

# Euroburnout: When voices go silent at Eurovision

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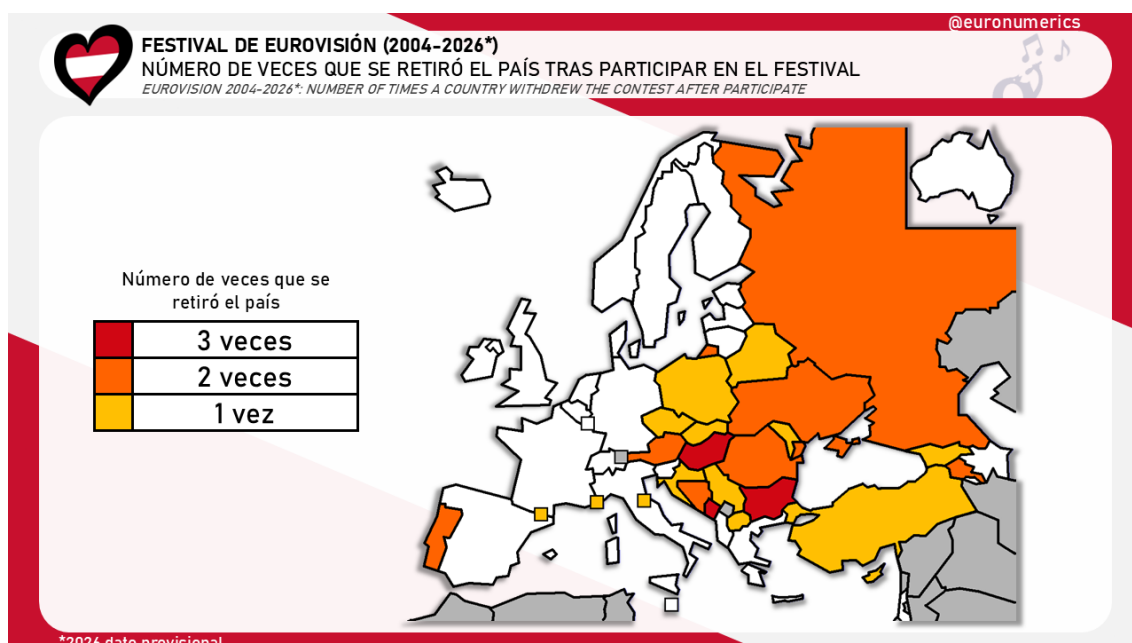
The 2026 Eurovision season is off to a strong start. Eurovision has always been a reflection of European reality from every perspective. Withdrawals are an example of these social reactions, and that's why we're going to analyze this phenomenon on the blog. We'll look at the causes and consequences, and we'll create an index, Euroburnout, to observe which countries accumulate the most frustration and burnout year after year.

## THE BIG DECISION: WITHDRAWING FROM EUROVISION

The world is currently experiencing a very turbulent situation, with conflicts escalating rather than being resolved. And Eurovision is no exception. There is much debate now about whether Eurovision is political or not. Both perspectives fall short. The Festival is a reflection, a social, demographic, historical, and also political snapshot of Europe and its inhabitants. Therefore, conflicts also impact the competition, just as other phenomena do, such as migration, economic growth, or globalization/isolation.

