Visualising Voting Patterns and Polling Data

Process Book

Introduction

The Eurovision Song Contest is an annual song contest running since 1956. Each participating country is represented by an artist and song, and a winner is crowned after each country awards their points. The points are allocated based off of a jury and public vote.

Goal

Each country awards points from a public vote and a jury vote, both of which are weighted equally. The public vote is comprised of televoters, and the jury vote is comprised of a panel of juries.

In recent years, this system has come under scrutiny. Two issues in particular are often raised:

- Voting blocs have emerged where countries give the most points to each other
- The fan favourite does not win as the jury vote prevents the public winner from winning

The goal of our project is to create a website with interactive visualisations that will allow us to explore the voting patterns and find out which songs were fan favourites. With our website, it will be simple to view how countries have voted across multiple editions of the contest and see whether certain countries vote for each other. In addition, it will be clear to see whether or not the public and jury votes align and whether the jury vote really does prevent the fan favourite from lifting the Eurovision trophy.

EUROVISION
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The Journey

Dataset

The first step was to see which data we could obtain. Since editions are infrequent and the voting results are made public, we believed that the data that we will need would be easily accessible. Indeed, we found the Eurovision Song Contest Data dataset on Kaggle to contain the data we needed – the allocation of televotes and jury votes from each country each year, and the results from the two biggest polls of Eurovision fans on who should win the contest. Fortunately for us, the dataset is complete and did not require any cleaning.

After carrying out an exploratory analysis of our data, we would need to decide which visualisations we would create. Then, we could determine which format we would need our data to be in and transform it accordingly, as the format that the data was in was unlikely the most suitable one to work with.

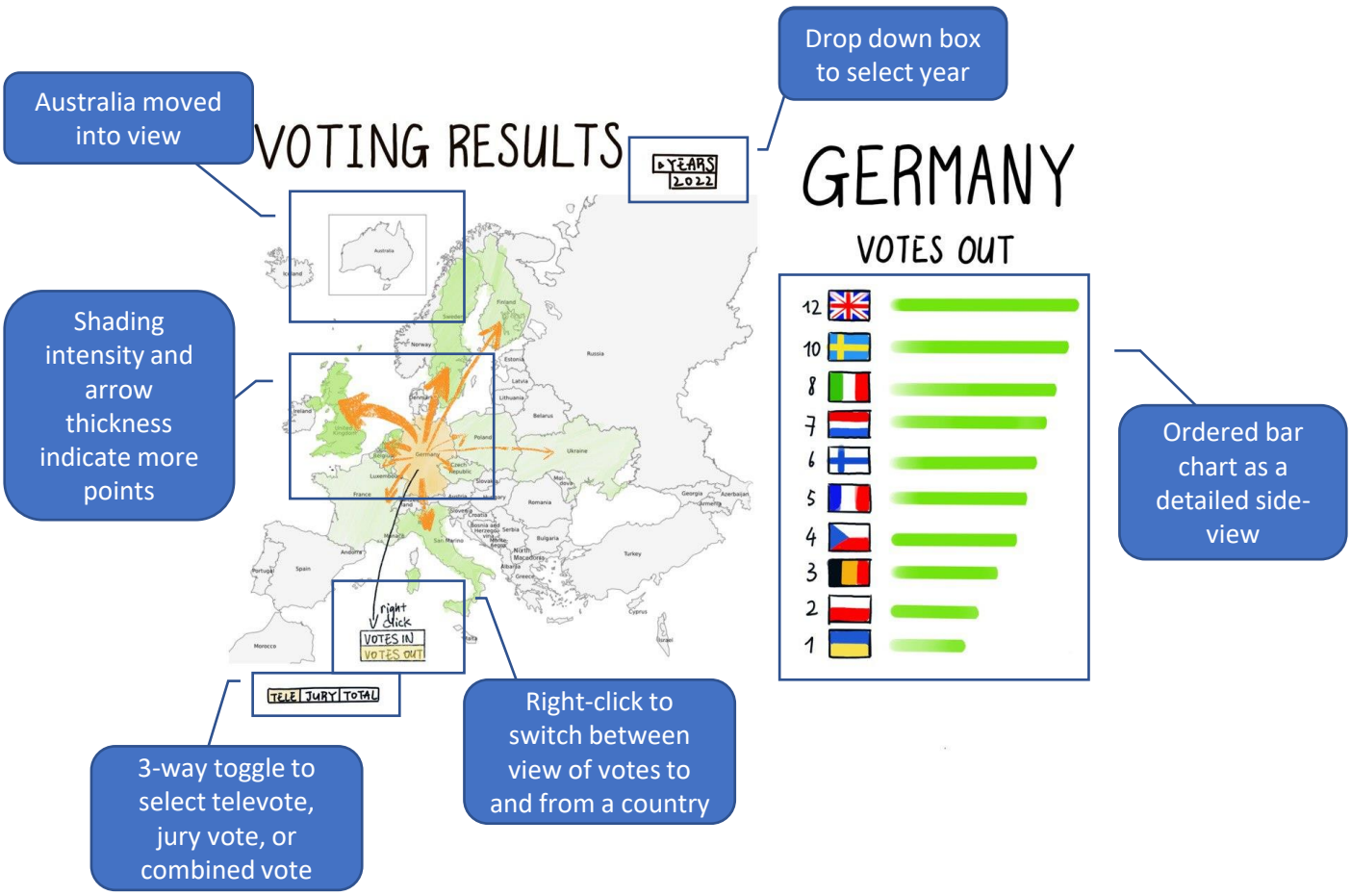
Brainstorming Ideas

Once we could see exactly what data we have, we started coming up with ideas on how we could visualise our data. We started by looking at the voting data. During the Eurovision broadcasts, the votes are presented in a tabular format, as shown below.

