and setting up the stage, the host broadcaster shows short vignettes. Traditionally, these vignettes showcase the host country, though recent trends have favored highlighting the upcoming country and/or performers in some capacity.

Interval Act – While the votes are being cast, counted, and certified, the audience needs to be entertained. The interval acts serve this purpose and has been a part of the Contest from the very beginning.

Voting Sequence – Each participating country has the right to vote in the Grand Final, whether they are still alive in the competition or not. Each country has a spokesperson who reveals its jury’s points.

Twelve Points/Douze Points – the highest amount of votes that can be given to a country from another. It is often used as slang for things that are really good. Inexplicably, the French is used more often amongst fans.

Nul Points – for some reason, this is always pronounced in French – [nul-le pwahn]. This occurs when, at the end of voting, a country has received no points from any other country. If Country A finished last with Nul Points, it has a score of zero.

Winner’s Reprise – The winning song gets performed again at the end of the broadcast.

The Eurovision Song Contest 2021 – Rotterdam

Notes About ESC 2021:

The overseer of the Eurovision Song Contest is called the “Executive Supervisor of the Eurovision Song Contest on behalf of the EBU.” S/he is directly responsible for overseeing the ESC. This person also used to oversee the other Eurovision competitions, but these duties have since been delegated out. The Executive Supervisor tends to spearhead new directions and rules for the Contests. ESC2021 is the first Contest under Mr. Martin Österdahl.

2021 will be the 65th ESC, returning the Contest to the Netherlands for the first time since 1980 when the country hosted on behalf of Israel. The Contest is in Rotterdam for the first time, in the Rotterdam Ahoy Arena; the Netherlands has hosted the Contest in Amsterdam, The Hague, and Hilversum. Rotterdam Ahoy Arena did host the 2007 Junior ESC. 2021 brings the return of Bulgaria, after it took 2019 off to save money, and Ukraine, which withdrew in 2019 after its selection process resulted in controversy. Four countries have withdrawn, Hungary for political reasons, Montenegro for financial ones, Armenia after military conflict with Azerbaijan, and Belarus because its chosen song was too political – violating the rules.

Open Up ... Again!

After last year’s historic cancellation. The EBU and host broadcaster AVOTROS wanted to ensure that the Contest could happen no matter what. As such, certain rule changes were put into place. Two of these contingencies are in place – for the first time, countries are allowed to choose to send a pre-recorded video of their entry instead of competing live (which Australia is using) and the use of prerecorded backing vocals is allowed. The Dutch government is allowing an audience of 3500 spectators. Other interesting notes, Portugal is submitting a song 100% in English for the first time. Denmark is submitting a song in Danish for the first time since 1997.

Performers this year range from 18 to 61, from all around the world, representing 39 different countries on stage. From the artists, to the fans, to the producers - every person associated with Eurovision can learn and grow from one another: ESC is for everyone – so Open Up!

Semi-Final One	
01 Lithuania	09 Norway
02 Slovenia	10 Croatia
03 Russia	11 Belgium
04 Sweden	12 Israel
05 Australia	13 Romania
06 North Macedonia	14 Azerbaijan
07 Ireland	15 Ukraine
08 Cyprus	16 Malta

Semi-Final Two	
01 San Marino	10 Georgia
02 Estonia	11 Albania
03 Czech Republic	12 Portugal
04 Greece	13 Bulgaria
05 Austria	14 Finland
06 Poland	15 Latvia
07 Moldova	16 Switzerland
08 Iceland	17 Denmark
09 Serbia	

Grand Final	
01 Cyprus	14 Moldova
02 Albania	15 Germany
03 Israel	16 Finland
04 Belgium	17 Bulgaria
05 Russia	18 Lithuania
06 Malta	19 Ukraine
07 Portugal	20 France
08 Serbia	21 Azerbaijan
09 United Kingdom	22 Norway
10 Greece	23 The Netherlands
11 Switzerland	24 Italy
12 Iceland	25 Sweden
13 Spain	26 San Marino

Eurovision Entries: A description of each song, in about one sentence.