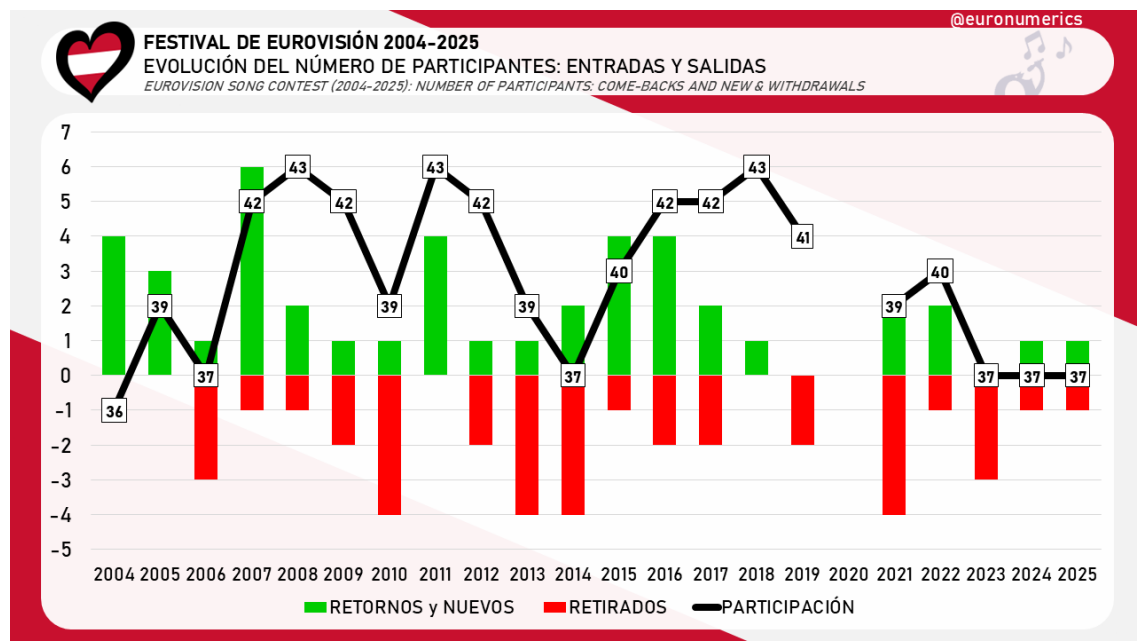
The genocide in Gaza, as defined by the UN, has led some countries to consider withdrawing from the Festival if a certain country is allowed to participate. These withdrawals are political in nature, but also social because they reflect the expressions of the peoples of Europe. There are other types of withdrawals, such as those related to poor results (Turkey, Czechia at his time, etc.), economic ones (Romania, Bosnia, etc.), and even sanctions (Belarus). And others are multi-causal, a combination of two or more.

Although the cases are varied, these withdrawals or absences are not distributed equally across Europe. The following map shows how many times a country has withdrawn (or been excluded) after having participated in Eurovision at least once, since 2004.



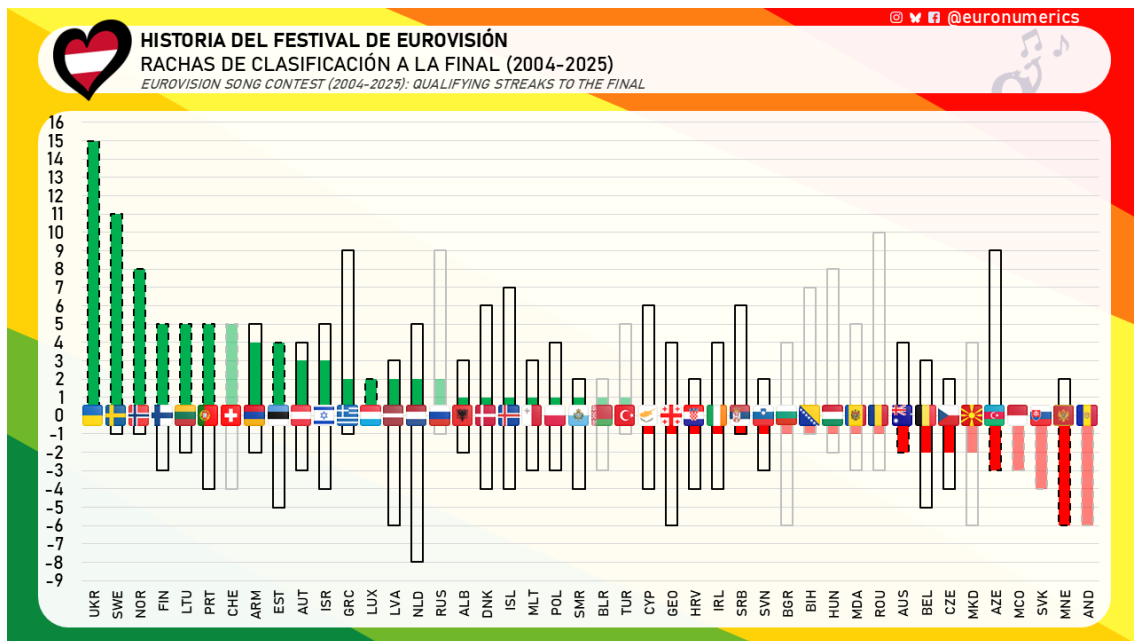
Most are concentrated in Eastern Europe. Despite the number of countries, almost all of them have withdrawn at some point. And depending on what is decided in November, more could be added to the list. The West, more fixed on its participation, could see the first absences in years from historic countries, revealing the magnitude of current events.

