

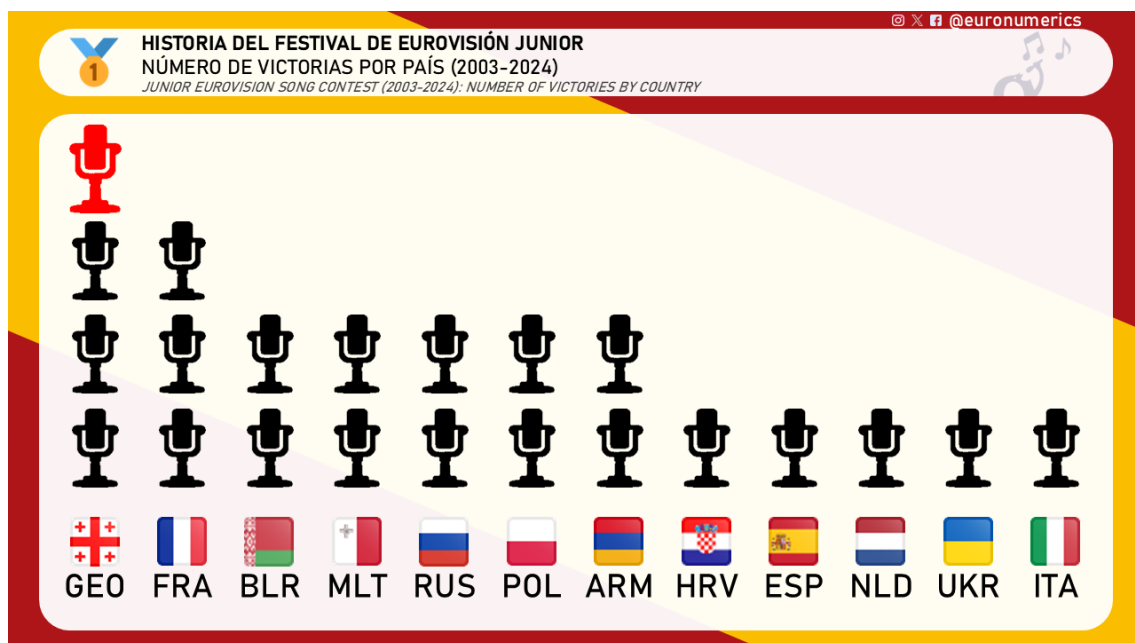
JESC 2024: And Georgia *boomed* the scoreboard

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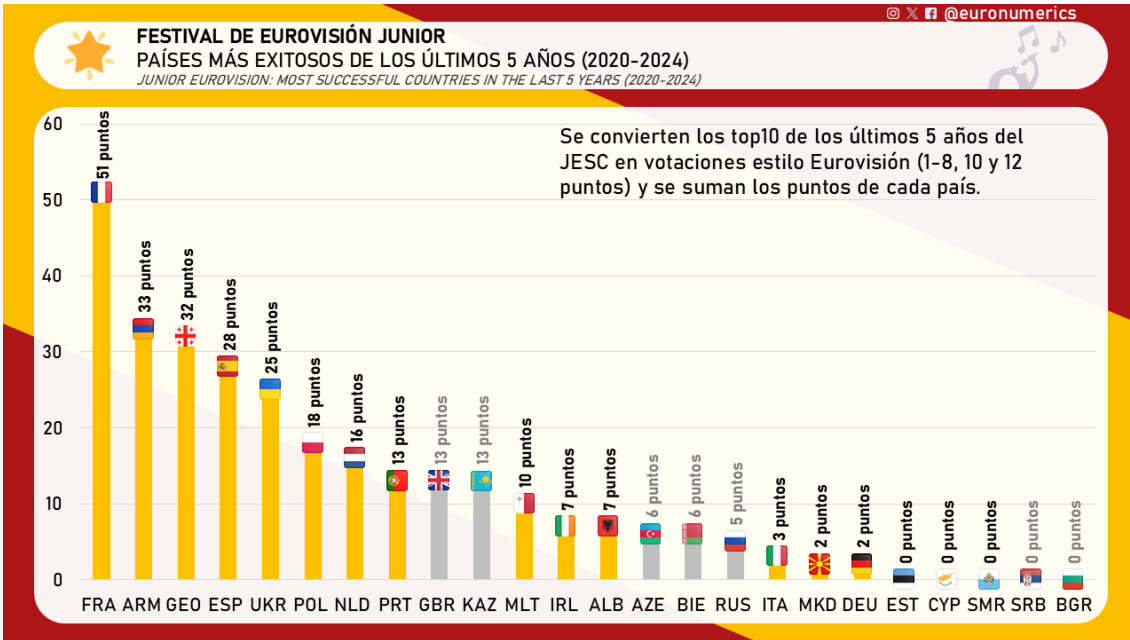
Madrid hosted the 22nd edition of the Junior Eurovision Song Contest, in which Georgia became the four-time champion. In this blog we analyse the results of the Festival, where it was once again evident that the weight of the jury vote can be greater than that of the online televote.