This format is suitable for the show since this screen appears for almost a minute per country. This gives the viewers enough time to assimilate the information. However, we want to present this information in such a way where for a given country, the points awarded can be understood in a matter of seconds. Therefore, using a similar format would not work for our goals. The main issue is that each entry has to be read one by one to assimilate everything.

Voting Data

We came up with the idea to try and display this information on a map instead. In one quick glance, the same information should be easily extracted. Our first sketch of what this could look like combined the tabular view with a would-be interactive map.

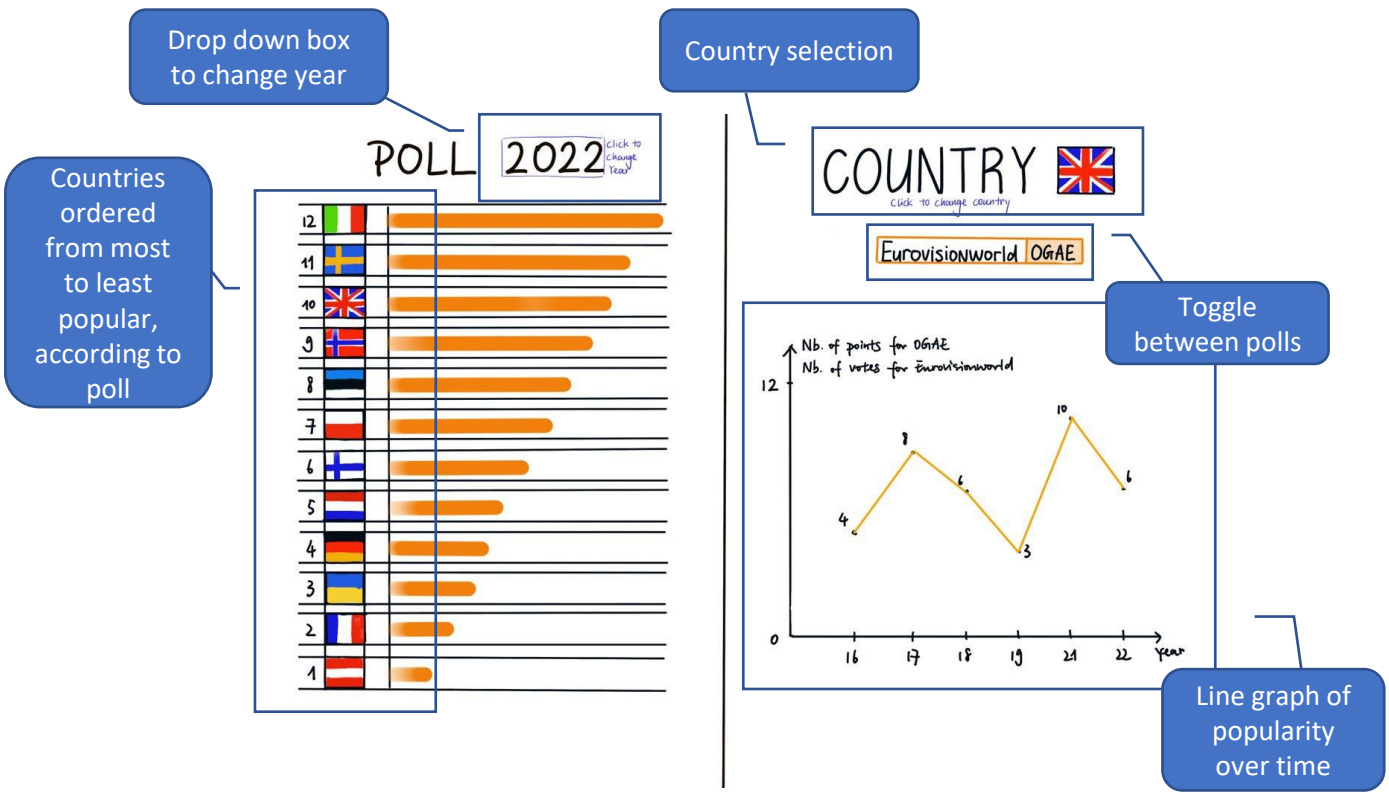


In this view, we are able to quickly where the German public awarded their points. The bar chart to the right provides the exact details of the voting, and the arrows show a summary of who received the most points. We imagine that someone can, in a short amount of time, click on their countries of interest and quickly see from whom they voted for.

Polling Data

We have data from 2 fan polls. One (Eurovisionworld) asks fans which song they think should win the contest, and the poll counts the number of votes each country receives. Another (OGAE) asks fans to award their own points to countries, and the poll tracks the average number of points each country receives.

We chose to present this data using bar charts for each individual year, and for specific countries line charts to show how the trend of how popular countries are over time.



We also sketched out how the year and country selection could look. We decided it would be most intuitive to show a grid of flags to select the country, as a list of country names would be too long.