

C1-C2 Worksheet: Bulgaria's Eurovision Breakthrough - 19 May 2026

Article

Bulgaria's first Eurovision victory has turned into a case study in how live performance can shift cultural perception almost overnight. At the 70th Eurovision Song Contest in Vienna, singer Dara won with Bangaranga, an energetic entry that had not been widely tipped as the inevitable winner before the final. Yet the performance managed to win over both juries and viewers, racking up 516 points and giving Bulgaria a breakthrough moment after years of mixed results. The result suggests that Eurovision success rarely comes down to the song alone; staging, timing, personality and narrative all have to line up under intense public scrutiny.

Part of Dara's appeal lay in the way the performance built on recognisable pop energy while drawing on Bulgarian identity and personal struggle. Reports after the contest highlighted the song's links with tradition and anxiety, giving what might have looked like a simple party anthem a more layered emotional frame. That combination helped the act stand out in a field crowded with polished choreography, elaborate visuals and carefully engineered hooks. In a contest where entries can easily blur into one another, Dara appeared to pull off the difficult task of seeming both accessible and distinctive.

The victory also raises broader questions about what Eurovision has become. For some viewers, it is still an exuberant spectacle and celebration of music, costume and national self-expression. For others, it is a huge branding exercise in which countries try to show off creativity, modernity and soft power in three minutes. Bulgaria's homecoming celebrations show how quickly a song contest can spill over into national pride and cultural visibility. Whether the win will translate into lasting support for Bulgarian artists remains uncertain, but for one weekend Eurovision gave a smaller music market an unusually large stage.

True/False

Decide if each statement is True (T) or False (F).

1. The article presents Bulgaria's Eurovision win as significant because it was the country's first victory.
2. Dara's song is described as having been the obvious favourite long before the final.
3. The writer suggests that Eurovision success depends on more than the song itself.
4. The article says Dara's performance had no link to Bulgarian identity or personal experience.
5. The second paragraph suggests that standing out is difficult because Eurovision performances are often highly polished.
6. The article describes Eurovision only as a small musical event with little cultural meaning.
7. Bulgaria's celebrations are used to show how Eurovision can connect with national pride.
8. The writer says it is certain that the win will permanently transform Bulgaria's music industry.

Phrase Match

Match the phrases (1-10) to the correct definitions (A-J).

Phrases (1-10)	Definitions (A-J)
1. turned into	A. to depend mainly on something
2. tipped as	B. to persuade people to support or like something
3. win over	C. to succeed in doing something difficult
4. racking up	D. to use something as a base or foundation
5. comes down to	E. to spread into another area or situation
6. line up	F. to become something different
7. built on	G. to be clearly noticeable or different
8. stand out	H. to accumulate a large amount
9. pull off	I. to be predicted or regarded as likely
10. spill over into	J. to fit together or happen in the right way

Synonym Match

Match the words (1-10) to the correct synonyms (A-J).

Words (1-10)	Synonyms (A-J)
1. spectacle	A. examination
2. perception	B. lively
3. inevitable	C. view
4. scrutiny	D. enduring
5. distinctive	E. unclear
6. exuberant	F. prominence
7. visibility	G. approachable
8. lasting	H. unavoidable
9. uncertain	I. recognisable
10. accessible	J. display

Use the new language

Please choose 5 words or phrases and make your own sentence using the new word or phrase.

Discussion Questions

Student A

1. Do you watch Eurovision, or is it not your kind of music event?
2. What makes a live performance memorable for you?
3. Can a song win people over even if it is not your usual style?
4. Why do some performances stand out while others are quickly forgotten?
5. Is Eurovision more about music, entertainment, national identity or spectacle?
6. Do you think a surprise win is more exciting than a predictable result?
7. What kind of performance usually works well on television?
8. Can a song contest really change how people see a country?

Student B

1. To what extent does Eurovision reward musical quality rather than narrative, staging and timing?
2. Why might a three-minute performance carry such cultural weight for a smaller music market?
3. Does national identity make a song more interesting, or can it become a marketing device?
4. How far is Eurovision a soft-power platform rather than simply an entertainment show?
5. Can authenticity be engineered in a performance, or does it have to feel spontaneous?
6. What does a contest like Eurovision reveal about the relationship between audiences and juries?
7. Should countries use Eurovision to showcase local culture, or aim for a more universal pop sound?
8. Will viral staging and visual impact become even more important than the song itself in future contests?

Answer Key

True/False: 1=T, 2=F, 3=T, 4=F, 5=T, 6=F, 7=T, 8=F

Phrase Match: 1=F, 2=I, 3=B, 4=H, 5=A, 6=J, 7=D, 8=G, 9=C, 10=E

Synonym Match: 1=J, 2=C, 3=H, 4=A, 5=I, 6=B, 7=F, 8=D, 9=E, 10=G

Example sentences with the phrases

1. The small concert turned into a national talking point.
2. The singer was tipped as a possible winner after the semi-final.
3. A sincere performance can win over even sceptical viewers.
4. The charity single ended up racking up millions of streams.
5. In Eurovision, success often comes down to staging as much as vocals.
6. Everything has to line up for a live performance to feel effortless.
7. The new song built on traditional rhythms and modern production.
8. A simple idea can stand out if it is performed with confidence.
9. It is hard to pull off a dramatic costume change on live television.
10. The excitement of the win spilled over into street celebrations.