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Russia Barred from Eurovision 2022 Over Ukraine Invasion

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Last year's Russian contestant Manizha was among the several dozen Russian artists, celebrities and other public figures who have voiced opposition to the war. **AP / TASS**

Russia was on Friday kicked out of this year's Eurovision Song Contest after President Vladimir Putin launched an invasion of neighboring Ukraine.

"A Russian entry in this year's Contest would bring the competition into disrepute," the European Broadcasting Union said in a statement.

The decision to ban Russia followed a recommendation by the EBU's governing body, support by its television committee and wide-ranging consultations among members, the statement said.

In addition to banning Russia from sending a musical act to the contest, Russians will also be unable to cast votes for its winner.

Russian Senator Sergei Tsekov accused the European songwriting competition of being

politicized but expressed indifference to the ban.

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The EBU said in the statement it is an "apolitical member organization of broadcasters committed to upholding the values of public service."

"We remain dedicated to protecting the values of a cultural competition which promotes international exchange and understanding, brings audiences together, celebrates diversity through music and unites Europe on one stage."

Last year's Russian contestant Manizha was among the several dozen Russian artists, celebrities and other public figures who have voiced opposition to the war by posting black squares on their Instagram accounts.

"The current aggression is against my will, the will of my family and I believe the will of our peoples," Manizha wrote.

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