THE JUNIOR OLYMPUS IS ON FIRE

Last year, France achieved its third victory in four years, equalling the three victories that Georgia also had, but which they achieved in a period of 8 years. However, Georgia has taken it very seriously and has achieved its fourth victory in Madrid, once again reigning in Junior Eurovision. Since 2019, with Poland's victory, a new country has not won in the Junior, although these newcomers were half of them in the Magic Box.



In fact, the contest seems to be hijacked by an elite of countries. The following graph represents the success of each country in the JESC as follows: we have taken the results of the last 5 years and assigned Eurovision-style points to the final ranking of each year. For example, this year it would be 12 points for Georgia, 10 for Portugal, 8 for Ukraine, etc. Adding up the points that have been obtained in this way since 2020, the following result is obtained:

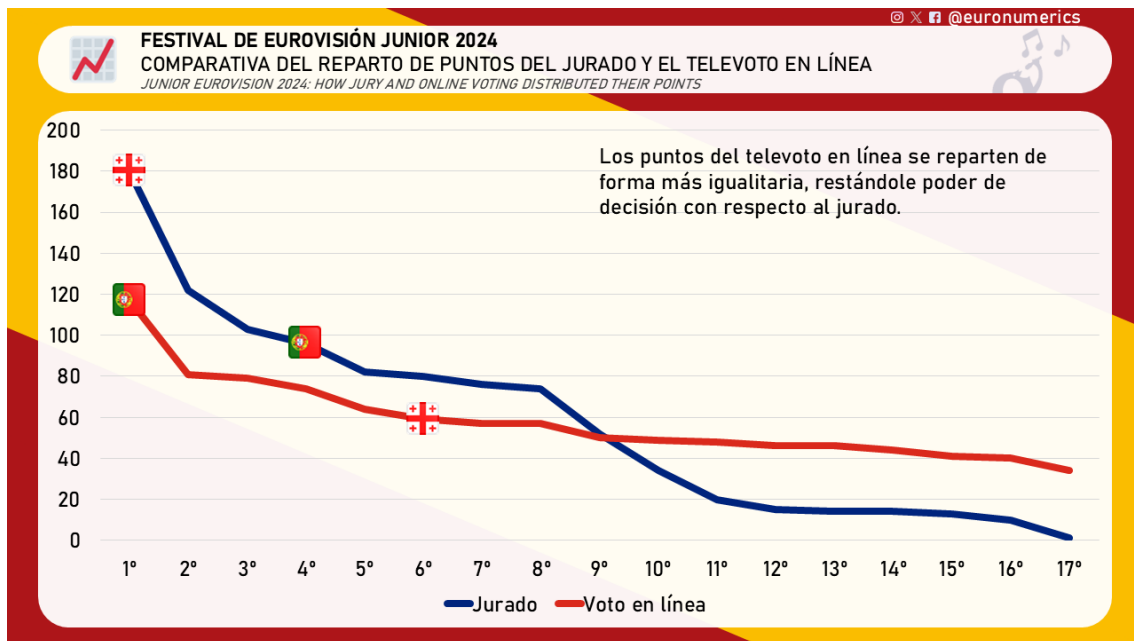


France leads the ranking by a landslide, with 51 points out of a possible 60, being the absolute kings of the competition at present. They are followed by the Caucasian countries, Georgia and Armenia, with around 30 points. 30 points is equivalent to an average of 6 points per year, which is achieved with a 5th place. In other words, these three countries have been occupying 3 places in the top 5, leaving very little room for other countries. The one that has stepped off this bandwagon has been Poland, with its double triumph already far away.

