

Eurovision song contest

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The Eurovision Song Contest refers to an annual competition, which is held among many active member nations belonging to the EBU, or European Broadcasting Union. Under this arrangement, each member state presents a song which is to be performed live on radio and television sets, and then votes are cast for songs belonging to the other nations in order to determine the song that is most popular in the competition. Since its creation in 1956, the contest is broadcast each year worldwide. The Eurovision Song Contest has become one of the television programmes that have been televised for long.

Of the Eurovision Song Contest, along with all the sporting events in the world, is watched by in approximately one hundred to 600 million viewers worldwide. In addition, the Eurovision Song Contest is apart from being broadcast in Europe, it has also been broadcast to different nations like Canada, Argentina, Brazil, Australia, South Korea, the Philippines, the United States, Mexico, Jordan, Venezuela, Uruguay, India, China, Chile and Colombia despite the fact that these nations do not actually compete. Being popular worldwide the Eurovision Song Contest has become one of the most popular and widely discussed events all over the world. Some examples of artists who rose to international fame after participating and emerging victorious in the Eurovision Song Contest include ABBA from Sweden, who emerged victorious with their song titled “ Waterloo” in 1974, Domenico Modugno who was placed third for singing “ Nel Blu Dipinto” in the year 1958 and Celine Dion, whose song “ Ne Partnez pas san” earned Switzerland Victory in the year 1958 (“ Eurovision Song Contest”). Since the year 2000, the Eurovision Song Contest has been broadcast live on the Internet in almost 140 nations

with around 74 thousand individuals having watched the online edition of 2006.

The origin of the Eurovision Song Contest is built on an ad hoc committee, which was set up during the 1950's with an aim of uniting nations of the EBU through a programme that provided light entertainment. The Director General, in a meeting, which was held in January 1955 in Monaco, came up with an idea or suggestion of an international song contest, in which various nations could participate in one of the television programmes, which had to be transmitted or aired at the same time to all nations of the organization or union. Based on the San Remo Music Festival, which was by then in existence, the Eurovision Song Contest was regarded as being an experiment in the field of live television given the fact that it was a complex procedure to join many nations in any international network that could cover a wide area (" Eurovision Song Contest". Malmo 2013). The absence of the satellite television necessitated the need for the " Eurovision Network", which was composed of a network in a terrestrial microwave.

By then, the concept was called " The Eurovision Grand Prix" (" Eurovision Song Contest". Media Handbook 9), which was then assented by EBU's General Assembly during a meeting, which was held on the 19th of October in 1956 in Rome. In that meeting, it was concluded that the first competition or contest was to be held in Switzerland during the spring of 1956. In relation to EBU's network, the first use of the word " Eurovision" was by George Campey, a British journalist who used it in 1951 in London's Evening Spring. As a result, over the years, the format of the contest has continued to change even though the main idea has always been for the participating

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nations to present songs that are then performed through a television program that is transmitted via the Eurovision Network to all nations simultaneously. Once all songs are performed, the member countries then go ahead to cast their votes for the songs belonging to other countries, but it should be noted that countries are not allowed to cast votes for their representatives.

The winner is then declared at the end of the programme basing on the song that has the highest number of points. The winning nation is then invited to become the host of the event in the year that follows while the winner is accorded the prestige of winning through a trophy that is presented to songwriters that have won (“ Eurovision Song Contest”. Malmö 2013).

Eligible participants of the Eurovision Song Contest comprise EBU’s active members who are based in any states which fall within the area of European Broadcasting, or who are the Council of Europe member states. The International Telecommunication Union defines areas under the European Broadcasting.

The present generic logo for the Eurovision Song Contest was introduced in Turkey in 2004 during the organization’s contest. The logo was aimed at creating a visual identity that was consistent. The generic logo will always contain the flag of the host country, which also comes up with a sub-theme that is normally accompanied and created with a slogan and a sub logo. The week in which the contest takes place is known as the Eurovision Week.

Rehearsals are a must during the Eurovision Song Contest, which calls for all performers to perfect their works. Apart from the rehearsals, which are conducted in the participants’ home countries, they are also given a chance

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to rehearse their acts during the Eurovision auditorium, where they perform on stage.

The system of voting that is used in the Eurovision Song Contest changes each and every year. The current modern system of voting has been there since the year 1975, and it is known as the positional voting system. Under this system, nations are awarded a set of points ranging from one to eight followed by ten and then eventually 12 points to other songs in the contest. The best song is then awarded twelve points. According to history, a nation's set of votes was normally arrived at by an internal jury, but in 1997, five nations which included Sweden, Australia, Germany, the United Kingdom and Austria made an experiment in tele-voting, in which members of the public in such nations voted for their favourite songs en-masse (" Eurovision Song Contest").

Media Handbook 19-20). An EBU scrutinizer, who is tasked with making sure that there is a correct allocation of all the points, mans the voting process. There are various rules that must be followed by all the countries participating in the contest. Apart from being numerous, the rules are also unabridged thus ensuring that each year a separate draft is generated specifying the period on which some specific things must get done. However, many of the rules regard to matters of broadcasters' rights, sponsorship agreements and the time on which broadcasters are supposed to transmit the songs. Over the years, most notable rules affecting the presentation and format of the Eurovision Song Contest have changed.

After all, given the fact that most of the musical songs playing in the Eurovision Song Contest play to diverse cultures and international audience, which have contrasting musical tastes, most of the songs are pop and middle of the road. Many performances in Eurovision have therefore attempted to raise the voters' attention by other means apart from music like pyrotechnics and lighting sequences, which has sometimes resulted in bizarre costumes and on stage theatrics. The Eurovision Song Contest has also been faced by various accusations. For instance, it has been accused of political bias, in which tele-voters and judges have been accused of allocating points on the basis of the relationship of their country to other nations.