

## = Eurovision Song Contest 2012 =

The Eurovision Song Contest 2012 was the 57th edition of the annual Eurovision Song Contest . It took place in Baku , Azerbaijan , following Ell & Nikki 's win at the 2011 contest in Düsseldorf , Germany with the song " Running Scared " ? marking the first time that the country had won the contest . The contest was held at the newly constructed Baku Crystal Hall , with semi @-@ finals held on 22 and 24 May 2012 , followed by the final held on 26 May 2012 . Forty @-@ two countries competed in the contest , with Montenegro returning for the first time since 2009 , and the withdrawal of Armenia due to security concerns in relation to the ongoing Nagorno @-@ Karabakh conflict with Azerbaijan , and Poland due to financial concerns .

The contest was won by singer Loreen from Sweden with the song " Euphoria " ? written by Thomas G : son and Peter Boström , the song scored a total of 372 points . Russia finished in second place , with Serbia finishing in third . They were followed by the host country , Azerbaijan , which reached the 4th place . Albania finished 5th , achieving its first top 5 placing . Germany , Italy and Spain were the three members of the " Big Five " that managed to rank within the top 10 , finishing in 8th , 9th and 10th places respectively .

The lead @-@ up to the contest was met with political concerns and protests surrounding the host country , including its human rights record and allegations by advocacy groups that Baku was carrying out forced evictions in the construction of the contest 's venue , along with objections to the contest 's presence by Iranian officials ? who felt that the event was anti @-@ Islamic because it was , according to them , a " gay parade " .

## = = Location = =

Azerbaijan got the right to host the 2012 edition of the Eurovision Song Contest after winning the previous 2011 edition with the song " Running Scared " performed by Ell & Nikki . Baku , the capital and largest city of Azerbaijan , as well as the largest city on the Caspian Sea and of the Caucasus region , was named the host city for the contest , with the venue being the Baku Crystal Hall , built a few months prior to the contest on the city 's coastline .

Shortly after Azerbaijan 's victory at the 2011 edition , officials announced that a new 23 @,@ 000 seat concert venue was to be built near National Flag Square in Baku , as a potential venue for the event . Three days later , other venue options were revealed by organisers , such as the 37 @,@ 000 @-@ seat Tofiq Bahramov Stadium and the Heydar Aliyev Sports and Exhibition Complex . On 2 August 2011 , Alpine Bau Deutschland AG was awarded the contract to construct the Baku Crystal Hall . Preparations for construction began in the area shortly after the announcement . Even though the full cost of the contract was not named , the government allocated 6 million AZN for the construction of the venue .

On 8 September 2011 , Azad Azerbaijan TV ( ATV ) reported that Baku Crystal Hall would be the venue of the contest , but no formal confirmation was made at the time by the EBU . On 31 October 2011 , Ismayil Omarov , the director general of Azerbaijani national broadcaster ?ctimai Television announced that a decision on the venue choice would be taken by the steering committee in January 2012 . On 25 January 2012 , it was confirmed that the Baku Crystal Hall would be the venue of the contest . Even though the venue had an extended capacity of 23 @,@ 000 people , only 16 @,@ 000 people were able to attend each show . Tickets for the festival became available online for purchase on 28 February 2012 .

## = = Format = =

In a meeting of the Eurovision Reference Group on 29 June 2011 , it was decided that the televoting system would revert the format used most recently in the 2009 Contest , in which the phone and SMS lines opened for a fifteen @-@ minute window after all songs had been performed , instead of opening before the show starts , which was the system used between 2010 and 2011 . The results format of each show remained the same with each country 's votes being decided on a

50 : 50 split between televoting and a national jury . Each participating country had their own national jury , which consisted of five professional members of the music industry .

Under the official rules released on 24 November 2011 , the number of participants in the final was raised to 26 , including the host nation , the " Big Five " , and the ten qualifiers from each semi @-@ final . This was the second time in the Eurovision Song Contest that 26 countries were in the final , the first being the 2003 Contest .

= = = Semi @-@ final allocation draw = = =

The draw that determined the semi @-@ final running order was held on 25 January 2012 at the Buta Palace . The participating countries , excluding the automatic finalists ( Azerbaijan , France , Germany , Italy , Spain and the United Kingdom ) , were split into six pots , based upon how those countries voted in past contests . From these pots , half ( or as close to half as possible ) competed in the first semi @-@ final on 22 May 2012 . The other half in that particular pot competed in the second semi @-@ final on 24 May 2012 . This draw also acted as an approximate running order , in order for the delegations from the countries to know when their rehearsals would commence and determine which semi @-@ final the automatic finalists would be allowed to vote in .

1 . ^ Armenia withdrew approximately a month and a half after the semi @-@ final allocation draw .