Withdrawals are a concept that is very present every year. The following graph shows the evolution of the number of Eurovision participants since Istanbul 2004 (when the semi-finals were introduced), emphasizing the number of returns and debuts (green) and withdrawals (red).



After the boom in entries in 2004-2005, only two editions did not record an absence or withdrawal (2011 and 2018). In other words, we are accustomed to a country withdrawing every year. However, with the number of participants at a record low, it is difficult for the EBU to avoid a decline in participation, setting a negative record since the introduction of the semi-finals.

Withdrawals are often linked to poor results. Below are the qualifying streaks for all countries: positive in green and negative in red.



All the countries no longer participating and on a winning streak (Russia, Belarus, and Turkey) left the Festival for political reasons. Of the negative ones, some also did so for economic reasons. Some have left after terrible runs, such as Monaco, Slovakia, Andorra, and the intermittent Montenegro. In other words, these streaks are also an indicator of possible withdrawals and the reasons behind them.

## BURNOUT: FRUSTRATION THAT LEADS TO WITHDRAWAL

As we've seen, poor results can lead to withdrawal. Therefore, it's worth asking, which countries have had the worst results recently? How has this historical trend been?

To this end, we created the Euroburnout Index. Burnout is known in the workplace as the exhaustion and frustration of a worker. In this case, we want to reflect in numbers a country's frustration with its poor results. To do this, we developed an index based on the most recent ranks in each country. The worse the results, the higher its value, and the more burned out the country will be with its performance.

## TO LEARN MORE... CALCULATION OF THE BURNOUT INDEX

For the calculation, we compiled all the historical positions of all Eurovision countries and put them in proportion to the number of participants, subtracting 1 from the numerator and denominator so that the lowest value is 0 (when it wins) and the highest is 1 (when it finishes last). For example, if a country finishes 11th out of 21 countries, its ratio is  $(11-1)/(21-1) = 10/20 = 0.5$  or 50%.

