



EBU

OPERATING EUROVISION AND EURORADIO

EURO♥vision

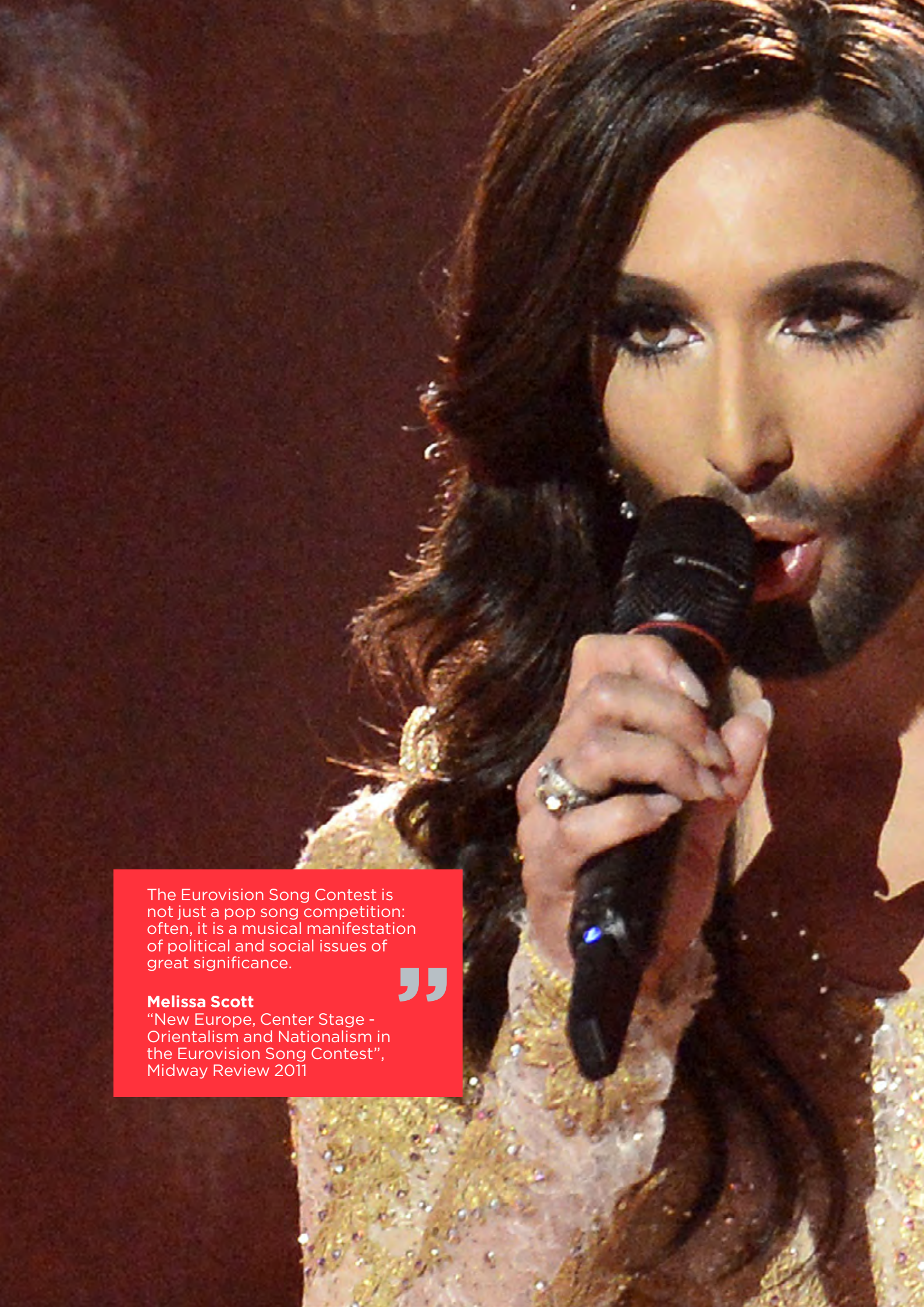
SONG CONTEST

60TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

24 APRIL 2015



#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 will be 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.



AGENDA

1000 INTRODUCTION

Paddy O'Connell – Moderator – BBC Radio 2 and 4 Presenter, Journalist and Former Eurovision Song Contest Commentator for BBC

Jon Ola Sand – Executive Supervisor – Eurovision Song Contest – European Broadcasting Union

1015 KEYNOTE

by **Dr Karen Fricker** – Canada – Asst. Professor, Department of Dramatic Arts, Brock University, St Catharine's Ontario and co-editor of *Performing the New Europe: Identities, Feelings, and Politics in the Eurovision Song Contest* (Palgrave 2013).