Cyprus <i>El Diablo</i>	You're the worst possible choice for me, but dang it, I can't resist you.	Azerbaijan <i>Mata Hari</i>	I am like a sexy spy: mysterious and dangerous. You don't stand a chance!
Albania <i>Karma</i>	I deserve this heartache because I was terrible to my former partner.	Norway <i>Fallen Angel</i>	I know I should see myself as good, but I can't. I need to leave the darkness.
Israel <i>Set Me Free</i>	I am no longer okay being here. Let me go or I'll make my own way!	Netherlands <i>Birth of a New Age</i>	We are throwing off the chains of oppression and colonialism.
Belgium <i>The Wrong Place</i>	We spent the night together; now you regret it. I don't care, you're a jerk anyway.	Italy <i>ZITTI E BUONI</i>	Society tries to tell us what to do and who to be – screw that!!
Russia <i>RUSSIAN WOMAN</i>	Every woman is strong and fearless! You can stand alone, be brave!	Sweden <i>Voices</i>	The world is crying out for you to make a difference. You can do it!
Malta <i>Je Me Casse</i>	Your tired pick-up lines and money do not impress me. Boy, bye!	San Marino <i>Adrenalina</i>	We're like fire and gasoline; you get my heart pumping!
Portugal <i>Love is on My Side</i>	Despite everything going awry, I think fortune shines on me. I still have hope.	Australia <i>Technicolour</i>	We can harness the powers of the full spectrum of being to stand & persist.
Serbia <i>LOCO LOCO</i>	Meet me on the dance floor and let's go crazy! Who knows where it will lead.	Austria <i>Amen</i>	Death has come and ravaged those I love - why?!
United Kingdom <i>Embers</i>	You may think everything is ashes, but there's some heat left. Let's burn bright!	Croatia <i>Tick-Tock</i>	You can't take me for granted any more. In time, you will want me back.
Greece <i>Last Dance</i>	This is our final chance...at romance...tonight...	Czech Republic <i>omaga</i>	YOU ARE JUST SO BEAUTIFUL - GOODNESS ME!!
Switzerland <i>Tout l'Univers</i>	All of creation seems to be crashing down – but our hearts will always be connected.	Denmark <i>Øve Oss På Hinanden</i>	We're both new to this love thing, but we can practice on each other.
Iceland <i>10 Years</i>	Wow, we've been together for a decade; things are only getting better and better!	Estonia <i>The Lucky One</i>	I thought it was a mistake to let you go, I definitely feel the opposite now!
Spain <i>Voy a Quedarme</i>	Through thick and thin I will always be here for you.	Georgia <i>You</i>	I want to experience all you - your seas, your mountains, your entire being.
Moldova <i>Sugar</i>	Hey lover - there's nothing sweeter than being together; so come over - NOW!	Ireland <i>Maps</i>	I spent my life listening to others. Now I am listening to my own soul.
Germany <i>I Don't Feel Hate</i>	Feel free to hate me, I don't care – and that makes me better than you.	Latvia <i>The Moon is Rising</i>	You think our cycles make us weak? Ha! We're stronger because of them.
Finland <i>Dark Side</i>	Screw the world - we're young and reckless - middle fingers for everyone!	North Macedonia <i>Here I Stand</i>	Times have been difficult, but I am still standing here to face it all.
Bulgaria <i>growing up is getting old</i>	My demons have always tried to crush me, it's tiring to resist, but it's all we got.	Poland <i>The Ride</i>	Life is a wild ride – c'mon and join me in it!
Lithuania <i>Discoteque</i>	I'm feeling nervous, but it's alright. I can find happiness on my own.	Romania <i>Amnesia</i>	I have lost myself – I've forgotten how to love myself. I need to remember!
Ukraine <i>SHUM</i>	We sow seeds and celebrate the sun – spring has come and we sing our song!	Slovenia <i>Amen</i>	You don't need to be afraid or hide. You are loved, come into the Light.
France <i>Voilà</i>	Fate is indiscriminate and fickle in handing out fortune and failure.		