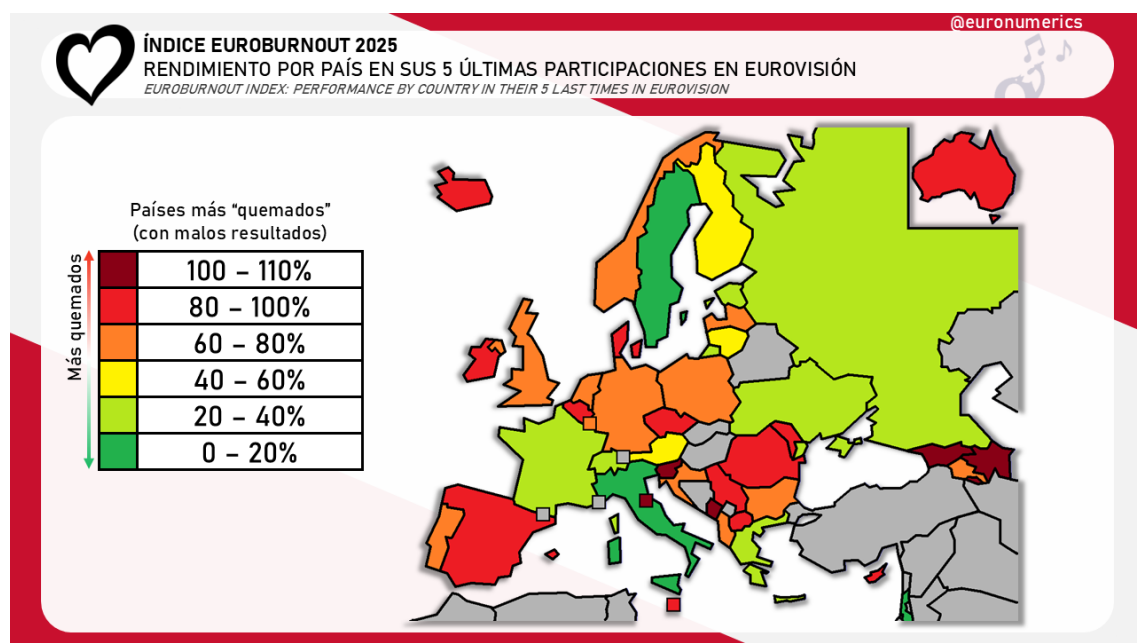
For countries that do not qualify for the final, an arbitrary value was set. After several tests, 1.1 (or 110%) seemed quite adequate.

Finally, we decided to calculate the index for each country's last 5 years, which may or may not be consecutive editions. We also weighted them so that recent editions count more: the most recent edition counts twice as much as the next, and so on until the fifth. To give you an idea, the most recent index accounts for 50%, and the fifth, around 3%.

Roughly speaking, these are the index calculations. The higher the index, the worse the performance, and vice versa.

