Eurovision Asia 2026: Early voting patterns in Asia

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Eurovision Asia has finally become a reality. The Philippines emerged as the winner in this inaugural competition, which featured eleven participants. The organizers have not been very transparent regarding the results; we only know what was revealed that night. Nevertheless, in this blog, we are working with the available information to analyze the voting and attempt to uncover the initial voting patterns in Asia.

EUROVISION ASIA: THE FIRST EDITION

What did you think of Eurovision Asia? On a personal note, it reminded me of years past—back when Eurovision wasn't so widely exposed or such a "public phenomenon." While some performances or attitudes might have seemed a bit amateurish—especially when compared to the European version—that distinct, different quality was actually quite refreshing. The languages, gestures, and rhythms from this handful of countries offered something far removed from what we are accustomed to. Regardless of the overall quality, Eurovision Asia serves as an opportunity to explore new corners of the globe and broaden our horizons.

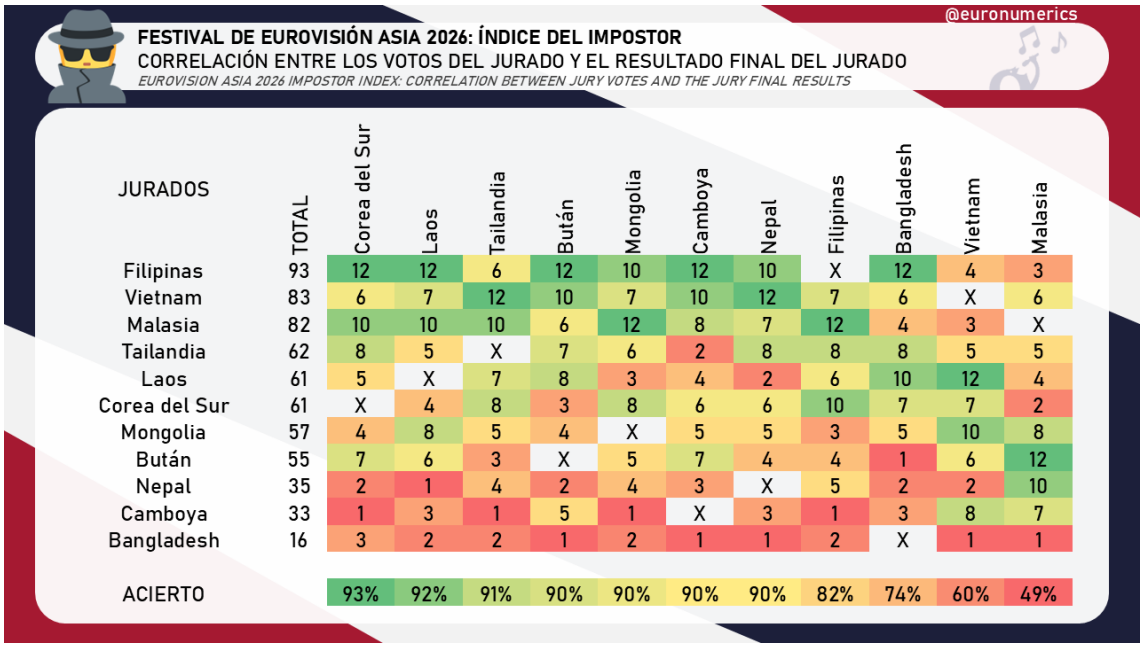
The format shared many similarities with the original European version, including the voting system. However, there were notable differences regarding transparency: the detailed breakdowns from individual jurors and the televote were never published. In fact, it appears that once the festival concluded, the organizers provided no further follow-up or updates.

Consequently, even though we lack extensive data, we've posed the following questions: Are there voting patterns similar to those seen in Europe? Which country clusters can be identified? And what were the jury voting trends like in Eurovision Asia?

MALAYSIA: THE "IMPOSTOR" COUNTRY AWARD

Malaysia not only stood out for censoring certain scenes during this first Asian edition of the contest, but it also takes home our annual award for the country with the most suspicious voting record.

The table below displays the votes cast by each national jury (represented in the columns). They are arranged from left to right based on how closely their individual votes aligned with the final jury results: those further to the left showed greater alignment, while those further to the right cast more suspicious votes.



JURADOS	TOTAL	Corea del Sur	Laos	Tailandia	Bután	Mongolia	Camboya	Nepal	Filipinas	Bangladesh	Vietnam	Malasia
Filipinas	93	12	12	6	12	10	12	10	X	12	4	3
Vietnam	83	6	7	12	10	7	10	12	7	6	X	6
Malasia	82	10	10	10	6	12	8	7	12	4	3	X
Tailandia	62	8	5	X	7	6	2	8	8	8	5	5
Laos	61	5	X	7	8	3	4	2	6	10	12	4
Corea del Sur	61	X	4	8	3	8	6	6	10	7	7	2
Mongolia	57	4	8	5	4	X	5	5	3	5	10	8
Bután	55	7	6	3	X	5	7	4	4	1	6	12
Nepal	35	2	1	4	2	4	3	X	5	2	2	10
Camboya	33	1	3	1	5	1	X	3	1	3	8	7
Bangladesh	16	3	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	X	1	1
ACIERTO		93%	92%	91%	90%	90%	90%	90%	82%	74%	60%	49%