In short, it does not seem that we are facing a very competitive competition: there are only a few countries that share the victories year after year. Will a new country manage to enter this select group? Spain remains fourth in this popularity ranking, being the one with the most points but without victories in the last 5 years.

THE KEY TO THE RESULTS: A TELEVOTING THAT CANNOT TAKE OFF

We have been denouncing it year after year, blog after blog, that the online televoting has no competitive capacity against the jury. The following graph is a classic that we have repeated many times and if you consult previous blogs you will see that the pattern is repeated. In this case the blue line represents the total points awarded for each position by the experts, while the red line represents the total scores of the televoting.



It can be clearly seen that the red line is much flatter, that is, very similar points are distributed. This produces few differences and, therefore, it is very difficult for the televoting to modify the results of the jury. The blue line of the expert vote is much wider. This year, if possible, it has been extremely wide: it has gone from 1 point for San Marino to 180 for Georgia (180 out of 192 possible points).

Georgia won the jury and Portugal the televoting. Portugal was 4th in the experts' poll and Georgia 6th in the audience poll. On average, Portugal would be better, but the differences in points are so great in the jury that the Caucasians still prevailed. In fact, it is quite widespread, Georgia would have won even with only 33 points from the televote, which would be equivalent to being last in the televote.

This does not mean that the televote has no power to decide the winner, but it has less. For example, Ukraine would have won if it had received the 117 points from the televote instead of Portugal. In short, what is observed is that the televote only generates differences for its winner, in this case Portugal; and if it is not blessed by the jury (it was fourth), it is not of much use.

Is this what happens with Eurovision? No. This problem is different. In Eurovision, the televote and the jury have the capacity to be very consensual, although the elimination of the jury in the semi-finals may have helped the jury to concentrate. However, in Junior Eurovision we are faced with two scoring systems that are not the same: the jury can be very equal or very discriminating, while the televoting will always be very equal, except on occasions with its winner. It is the same as we saw for the BenidormFest.

LESS ORNAMENTS AND MORE QUALITY IN THE VOTING SYSTEM

And how can this imbalance between the jury and the audience be resolved? Well, of course, the only way to resolve it is by changing the presentation of the points. This system needs to be rethought to give online voting the weight it is intended to give it, 50%.

That each country should issue a televote vote as with adults is a solution, but it surely implies that countries cannot vote for themselves and loyalty is lost. Another way to resolve it would be to convert the points of each criterion into a simple Eurovision vote and add them up, as is done in many pre-selections. The real differences between the songs are lost, but the system is perfectly 50%-50%. For example, with this system the winner would have been Ukraine, second in both criteria, which would have added 20 points to Portugal's 19 and Georgia's 17. Or even a televote by age as they decided in Melodifestivalen.

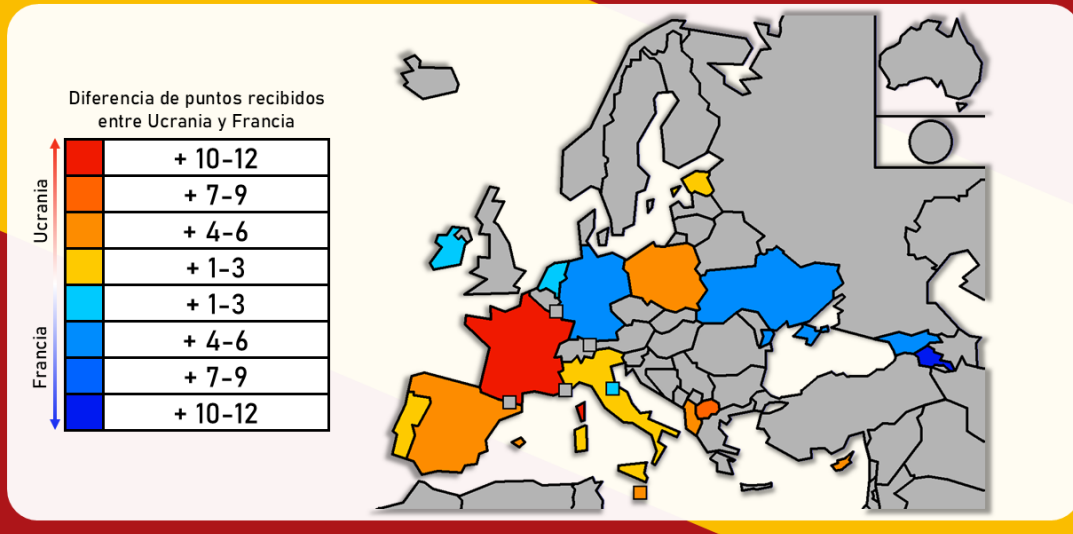
As we mentioned, the change that the organisation has made has been in the presentation of the points. This year it has been better for them than ever because without this change the jury's vote would have been relatively monotonous from the beginning: Georgia would have led from the first vote. On the other hand, this presentation caused us a dramatic, although predictable (not for the graphic designers) Georgian overtaking.