"What Eurovision has taught us about Europe"

1100 PANEL DISCUSSION ON "RITUAL"

How watching Eurovision is an institution of European family life and European popular life. How has the advent of social media changed/enhanced what it means to watch Eurovision? How has Eurovision engendered a sense of cosmopolitanism?

Taking Part:

Prof Brian Singleton – Ireland – holds the Samuel Beckett Chair of Drama and Theatre at Trinity College Dublin,

Phil Jackson – UK – Associate Head of Media and Programme Leader for BA Media, Music and Sound, Edge Hill University, Liverpool

Aija Medinika – Latvia – Former Head of Press for Latvian Television

Dave Benton – Estonia – Eurovision Winner 2001

William Lee Adams – United States – Contributor for Newsweek and TIME magazines and founder of current most popular and innovative Eurovision website WiwiBloggs

1145 KEYNOTE

by **Dr Dean Vuletic** – Australia – Historian and Marie Curie Fellow at the University of Vienna, where he runs the research project "Eurovision: A History of Europe through Popular Music" and teaches a course with the same title

"The History of Europe through the Eurovision Song Contest"

1230 LUNCH

1330 PANEL DISCUSSION ON "INNOVATION"

This panel explores The Eurovision Song Contest as a vanguard of innovation in television, multimedia and social networking. Discussions will include how the Contest has changed in terms of staging, the changes and challenges in how the Eurovision Network comes together on one night of the year and how social media and websites have created a whole new engagement with the event.

Taking Part:

Jon Ola Sand – Norway – Executive Supervisor – Eurovision Song Contest – European Broadcasting Union

Sietse Bakker – The Netherlands – Event Supervisor of Eurovision Song Contest and formally founder of ESCToday – the first global popular website dedicated to the event.

Guy Freeman – United Kingdom – Executive Producer of the 1998 Eurovision Song Contest and "Eurovision's Greatest Hits" Anniversary Show. Head of UK Delegation to 2015 Contest.

Pernille Gaardbo – Denmark – Executive Producer of the 2014 Eurovision Song Contest

Frank Saelens – The Netherlands – Manager of EBU Network Operations Centre

1415 KEYNOTE

by **Dr Paul Jordan** – United Kingdom – an expert on the Eurovision Song Contest and in 2011 was awarded his PhD, *The Eurovision Song Contest: Nation Building and Nation Branding in Estonia and Ukraine*, from the University of Glasgow.

"The Eurovision Song Contest: A platform for nation branding and nation building"

1500 PRESENTATION ON EUROVISION SONG CONTEST AUDIENCES

Francesca Cimino – Senior Media Analyst – EBU Media Intelligence Service

1515 INTERVIEW WITH CONCHITA WURST – WINNER OF EUROVISION 2014

Discussing how Eurovision embraces diversity and builds communities

1600 PANEL DISCUSSION ON "INSPIRATION"

Panel discussion about how the Song Contest functions in different communities/nations/regions as site of national/personal/gender-sexual identity realization. How have people used Eurovision as a way to access European and National identity?

Taking Part:

Kjell Ekholm – Finland – Former Member of Eurovision Reference Group and Head of Delegation for Finland

Dr Peter Rehberg – Germany – Ph.D. Dept. of Germanic Languages and Literatures, University of Texas

Geert Willems – The Netherlands – Journalist and Author – "Douze points, Twelve points – Facts and Myths about the Eurovision Song Contest"

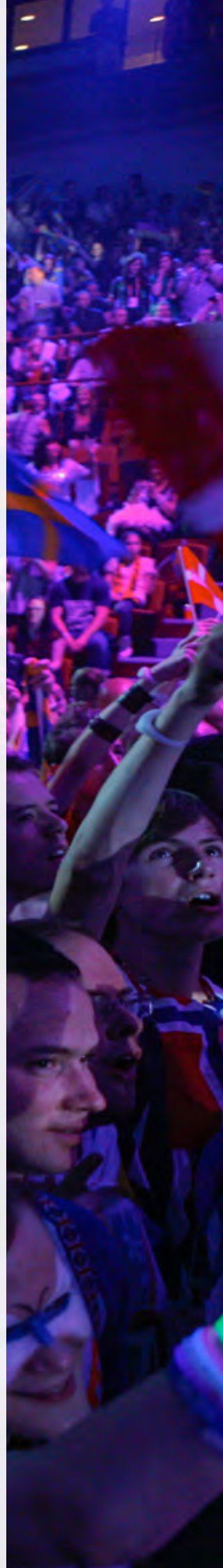
Fraser Nelson – United Kingdom – Journalist and Editor of political magazine The Spectator

