

The Complete & Independent Guide to the Eurovision Song Contest 2015



Austria hosted Eurovision this year with the organisers staging the 60th Contest in the Wiener Stadthalle, in front of an audience of over 16,000 and an estimated record-breaking 197 million television viewers. Broadcaster ORF chose Mirjam Weichselbraun, Alice Tumler and Arabella Kiebauer to present the shows, while last years winner Conchita Wurst mingled in the green room. It was the first time Austria had hosted the contest since 1967. Forty countries participated, three more than last year, with Australia making a guest appearance to celebrate the 60th anniversary, qualifying directly for the Final and voting in both semi-finals. We welcomed back Cyprus and Serbia after a short break and the Czech Republic, after missing the previous five Contests. Sadly we lost Ukraine, an ever-present in the Final since their first entry in 2003, who withdrew due to financial and political reasons around the Ukrainian crisis. Congratulations to Mans Zelmerlow and to Sweden who won Eurovision for the second time in three years. This win moves Sweden into clear second place in the list of most successful Eurovision participants, with six victories, all the more impressive considering two have been this century and under the current voting system. Heroes gained 14 out a possible 20 twelve points in the semi-final. Indeed, Sweden has by far the highest number of 12 points in Finals, being given 111 maximums since 1975. Russia were runners-up but have the honour of receiving the highest score without winning the final and the first to score over 300 points without winning. 2015 was notable in that it was the first time that the winners of the public vote did not finish first. Without the jurys influence, Italy would have won the Contest and Sweden would have finished only third. Despite putting on a spectacular show, Austria failed to gain a single point, the first time a host has suffered the dreaded

nul points. Still, Germany also scored zero, and thanks to the tie-breaker rules, Austria managed to avoid finishing last. And a special mention for Greece and Cyprus who startled everyone watching the voting process by not giving each other 12 points. The meagre eight points Cyprus awarded Greece in the Final was the first time they failed to give 12 to Greece since 1996. Yet again, there were abject performances this year from most of the Big 5, with Italy excepted. The UK, France, Germany and Spain averaged just 6 points each this year, more dismal even than last year. Italys third place was the best by one of the Big 5 (or previously the Big 4), since automatic qualification started in 2004. The 2015 Edition of the Complete & Independent Guide is the 8th edition of the book and as usual its packed with details of every Contest since 1956. Weve expanded the Guide again this year to include extra facts, statistics and records, including the full jury and public vote split rankings for the Final, analysis of how countries have voted for the eventual winners, how debutant countries have fared in light of Australias success, and how the final table would look if it was based on average points received.

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