We have seen it in recent years with adults and now also with children: the organisation is more concerned about how the points are awarded, how to make them exciting and attractive; than with developing a more proportionate system in line with what it sells, the equality between jury and televoting. Just as they do not change, in this blog we will not tire of denouncing the inaction of the EBU and the commercialisation of the results.

GEORGIA CAME, SAW... AND BROKE THE SCOREBOARD

Georgia's sweep of the juries is unparalleled. It obtained 180 points out of a possible 192 and did not drop off the podium in any nation. It dropped 4 points in Poland and France and 2 in Macedonia and Germany. Only Ukraine and Portugal surpassed it in these countries, not even France was ahead. However, it is noticeable that in some countries, such as Ireland, Georgia was ahead of France thanks to the exponential of the juries, which rewards high positions.

It did not make much sense to compare Georgia's points with Ukraine, but we have made the comparison between Ukraine, second, and France, third. The following map shows the difference in points obtained by each country. The more intense the red, the more that country voted for Ukraine with respect to France; the more intense the blue, the more that jury voted for France than for Ukraine.

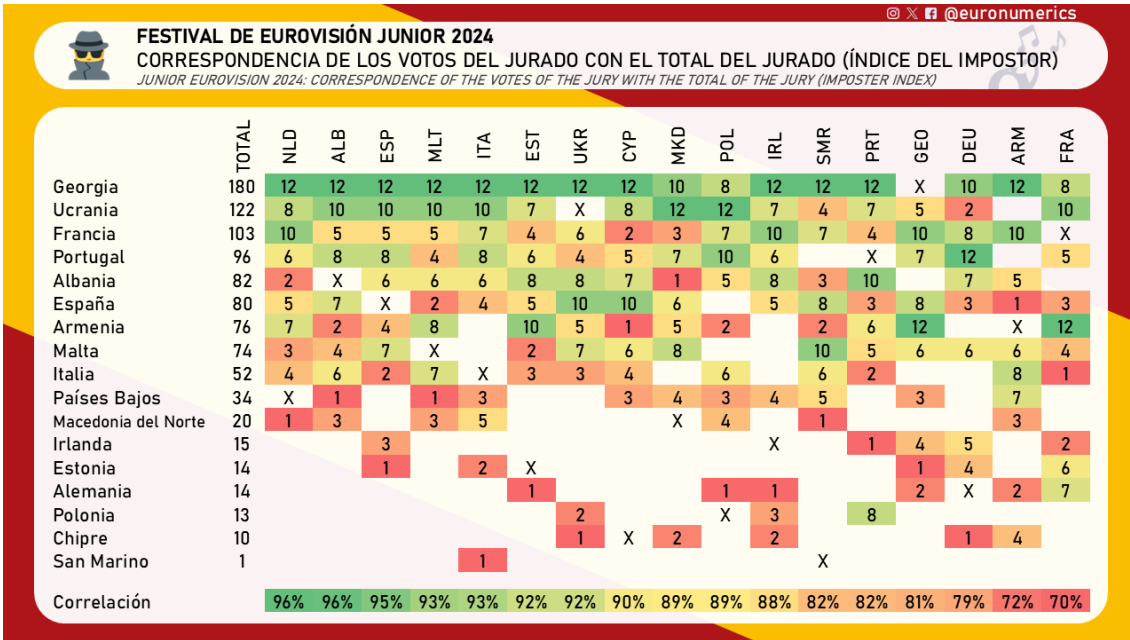


A certain consensus can be seen in the Mediterranean, which opted more for Ukraine than for France. France's southern neighbours did not give it as many points as its northern neighbours (Ireland, the Netherlands, Germany) did. On the other hand, France took points in the Caucasus, breaking the robustness of the pyrrhic Eastern bloc to some extent.