= = = Graphic design = = =

The design of the contest was built around the motto " Light your fire ! " , inspired by the nickname of Azerbaijan itself , " Land of Fire " .

Each introductory video postcard began with a shot of the artist and performers , followed with the flag and country name in a handwritten font with a background resembling the yellow , orange and red fire of the 2012 theme art . The postcards consisted of various shots of Azerbaijan , with a caption displaying ' Azerbaijan ' and underneath ' Land of ... ' ( e.g. Land of Abundance ; Land of Poetry etc . ) , which were then followed by the name of a town or geographic feature , showing the landscape and culture of the country . Some postcards focused on the host city of Baku with text changing to ' Baku ' and underneath ' City of ... ' ( e.g. City of Jazz ; City of Leisure etc . ) . The postcards finished with a shot of the Crystal Hall displayed in the colours of the performing country 's flag . These postcards acted as a tourism mechanism to present the country to a wider audience .

The artist , song and number graphics as well as tables and voting graphics were kept the same as those used in 2011 , with a slight modification to incorporate the 2012 theme art . The lower points ( 1 @-@ 7 ) were highlighted in red squares while the top points ( 8 , 10 , 12 ) were highlighted in orange squares with each square increasing in size in relation to the point value . Both sets of graphics were designed by London brand design agency Turquoise Branding .

= = = National host broadcaster = = =

Azərbaycan Televiziya ( ?TV ) , which was the EBU member that broadcast the Eurovision Song Contest in Azerbaijan , is one of country 's public @-@ service broadcasters . Deputy Minister of Communication and Information Technology of Azerbaijan , İlham Məmmədov , stated that telecom networks were ready to host the event . Azerbaijan 's largest telecommunications operator , Azercell , was chosen as the presenting partner for the contest . On 1 December 2011 , ?TV named the German production company Brainpool as its official production partner for the contest , citing the quality of its work on the previous year 's contest .

= = Participating countries = =

On 17 January 2012 , the EBU announced that forty @-@ three countries would take part in the 2012 contest . The 57th edition saw the return of Montenegro , who was previously represented by Andrea Demirovi? in 2009 . Armenia , who had originally planned to participate , later withdraw their

application due to security fears of the continuous Nagorno @-@ Karabakh War with Azerbaijan . Poland also withdrew from the competition , due to the financial burden of the 2012 UEFA European Football Championship ( which Poland co @-@ hosted with Ukraine ) and Summer Olympics .

== = Returning artists == =

Four artists returned in this year 's contest . Kaliopi for Macedonia who previously participated in the 1996 contest with the song " Samo ti " , which placed in 26th position in the pre @-@ qualifying round . Jónsi for Iceland and ?eljko Joksimovi? for Serbia both previously participated in 2004 .

Joksimovi? had represented Serbia and Montenegro in 2004 with the song " Lane moje " which placed second in that year , and co @-@ hosted the 2008 Contest with Jovana Jankovi? . Jónsi performed " Heaven " in 2004 , which placed 19th . For a second consecutive year Jedward participated for Ireland , after their 8th @-@ place finish at the 2011 Contest with the song " Lipstick " .

== = Languages == =

The Finnish entry , " När jag blundar " , sung by Pernilla Karlsson , was only Finland 's second entry in Swedish and the first entry at all to be sung in Swedish since 1998 . Russia 's entry , " Party for Everybody " , sung by Buranovskiye Babushki , was the first entry ever to be performed in Udmurt . The Georgian entry , " I 'm a Joker " was the first Eurovision entry containing the Georgian language while the Bulgarian song " Love Unlimited " had a few words in the Azerbaijani language , both of whom never appeared at the contest before .

== Results ==

== = Semi @-@ finals == =

== = = Semi @-@ final 1 == = =

Azerbaijan , Italy and Spain voted in the first semi @-@ final . The EBU allowed the Albanian broadcaster Radio Televizioni Shqiptar ( RTSH ) to defer transmission and only use jury votes due to a serious bus accident in the country .

Notes

- 2 . ^ Contained some phrases in Montenegrin and German .
- 3 . ^ Although the song was completely in Albanian , the title is in Latin .
- 4 . ^ Suus is a Latin third person reflexive possessive pronoun , and means " his " , " his own " .
- 5 . ^ Contained some phrases in Italian .
- 6 . ^ Specifically Mühlviertlerisch , a Central Bavarian dialect spoken in Upper Austria .
- 7 . ^ Although the song was completely in English , the title was in Romanian .

== = = Semi @-@ final 2 == = =

France , Germany and the United Kingdom voted in the second semi @-@ final . Germany requested that they vote in this semi @-@ final . Armenia was drawn to perform in the first half of this semi @-@ final , but later withdrew from the contest due to security reasons .

Notes

- 9 . ^ The song also contained phrases in Arabic , Azerbaijani , English , French , Greek , Italian , Romani , Serbo @-@ Croatian , Spanish and Turkish .