Andi Knoll – Austria – Eurovision Song Contest Commentator for ORF

1645 SUMMING UP

Paddy O'Connell with **Dean Vuletic**, **Karen Fricker** and **Paul Jordan**

1700 CONFERENCE ENDS



SPEAKERS LIST

MODERATOR



PADDY O'CONNELL @paddy_o_c
Broadcaster and Journalist

Paddy hosts the Sunday radio programme "Broadcasting House" with two million listeners on BBC Radio 4. He was the UK's first semi-final commentator at Eurovision – live on BBC TV from Istanbul in 2004. Ten years later he launched the UK's first-ever Eurovision digital radio station "Radio 2 Eurovision" live from Copenhagen. He hosts the ESC Preview Party held in London each year live on the stage of the Café de Paris.

SPEAKERS



KAREN FRICKER @KarenFricker2
Assistant Professor, Department of Dramatic Arts at Brock University, Ontario

Karen's co-edited volume, with Milija Gluhovic, *Performing the 'New' Europe: Identities, Feelings, and Politics in the Eurovision Song Contest*, was published in 2013 by Palgrave Macmillan, and she is completing a monograph, *Making Theatre Global: Robert Lepage's Original Stage Productions* for Manchester University Press. Karen is a professional theatre critic and the founding editor in chief of *Irish Theatre Magazine*. She has reviewed and broadcast for *The Guardian*, *Variety*, *The Irish Times*, *The New York Times*, BBC, RTÉ, and the CBC, amongst other outlets.



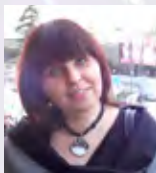
BRIAN SINGLETON @bsnglton
Samuel Beckett Professor of Drama & Theatre, Trinity College Dublin.

Brian is also Academic Director of The Lir – National Academy of Dramatic Art at Trinity College and co-winner (with Janelle Reinelt) of the 2012 ATHE Excellence in Editing Award for the book series 'Studies in International Performance', he is currently co-editing (with Elaine Aston) 'Contemporary Performance InterActions' for Palgrave Macmillan. He has published widely on European theatre and television drama, as well as on the Eurovision Song Contest in several books and journals. He has also appeared as a Eurovision cartoon character on public service broadcasting websites YLE Finland and LSM Latvia.



PHIL JACKSON
Associate Head of Media, Edge Hill University, Liverpool

Phil is one of the co-founders of the Eurovision Research Network. Since 2006 he has devoted his academic research to aspects of the ESC, presenting at international conferences, and in 2014 contributed a chapter to the first edited academic publication on Media and Cosmopolitanism entitled '*Welcome Europe! The Eurovision Song Contest as a Continuum for Cosmopolitanism*'. Perhaps more importantly, Phil is also a lifelong fan of the Eurovision Song Contest, with an early memory dating back to the UK's 1976 victory with Brotherhood of Man's *Save Your Kisses for Me*.



AIJA MEDINIKA @AMedinika

Former Eurovision Song Contest Head of Press for LTV (Latvia)

Aija worked as Head of Press for the Latvian Delegation at the Eurovision Song Contest in 2007 and between 2010 and 2013. In 2014 she obtained her MSc in International Events Management from Manchester Metropolitan University with a dissertation focusing on *“Stakeholders’ opinion of the effectiveness of Eurovision.tv as a social media communication platform.”* Her involvement in Eurovision events started in 2002 when she joined the *esctoday.com* team.



DAVE BENTON

Performer, Eurovision Song Contest 2001 Winner for Estonia

Dave was born and raised on the island of Aruba and started singing at an early age with the ambition to eventually perform around the world. He moved to Europe in 1985 and over the next 12 years lived in the Netherlands, Germany and Scandinavia where he worked on cruise ships, in theatres and gala events. He settled in Tallinn in 1997 and in 2001, at the age of 50, won the Eurovision Song Contest for Estonia singing “Everybody” with Tanel Padar and 2XL. He married and had his first child the same year.



WILLIAM LEE ADAMS @willyleeadams

Editor-in-chief, wiwibloggs

William is editor-in chief of the world’s leading independent web site devoted to the Eurovision Song Contest. A former correspondent at the London bureau of TIME magazine, he now contributes to Businessweek, CNN and Newsweek, among other outlets, and advises global corporations on digital storytelling. He holds degrees from Harvard University and the School of Oriental and African Studies.