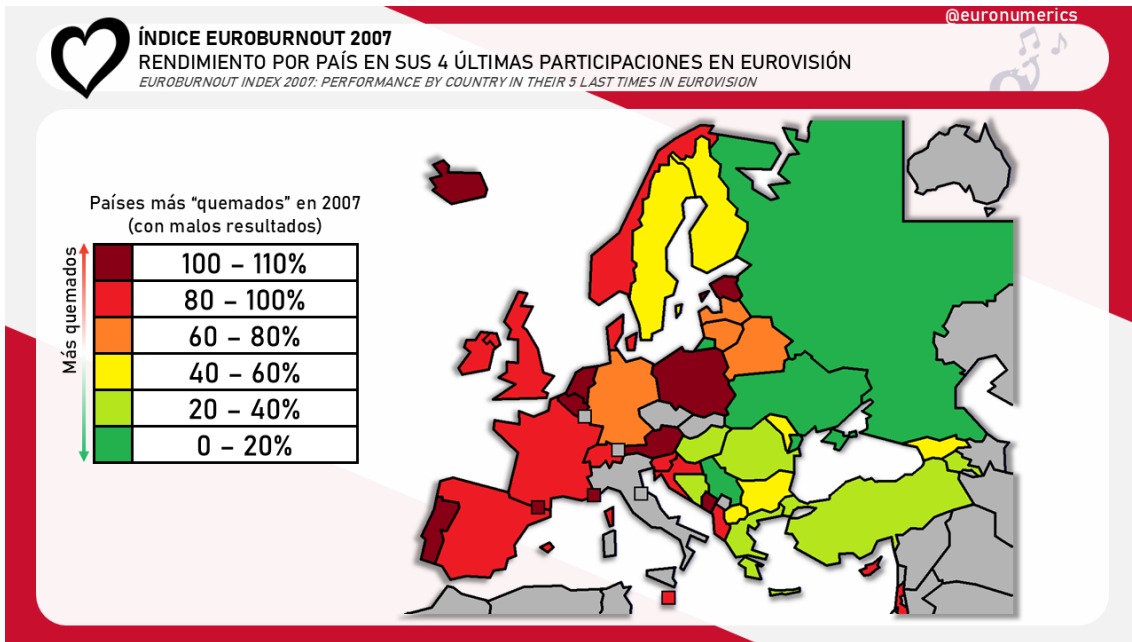
## FRUSTRATION SPREAD ACROSS EUROPE

If we calculate this Euroburnout index for 2025 using the last five results for each country, we obtain the following map. The redder and more intense the color, the higher the Euroburnout index and the worse the results. The shades of green show the countries that have had the best results recently.



Looking at geography, the Caucasus, the Balkans, and the smaller countries are currently the areas of greatest frustration. Montenegro is the most burned-out country, having never qualified for the final in its last five participations. The case of Central Europe is curious: from the upper middle of Europe onward, they are more burned out than from the lower middle of Europe onward.

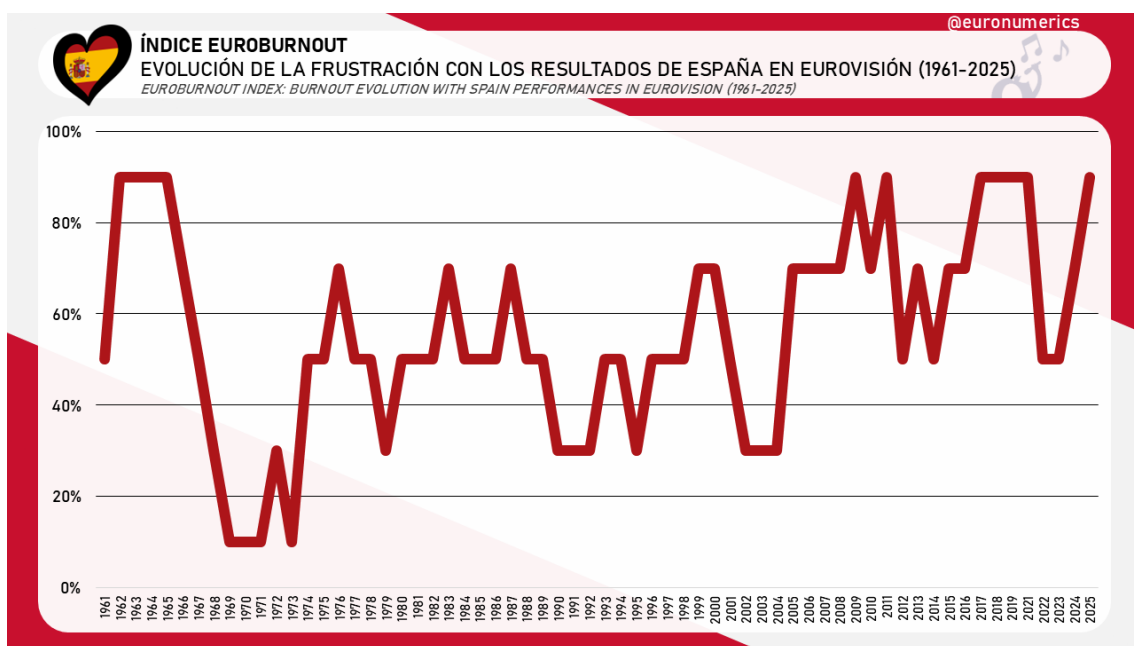
In general, there isn't a very clear geographical pattern. Have we had this in other years? Let's go back to 2007, considering only the last four participations for each country (to cover, in general, from 2004 to 2007). The result is revealed in the map below.



In recent years, the Eastern European countries, with the televoting in their favor, dominated the competition, as reflected in the distribution of colors: the Western countries were much more defeated (Benelux, Big 4, microstates). All the countries with good results are on the right side of the map (Ukraine, Serbia, Turkey, etc.).