== = Final == =

= = Scoreboard = =

The EBU and PwC audit company checked and verified the individual jury and televoting results , which were combined to create the overall national vote for the contests . On 18 June 2012 , the EBU published these results , which were as follows .

= = = Semi @-@ final 1 = = =

= = = = 12 points = = = =

Below is a summary of the maximum 12 points each country awarded to another in the first semifinal :

= = = Semi @-@ final 2 = = =

= = = = 12 points = = = =

Below is a summary of the maximum 12 points each country awarded to another in the second semifinal :

= = = Final = = =

= = = = 12 points = = = =

Below is a summary of the maximum 12 points each country awarded to another in the final :  
No country took nul points ( receiving 0 points total ) when both scores were added together , but France received 0 points at the televoting stage .

= = Other countries = =

Andorra ? On 19 October 2011 , Andorra announced that there are no plans for the country to participate in 2012 due to financial difficulties ; the country also had planned to withdraw from the EBU entirely .

Armenia ? On 7 March 2012 , the EBU announced that Armenian Public Television ( ARMTV ) had decided to withdraw from participation despite originally being included in the list of participating countries . Its decision came after President Aliyev of Azerbaijan gave a speech on 28 February 2012 when he stated " Our main enemies are Armenians of the world and the hypocritical and corrupt politicians under their control . " The country was consequently fined by the EBU and were expected to face further penalties , such as exclusion from participation in future contests if it failed to comply with the EBU requirements . Armenia had been in a continuous state of war with Azerbaijan since 1994 because of the Nagorno @-@ Karabakh War .

Czech Republic ? On 24 November 2011 , it was reported that the Czech Republic would not compete at the 2012 contest , following the release of a television schedule by ?eská televize ( ?T ) .

Liechtenstein ? On 26 November 2011 , it was announced that two official EBU documents , published in March and October 2011 , showed Liechtenstein 's only national broadcaster 1FLTV as being granted active EBU membership , sparking speculations of a début for the nation . However , on 29 November 2011 , these documents were later confirmed as editing mistakes , and thus a

début had yet to be planned .

Luxembourg ? On 31 December 2011 , RTL Luxembourg confirmed that Luxembourg would not participate at the Eurovision in Baku .

Monaco ? It had been reported on 23 November 2011 , at an EBU meeting in Geneva , that Monaco were considering a return to the 2012 contest . However , on 3 December 2011 , Phil Bosco , a former head of delegation told a French @-@ speaking website that the Monegasque national broadcaster Télé Monte Carlo ( TMC ) did not intend to return to the Eurovision Song Contest any time in the near future , as there were no financial budget available .

Morocco ? In an interview with the French delegation it had been revealed that Morocco were " likely to return " to the Eurovision Song Contest in 2012 with a new broadcaster 2M TV . Reports about the proposed return of Morocco to the contest , after an absence of more than 30 years , were further enhanced at an EBU meeting in Geneva .

Poland ? On 16 December 2011 , it had been reported on the official Facebook page of Telewizja Polska ( TVP ) that Poland were withdrawing from the 2012 Contest . This was confirmed a few days later , stating that the broadcaster had decided to focus on the 2012 UEFA European Football Championship ( which Poland co @-@ hosted with Ukraine ) and Summer Olympics . TVP stated that a return in 2013 has not been ruled out .

= = Controversies = =

= = = Human rights concerns = = =

Azerbaijan 's large investment in hosting the Eurovision contest was widely discussed in Western media as an attempt to " mitigate misgivings about its poor democracy and human rights record " . Elnur Majidli , an activist imprisoned during the Arab Spring @-@ inspired 2011 Azerbaijani protests , was released in an apparent effort to soften Azerbaijan 's image ahead of the contest , but many political prisoners remained . Human Rights Watch reported a " violent crackdown on protesters " on the eve of the contest , and Amnesty International condemned the " stern crackdown of freedom of expression , dissent , non @-@ governmental organizations ( NGOs ) , critical journalists , in fact anyone who criticised the Aliyev regime too strongly " that continued up to the contest .

Human Rights Watch also criticised the Azerbaijani government and the Baku City Authority for carrying out forced evictions against local residents , in order to allow for the demolition of flats to make way for construction in the neighbourhood where the Baku Crystal Hall was built . The Public Association for Assistance to Free Economy , a transparency and economic rights campaign group , had described the evictions as a " violation of human rights " , and as having " no legal authority " . However , in a statement to the BBC , Eurovision said that on a recent visit to Baku they had observed " that the construction of the concert hall [ which ] media reports refer to was already well under way on a clean construction site and thus there are no demolitions needed " . The EBU cited the " apolitical " nature of the contest and the Azerbaijani government 's claim that the construction was not tied to the Eurovision Song Contest .