EUROVISION VOTING

Under the current system, all participating countries award up to twenty other countries points ranging from 1-8, 10, and 12. Countries are not allowed to award points to themselves.

Points are determined by both, results of a public vote sent via phone calls, SMS/text messages, and through the Eurovision app (“televoting”) and votes cast by a professional jury. There are specific rules that govern the make-up of juries. All jurors must be citizens or nationals of that country and must be comprised of five “music professionals” of various levels, ages, and demographics. Music professionals include radio company executives, music producers, professional musicians (including DJs, composers, and lyricists), dancers & choreographers, professors & researchers, graduate students studying music, and former Eurovision and Junior Eurovision performers. All jurors must be free from any connection, professional or personal, to all the competitors (for example, a juror may be disqualified if he works for a local branch of a large record company that may have signed a competitor from a different country). **The juries cast their votes during the second dress rehearsal, held the night preceding the broadcast. The televoting occurs during the live telecasts.**

In 2009, the head of the Russian jury, a big radio company executive, resigned after the semi-final when it was determined that his new friendship with the performing artist from Norway posed a conflict of interests.

In 2013, a new ranking system was introduced as a way of combining the jury votes and televotes. Both, the jury and the viewing public, rank all the songs competing on the night. For televoting, the top ten songs get that country’s public vote. For the juries, the rankings of the five jurors are combined. These comprise the two sets of points each country awards. In a year with 41 participants, there would be a total of 4,756 total points available (as compared to only 2,378 under the previous system).

The points being announced by each country during the voting sequence is just that of the juries. This is done for several reasons. It means that the interval act can be shorter because the jury votes can be read while the televotes are calculated, cutting down the length of the show in hopes of returning it to the appropriated three-hour running time. Secondly, since 2011, an algorithm (or formula) for determining the order of how countries gave their votes has been in place based on the results of the juries. This algorithm is designed to give the voting sequence to build suspense and excitement. This is still in place.

The televotes from all the countries will then be combined and revealed en masse after the jury votes are given. **Starting in 2019, these televote totals are revealed in ascending order according to the final ranking of the juries.**

In certain instances, a country may not have valid votes from either, their jury or their televoting public. In this situation, a substitute score will be calculated on the country’s behalf. It is unclear precisely how this substitute score is composited, but it appears to be connected to the equivalent votes of the other countries in their semi-final allocation pot. Jury votes can be deemed invalid if they are thought to be statistically too similar. Televotes can be deemed invalid if they appear to be suspicious (like, if it appears evident that a machine or a coordinated voting effort was employed), technical difficulties, or if a country does not receive a certain threshold of votes to validate their results.

Tie-break procedures: These rules were original established for the 1992 Contest and amended with each new voting system.

Grand Final

After all the participating countries have given their points, if two or more countries have the same total, then the tie-break rules are put into effect.

If the tie is any position other than first, the country with the higher televote point total is ranked higher. If the tied countries received the same points for the televote OR the tie is for first place, then the following steps are taken.

First tie-breaker: *Total number of countries voting for the contenders.* For example, let's say two countries both have 200 points, but Country A received points from 25 different countries and Country B received points from only 16 countries, then Country A will be deemed the winner.

Second tie-breaker: If the contenders are still tied after the first step, *the winner will be the country that has received more 12-pointers*, regardless of whether they were from the jury or the televote. For example, if Countries A and B both have 200 points and each has received points from the same number of countries, but Country A received ten 12-pointers and Country B received only eight 12-pointers, then Country A is the winner.

Third tie-breaker: If the contenders are still tied after the second step, the winner will be the country that has received more 10-pointers.

These steps continue in descending order until Step 11: If the contenders are still tied after the tenth step, the winner will be the country that has received more 1-pointers.

If the countries are still tied after all of this, then the Contest will be declared a tie.

Semi-Finals

The semi-finals have the exact same tie-break procedure as the Grand Final except for one small difference. If there are two or more countries tied for the tenth position (which is the entry that gets the final qualification spot for the Grand Final), then it becomes the same situation as for the winner on Saturday night. If, after all eleven steps, the tie persists, then the country that performed earlier in the running order is awarded the final qualification spot.