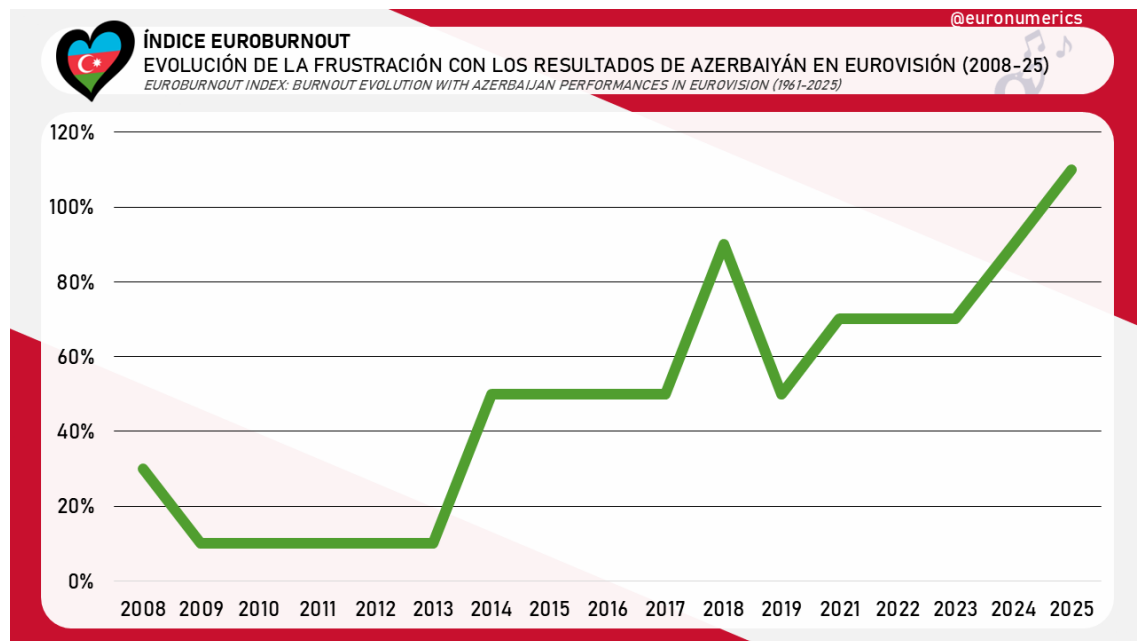
### THE EVOLUTION OF SPANISH FRUSTRATION: BACK TO THEIR OWN WAY

This Euroburnout index can also be viewed from a time perspective. How has frustration evolved in each country? Are there trends or changes in behavior? In this timeline, we can see Spain's simplified evolution, where the points for each year only reflect the range of the index (0 to 20%, 20 to 40%, etc.).



Our debut wasn't very glorious, but we soon experienced a golden age with our two consecutive triumphs. Since then, Spain has had a bit of everything until the explosion of countries in the 2000s. Since then, Spain has accumulated years and years in the maximum burnout zone (80-100%). The "Chanelazo" was a moment of recovery, but we're back to our old ways now. Will we be able to escape burnout with the changes at the Benidorm Fest?

We could list each country's performances, but to highlight one, let it be Azerbaijan.



This country debuted with great success, achieving a victory and several top-five finishes. But since 2014, it has been racking up mediocre and poor finishes, increasing its frustration index to the maximum. In fact, this is the first time it has failed to reach the final for the third consecutive time.

In short, countries withdraw from Eurovision for many reasons, and they are part of the social reflection of Europe that the Festival represents. Many leave the festival due to poor results, and we can measure the level of discontent to get an idea of which countries may be flirting with withdrawal. But it isn't always negative; it can open a period of reflection and renewal. How will the withdrawal phenomenon be reflected in Eurovision this year?