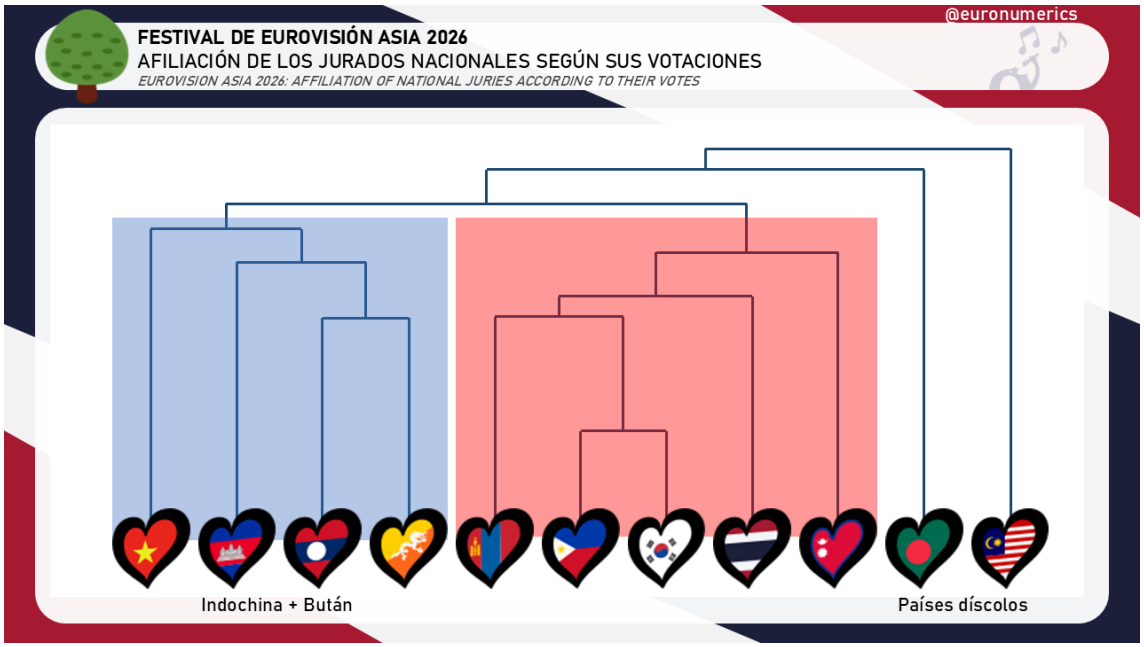
South Korea showed the highest level of alignment, at 93%. In general, most countries scored above 90%, indicating a strong consensus. At the lower end, we find Vietnam at 60% and Malaysia at a meager 49%. These figures suggest that both countries voted more or less at random. The metric would likely have been even worse, were it not for the fact that—even with such erratic voting—they still both agreed that Bangladesh's entry was the worst song.

Both countries were in the running for the win, reminding us of those nations that, when positioned as favorites, cast their votes strategically to maximize their own chances of victory. Perhaps we aren't so different after all.

HAS INDOCHINA RETURNED?

In previous posts, we've observed that televoting follows clear patterns rooted in European sociodemographics (such as the Soviet, Nordic, and Yugoslav blocs). Jury voting is generally less susceptible to these influences—appearing more neutral—yet it still retains certain nuances. Since we only have jury data for Eurovision Asia, can we identify any voting patterns among the participating countries?

The following chart illustrates how the 11 countries cluster together based on the similarity of their votes. Each country follows a line, and as they converge, they form groups that can be analyzed at various levels. This chart is known as a dendrogram.



Starting from the right, we can see that Malaysia and Bangladesh are the last countries to join the rest. This indicates that their voting patterns differed from the others—a finding consistent with the previous table, as both countries distributed their points in a way that was notably distinct from the rest. Conversely, South Korea and the Philippines are the first to join, meaning their voting patterns were the most similar.

The remaining countries can be divided into two blocks. The blue block on the left is particularly striking; in addition to Bhutan, it includes Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. These three nations once comprised French Indochina—a French colonial territory that was partitioned and gained independence shortly before Lys Assia's victory, eventually leading to the devastating Vietnam War. I encourage you to look at maps and explore this history further (you might even discover that this is where "Cochinchina" is located).

While the evidence is limited, it draws a parallel to the Eurovision Song Contest: countries with a shared history often exhibit similar—or distinct—voting patterns, though not necessarily exclusively with one another. We would need to examine televoting data or wait for future editions of the contest to confirm this connection.

There is also insufficient data to determine whether religion—acting through culture—has played a role. Bangladesh and Malaysia have the highest Muslim populations (and were the countries whose voting patterns differed the most from the rest). Buddhism is widespread in every country except the winner, the Philippines. As for Hinduism, its primary representatives here—Nepal and Bhutan—did not fare particularly well in the final standings. And that is not even considering the languages: there is an unprecedented level of linguistic diversity, with English playing only a marginal role.

In short, the voting results reveal certain similarities that we also observe in the Eurovision Song Contest. It is still too early to say how the Asian countries will relate to one another, but thanks

to this first edition, we have already gained an awareness of Asia's richness—as well as the steps that still need to be taken. Will Eurovision Asia manage to survive its inaugural edition?