

Eurovision – can it come to Edinburgh?

The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) and the BBC have confirmed that the Eurovision Song Contest to be held in 2023 cannot be held in Ukraine due to the ongoing invasion by Russia.

The UK won second place and so the competition will be held here instead on behalf of the winning broadcaster Ukraine's UA:PBC. But where in the UK? Bidding is expected to be competitive, with several mayors, councillors and MPs already informally expressing an intention to bid, including representatives from: Aberdeen, Belfast, Birmingham, Brighton, Bristol, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Manchester, Leeds, Liverpool, London, Newcastle, Nottingham, Sheffield and Wolverhampton.

Former Lord Provost Cllr Frank Ross wonders whether anyone in Edinburgh is talking about the possibility. Council Leader Cammy Day has tweeted that he would like Glasgow and Edinburgh to work together on plans for 2023.

Cllr Cammy Day said: "Edinburgh had the pleasure of hosting Eurovision 50 years ago at our very own Usher Hall – the first time it had been held outside London. Of course, I'd far rather the event was being held in Kyiv but, as its sister city and new home to many thousands of Ukrainians, Edinburgh would be a fitting host. Clearly, the scale of the event has grown since 1972, but we'll look at all options and make a

decision on whether to bid as soon as we can.”

There is a list of expectations from the Eurovision Song Contest – and one of these is that the venue must be able to accommodate at least 10,000 spectators with a press centre, be in easy reach of an international airport and have plenty of hotel accommodation.

Lothian MSP Miles Briggs said: “It has now been confirmed that Eurovision will be held in the United Kingdom next year and Edinburgh would be an excellent destination for hosting the event.

“Edinburgh has a strong track record of holding international events, including the 17th Eurovision Song Contest back in 1972.

“Kyiv and Edinburgh have been sister cities for over 30 years and it would be a nice touch for the capital to host Eurovision, with Ukraine understandably unable to hold the competition.

“I have written to Edinburgh Council backing a bid for Edinburgh to host Eurovision 2023.”

The Host Bidding Contest has now begun and the BBC will work to develop Ukrainian elements of shows. The BBC has staged the Eurovision Song Contest more times than any other broadcaster, hosting in London in 1960, 1963, 1968 and 1977, Edinburgh in 1972, Brighton in 1974, Harrogate in 1982 and Birmingham in 1998.

Were you at the contest in 1972? If so do tell us what your memories are of the event.

Martin Österdahl, the Eurovision Song Contest’s Executive Supervisor said: “We’re exceptionally grateful that the BBC has accepted to stage the Eurovision Song Contest in the UK in 2023

“The BBC has taken on hosting duties for other winning countries on four previous occasions. Continuing in this tradition of solidarity, we know that next year’s Contest will showcase the creativity and skill of one of Europe’s most experienced public broadcasters whilst ensuring this year’s winners, Ukraine, are celebrated and represented throughout the event.”

Mykola Chernotytskyi, Head of the Managing Board of UA:PBC, added: “The 2023 Eurovision Song Contest will not be in Ukraine but in support of Ukraine. We are grateful to our BBC partners for showing solidarity with us. I am confident that together we will be able to add Ukrainian spirit to this event and once again unite the whole of Europe around our common values of peace, support, celebrating diversity and talent.”

Tim Davie, Director-General of the BBC said: “It is a matter of great regret that our colleagues and friends in Ukraine are not able to host the 2023 Eurovision Song Contest. Being asked to host the largest and most complex music competition in the world is a great privilege. The BBC is committed to making the event a true reflection of Ukrainian culture alongside showcasing the diversity of British music and creativity. The BBC will now begin the process to find a Host City to partner with us on delivering one of the most exciting events to come to the UK in 2023.”

The dates for the 2023 Eurovision Song Contest will be announced in due course.

The logo for the Eurovision Song Contest 2023 is centered on a rectangular background with a vertical color gradient. The gradient starts with a dark purple at the top, transitions through blue, and ends in a bright blue at the bottom. The text is white and consists of three lines: 'EUROVISION' in a stylized, handwritten font where the 'O' is a heart shape; 'SONG CONTEST' in a clean, sans-serif font; and '2023' in a smaller, clean, sans-serif font.

EUROVISION
SONG CONTEST
2023