Dr. DEAN VULETIC

Contemporary Europe Historian, University of Vienna

As a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellow at the University of Vienna Dean leads the project “Eurovision: A History of Europe through Popular Music.” He is writing a book and teaching the world’s first regular university course on the history of the Eurovision Song Contest, which he also comments about for various international media outlets. He has also taught at Columbia University, New York University and the European University Institute. He has a doctorate in history from Columbia University, a Master’s degree in East European Studies from Yale University and a Bachelor’s degree in European Studies from the Australian National University.



JON OLA SAND @jonolasand

Head of Entertainment and Live Events, EBU

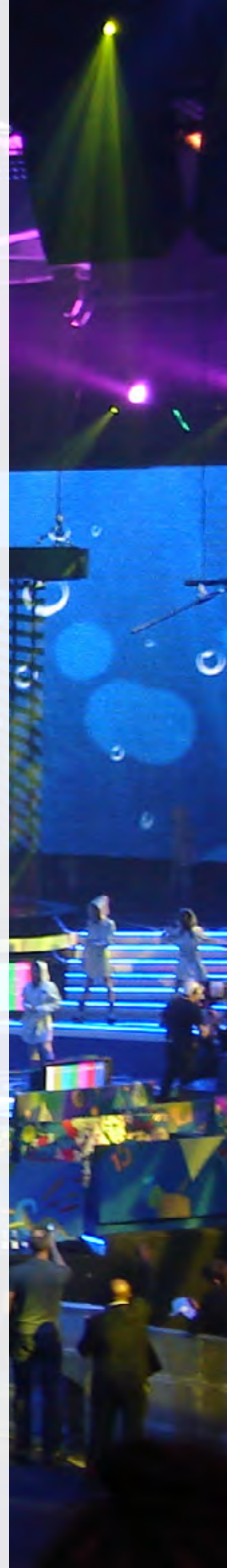
Jon Ola has 15 years of experience working with major productions and co-productions at NRK and TV2 in Norway as well as independent production companies. He has produced and directed a variety of programmes, such as the Nobel Peace Prize Concert, the Norwegian Film Awards and the Norwegian national selection for the Eurovision Song Contest, Melodi Grand Prix. Since 2010, Jon Ola has worked as the EBU’s Executive Supervisor of the Eurovision Song Contest.



SIETSE BAKKER @SietseBakker

Eurovision Song Contest Event Supervisor, EBU

Sietse is a media entrepreneur, writer and speaker. After working as Project Manager Internet and Manager Communications & Public Relations on the Eurovision Song Contest, he became Event Supervisor of the event in 2011. Aside from his work for the EBU, he runs two media companies and had his first book on personal development published in 2011. His second book, *The Sparkle*, will be published in the autumn.



**GUY FREEMAN****Editor of Special Events, BBC**

Guy started his career as a cameraman then moved into BBC Entertainment, ultimately directing and producing some of their biggest shows, including the 1998 Eurovision Song Contest. As a freelancer, he produced the first series of "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?", as well as five "BRIT Awards". More recently, as ITV's Controller of Music and Events he commissioned over 60 music and entertainment specials, before returning to the BBC in 2012 to oversee "The Queen's Diamond Jubilee Concert." Now, as Editor of Special Events, he is responsible for a portfolio of major new and returning programmes including the BBC's participation in the Eurovision Song Contest.

**PERNILLE GAARDBO @pernillegaardbo****Head of Media Service, DR**

Pernille is Head of Media Service at the Danish Broadcasting Corporation and was the Executive Producer of the 2014 Eurovision Song Contest in Copenhagen. She is currently producing the Danish Broadcasting Corporation 90th birthday celebrations with more than one hundred broadcasts on tv, radio, web and social media and is also a Member of the Eurovision Song Contest Reference Group for the EBU.

**FRANK SAELENS****Head of EUROVISION Control Centre, EBU**

Frank manages 25 staff dealing with the daily traffic on the EUROVISION network, be it over satellite or fibre optic. Eurovision is renowned for the distribution of high level events like the Olympics, FIFA World Cup, UCL, F1, Skiing... and the Eurovision Song Contest. Frank has personally been involved in the Song Contest since 2004 as the Technical Supervisor / Voting Coordinator. He makes sure that the show is transmitted to all participating countries in perfect quality and that the live links to the dozens of juries work on time and in real time. After all, the voting at the Eurovision Song Contest is almost a television show in itself.