Ties Among Televoting within a Country

If, after the televoting is complete within a country, there is a tie, the song that received the better ranking from the jury shall be ranked higher.

Ties Among Jury Rankings within a Country

If after a country's jury members combine their independent rankings there is a tie, then a vote will be cast among the five members to break the tie. If the tie persists, the youngest jury member will determine the final ranking of the deadlocked entries.

EUROVISION WEEK

Eurovision Week is the week when the Semi-Finals and Grand Final occur. Aside from the performance shows and associated rehearsals, the EuroClub (a night club in the host city that hosts parties thrown by participating countries and fan groups) and the ESC Fan Café (which exclusively plays ESC music throughout the week and broadcasts the shows live on large screens) open to the public, there are endless press conferences, and tourists descend upon the city. Host cities also establish a “Eurovision Village” in a large, public square that has events and performances throughout the week along with outdoor viewings of each show. Eurovision Week actually starts the week before, when the rehearsals begin on the preceding Monday. Rehearsals run every day through Sunday when Eurovision Week officially starts.

Sunday night – There is an opening reception where all the participating artists and their delegations (backing dancers, backing singers, lyricist(s), composer(s), broadcaster representative(s), producer(s), and the “Head of Delegation”) come together and mingle. The EuroClub opens and the first delegation or two throw parties there.

Monday – The First and Second Dress Rehearsals occur for the First Semi-Final. Juries vote during the Second Dress Rehearsal. More delegations host parties at the EuroClub.

Tuesday – The Third Dress Rehearsal for the First Semi-Final takes place in the afternoon. In the evening, the First Semi-Final occurs! Immediately following is the press conference for the ten qualifiers. More delegations host parties at the EuroClub.

Wednesday – The First and Second Dress Rehearsals occur for the Second Semi-Final. Juries vote during the Second Dress Rehearsal. The automatic qualifiers usually give a concert in Eurovision Village. More delegations host parties at the EuroClub.

Thursday – The Third Dress Rehearsal for the Second Semi-Final takes place in the afternoon. In the evening, the Second Semi-Final occurs! This is immediately followed by the press conference for the ten qualifiers. More delegations host parties at the EuroClub.

Friday – Early in the morning, the Final’s running order is revealed. The First and Second Dress Rehearsals occur for the Grand Final. Juries vote during the Second Dress Rehearsal. More delegations host parties at the EuroClub.

Saturday - The Third Dress Rehearsal for the Grand Final takes place in the afternoon. In the evening, the Grand Final occurs! It is immediately followed by the press conference for the winner and an after-party at the EuroClub.

EUROVISION GRAND FINAL – WHAT TO EXPECT

- 1.) *The Eurovision Theme* will play along with the host broadcaster’s intro vignette.
- 2.) *The Opening Act*: Typically, the previous year’s winning entry is performed and the artist may sing another song as well. Since 2013, there has also been a parade of nations.
- 3.) *The 26 songs compete!* There are several advert breaks throughout for broadcasters that need to show commercials. For other broadcasters (and the Internet stream), the host broadcaster prepares vignettes.
- 4.) *The Voting Window* – during which time people can vote and the songs will be recapped.
- 5.) *The Interval Acts*: as the votes are being cast, tallied, and certified, there are various performances.
- 6.) *The Voting Sequence*: each country reveals their jury votes via a spokesperson. Each country typically starts off by saying, “Hello (host city), this is (capital city of the reporting country) calling!” The first nine countries (points 1-7, 8, and 10) are posted on the screen. Then the spokesperson reveals their country’s top vote-getter (“And our twelve points go to...Country X!”). After this, the televoting results are revealed in ascending order according to the juries’ ranking.
- 7.) *The Official pronouncement of the winning entry and the awarding of the ESC trophy*. Typically, the previous year’s winning artist will give the trophy to the performing artist of this year’s winning entry.
- 8.) *The Winner’s Reprise*: the winning artist returns to the stage to sing the winning song one more time.