ARMENIA AND FRANCE, IN COMPETITIVE AND SUSPICIOUS MODE

Since France voted in reverse at Junior Eurovision 2020, we like to compile this impostor index, which compares the votes of each country with the overall result to see if there are discrepancies and strategic votes.

The following image represents the score table as follows. In the rows we have the countries ordered by their result in the jury, from Georgia to San Marino. In the columns, there are the votes ordered according to the correlation with the final result of the experts: on the left are the most coherent and on the right the most suspicious. With this ordering, the agreements and discrepancies can be seen more clearly.



The Netherlands was again the jury that voted most in line with the final result of the jury: they were the only ones that gave their three maximum scores to the top3. Albania and Spain completed the podium.

On the negative side we have France and Armenia, the two most successful countries in recent years. The points of their juries have some oddities. For example, France gave its 7 points to Germany, half of what it received; and 6 to Estonia, which only totaled 14. Armenia, on the other hand, forgot about the second and fourth ranked and was the highest voter of Italy, the Netherlands and Cyprus.

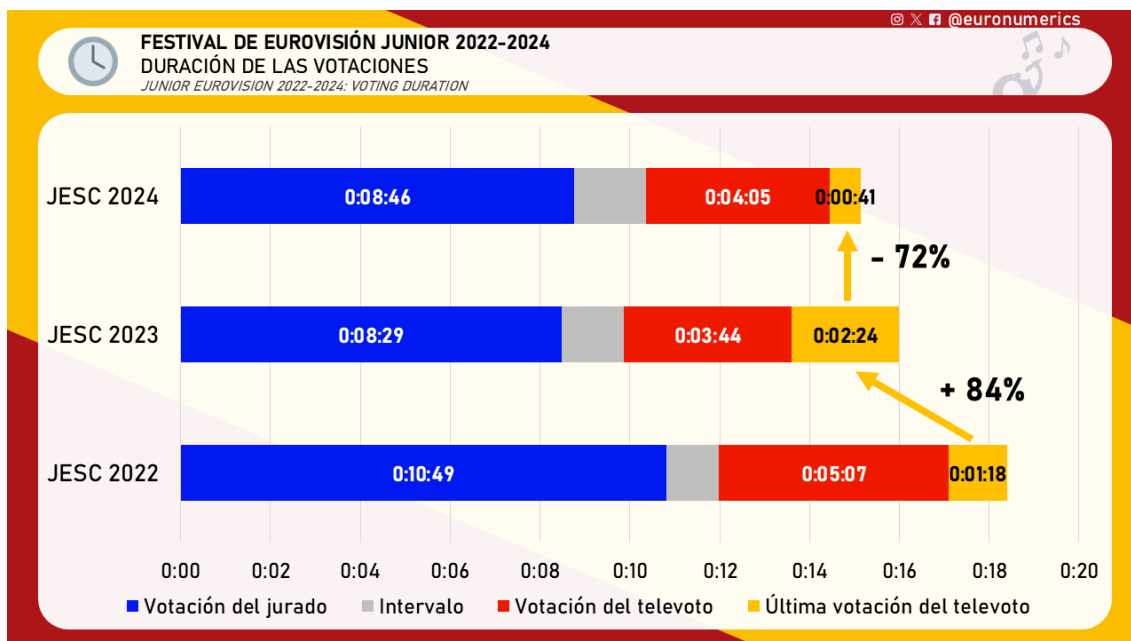
In conclusion, we see again that the most competitive countries tend to be those that vote the strangest.

Taking advantage of the table, a simple observation about Armenia, which was the country with the most polarizing result: it obtained 3 zeros and 2 times 12 points. In addition, it collected a whole variety of points.