The festival 's winner Loreen met local human rights activists during the contest , the only entrant to do so . She later told reporters , " Human rights are violated in Azerbaijan every day . One should not be silent about such things . " An Azerbaijan government spokesman criticized her in response , saying that the contest should not " be politicised " and requested the EBU prevented further meetings of a similar nature . Swedish diplomats replied that the EBU , Swedish TV and Loreen had not acted against the competition 's rules .

On 26 May , a flash mob of anti @-@ government protesters were quickly dispersed by police . Activists expressed fears that they would face a crackdown when the international spotlight left Azerbaijan again at the end of the contest . Before submitting the results of the German vote , the presenter from Germany Anke Engelke gave a live statement that alluded to the human rights issues in Azerbaijan , saying : " Tonight nobody could vote for their own country . But it is good to be able to vote . And it is good to have a choice . Good luck on your journey , Azerbaijan . Europe is

watching you . "

= = = Tensions with Iran = = =

Iranian officials objected to Azerbaijan hosting the 2012 Eurovision Song Contest . Iranian clerics Ayatollah Mohammad Mojtabeh Shabestari and Ayatollah Ja 'far Sobhani condemned Azerbaijan for " anti @-@ Islamic behaviour " , claiming that Azerbaijan were going to host a gay parade . This led to protests in front of Iranian embassy in Baku , where protesters carried slogans mocking the Iranian leaders . Ali Hasanov , head of the public and political issues department in Azerbaijani President 's administration , said that gay parade claims were untrue , and advised Iran not to meddle in Azerbaijan 's internal affairs . In response , Iran recalled its ambassador from Baku , while Azerbaijan demanded a formal apology from Iran for its statements in connection with Baku 's hosting of the Eurovision Song Contest , and later also recalled its ambassador from Iran .

On 30 May , the Ministry of National Security of Azerbaijan announced that they had thwarted a series of planned terror attacks against the Eurovision Song Contest , among the targets being Baku Crystal Hall , as well as Marriott and Hilton hotels in Baku . On 22 August , The Daily Telegraph reported that according to Western intelligence services , Iran 's Supreme Leader Ali Khamenei personally gave orders to the elite Quds Force unit to launch terrorist attacks against the West and its allies , including Azerbaijan during the Eurovision Song Contest .

= = Other awards = =

= = = Marcel Bezençon Awards = = =

The Marcel Bezençon Awards were first handed out during the Eurovision Song Contest 2002 in Tallinn , Estonia honoring the best competing songs in the final . Founded by Christer Björkman ( Sweden 's representative in the 1992 Eurovision Song Contest and current Head of Delegation for Sweden ) and Richard Herrey ( member of the Herreys , Eurovision Song Contest 1984 winner from Sweden ) , the awards were named after the creator of the annual competition , Marcel Bezençon . The awards were divided into three categories ; Press Award ; Artistic Award ; and Composer Award .

= = = OGAE = = =

Organisation Générale des Amateurs de l 'Eurovision ( more commonly known as OGAE ) is an international organisation that was founded in 1984 in Savonlinna , Finland by Jari @-@ Pekka Koikkalainen . The organisation consisted of a network of 40 Eurovision Song Contest fan clubs across Europe and beyond , and is a non @-@ governmental , non @-@ political , and non @-@ profit company . In what had become an annual tradition for the OGAE fan clubs , a voting poll was opened allowing members from the respective clubs to vote for their favourite songs of the 2012 contest . Below are the top five overall results , after all the votes had been cast .

= = = Barbara Dex Award = = =

The Barbara Dex Award has been annually awarded by the fan website House of Eurovision since 1997 , and is a humorous award given to the worst dressed artist each year in the contest . It is named after the Belgian singer Barbara Dex , who came last in the 1993 contest wearing her own self @-@ designed and often @-@ mocked dress .

= = International broadcasts and voting = =

=== Voting and spokespersons ===

The order in which each country announced their vote was determined in a draw following the jury results from final dress rehearsal . Similar to the 2011 contest an algorithm was used to add as much excitement as possible . The spokespersons are shown alongside each country .

Notes<sup>10</sup> . ^ Ireland was originally scheduled to announce its votes as the 32nd country , but instead voted 42nd ( last ) . The reason for this was technical difficulties in the minutes running up to the voting presentation .

=== Commentators ===

Most countries sent commentators to Baku or commentated from their own country , in order to add insight to the participants and , if necessary , the provision of voting information .

=== Participating countries ===

The commentators of the 42 participating countries are as follows :

=== Non @-@ participating countries ===

The commentators of the non @-@ participating countries are :

== Official album ==

Eurovision Song Contest : Baku 2012 was a compilation album put together by the European Broadcasting Union , and released by Universal Music Group on 3 May 2012 . The album featured all the songs from the 2012 contest .