**Dr. PAUL JORDAN @dreurovision****Author, "The Modern Fairy Tale: Nation branding, national identity and the Eurovision Song Contest"**

Paul Jordan obtained his PhD from the University of Glasgow in 2011. His doctoral research examined the relationship between nation and state building as well as the political management of international image in today's Europe through an examination of debates on nation branding and the Eurovision Song Contest. In 2014 he published his first book in Estonia. He is a regular media commentator on the Eurovision Song Contest and has attended the event since 2000. His other research interests include nationalism and post-Soviet identity politics.

**FRANCESCA CIMINO****Senior Media Analyst, EBU**

Francesca has been a Senior Media Analyst in the EBU's Media Intelligence Service since 2012. Her work focuses on audience behaviour, TV audience measurement and performance of EBU Events including the Eurovision Song Contest. She is responsible for the collection and processing of data related to EBU Member organizations' TV services and is also secretary of the Group of European Audience Researchers (GEAR).

**CONCHITA WURST @ConchitaWurst****Performer, Eurovision Song Contest 2014 Winner for Austria**

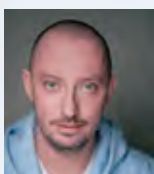
Conchita Wurst is the alter ego of Tom Neuwirth. Tom studied fashion, before embarking on a singing career through the 2007 casting show Starmania. He subsequently became a founding member of the short-lived boy band Jetzt Anders! Conchita first appeared in 2011 and came second in the Austrian pre-selection for the Eurovision Song Contest 2012. She was chosen to represent Austria at the Eurovision Song

Contest 2014, where she proved victorious. Her victory brought her international attention and established her as a gay icon, resulting in invitations to perform at various pride parades, the European Parliament and the United Nations Office in Vienna, Austria's capital.



KJELL EKHOLM @KjellEkholm
Head of Music, Radio Vega, YLE

Kjell was the Deputy Executive Producer of the 2007 Eurovision Song Contest in Helsinki and an active member of the Contest's Reference Group between 2002 and 2009, initializing many of the big changes in the event's format. He also worked as a producer for the EBU on the ESC 50th Anniversary in Copenhagen 2005. As Head of Fiction for the Swedish section of Finnish broadcaster YLE he started up many new popular formats. Kjell was also President of the Nordvision group for entertainment and events between 2006 and 2008.



Dr PETER REHBERG
Associate Professor, Department of Germanic Studies, University of Texas at Austin

Peter Rehberg is DAAD (German Academic Exchange Service) Associate Professor in the Department of Germanic Studies at The University of Texas at Austin where he teaches primarily in the fields of contemporary European and German cultures and queer theory. His current research interests are post pornography in the digital age and the Eurovision Song Contest. He also works as a journalist for the German weekly Der Freitag and prior to his academic appointment was editor-in-chief of the gay monthly magazine Maenner in Berlin. He has published three novels.



GEERT WILLEMS @DGGeertWillems
Journalist and Author, "Douze Points, Twelve Points"

Geert is the author of two books on the Eurovision Song Contest, "Dinge-Dong" published in 2000 and 2014's "Douze Points, Twelve Points" which explores the history of the Eurovision Song Contest from the influence it has had on the European Union to its impact on politics and the emancipation of the gay community. He's been fascinated by The Eurovision Song Contest since he saw Vicky Leandros win for Luxembourg with "Après Toi" in 1972. Since 2010 he has reported from the Contest for a large number of regional newspapers in The Netherlands.



FRASER NELSON @FraserNelson
Editor, The Spectator

Fraser is Editor of The Spectator, the oldest continually published magazine in the English language. He is a columnist for the Daily Telegraph and sits on the advisory board of the Centre for Policy Studies and the Centre for Social Justice. In 2013 he moderated a Eurovision symposium at the Swedish Embassy in London. In the same year he was named political journalist of the year and Editor's Editor of the Year, the top award in the UK magazine industry. His money is on Sweden's entry 'Heroes' to win in Vienna.



ANDI KNOLL
Austrian Eurovision Song Contest Commentator, ORF

Andi Knoll is a radio and television broadcaster and has been the Austrian commentator for the Eurovision Song Contest since 1999. He has also hosted the Austrian national finals for the Song Contest since 2002. Andi graduated from the Academy of Commerce in 1992 and has been a radio presenter for ORF's Hitradio Ö3 since 1994.



IRELAND	91	ISRAEL	193
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
2 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.

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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!



26

countries have won at least once



21

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



19

countries have scored "nulpoints" at least once



7

Irish wins in total make them the most successful Eurovision nation



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



1

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



195

million viewers saw
the 2014 Contest



40

cities have played
host in



43

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



25

different countries



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



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

NOTES

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