THE VOTING: IF YOU BLINK, YOU'LL MISS IT

The Junior voting has recently seemed a bit chaotic and rushed. Last year we already measured the times and found that, although they were reduced in time, the final moment of tension lasted longer than it should have.

In the following graph we have compiled this information again. The blue bar shows the time that the jury's voting lasted. The grey space is the interval between the jury's points and the televoting, when the presenters explain the audience's vote and which this year included the big ice cream party. The red block is the televoting scores, reserving the orange area for the announcement of the last vote that determines the winner. Just a slight nuance, this year 17 countries voted, compared to 16 in the last two years.

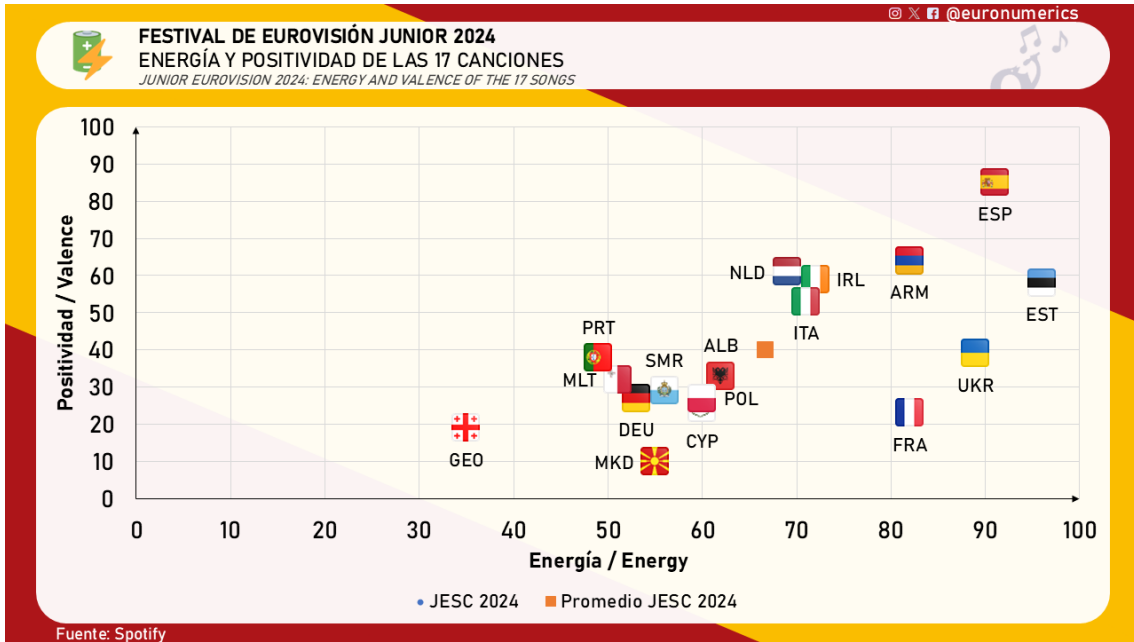


Although the new distribution of jury points seemed to be fast, its duration and speed was similar to 2023. The televoting was also a little longer, something that we can attribute to having one more participant. The biggest variation has again occurred in the final announcement of the winner. The final moment between Portugal and Georgia lasted just 41 seconds, when last year it lasted 2 minutes and 24 seconds. This represents a reduction of 72%. It was settled quickly.

In total, the voting was reduced by around one minute compared to last year and 3 minutes compared to 2022.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DIFFERENTIATING YOURSELF

A brief overview of the analysis of musicality offered by Spotify. The following graph shows the energy and positivity that this application gives to the songs, who knows how. Simply highlighting how Georgia stands out from the rest, in the area of lower energy and positivity. Standing out does not mean success, but it is an ingredient that can catapult you to success. If we had had similar songs, it could have gone more unnoticed.



This year, the songs with lower energy levels have triumphed: Georgia, Portugal and the surprise from Malta. This contrasts with last year's data, in which the most energetic songs triumphed.

These are, broadly speaking, the numbers that Junior Eurovision leaves us in Madrid. The EBU should leave marketing and dedicate itself a little more to the contest. We cannot close this blog without congratulating Chloe DelaRosa for her magnificent performance, you have a very promising future; and also RTVE for making a festival that, although they straitjacketed us, was up to par and was very much ours.