The Moscow Times
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Putin Signs Decree Creating Russian Eurovision Alternative

February 03, 2025



Russian singer Manizha performs at Eurovision in 2021. **Peter Dejong / AP / TASS**

President Vladimir Putin on Monday signed a decree establishing a Russian version of Eurovision, the state-run TASS news agency reported.

The competition, called Intervision, is set to take place in Moscow and the surrounding region later this year. Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Chernyshenko has been appointed chairman of the organizing committee, while domestic policy chief Sergei Kiriyenko will chair the supervisory board.

Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov said in December that more than 25 countries, including several in Latin America, had expressed interest in participating. Mikhail Shvydkoi, Putin's special representative for international cultural cooperation, previously said about 20 countries had confirmed their participation, including all BRICS nations.

The original Soviet-era Intervision music competition was held between 1965 and 1968, and then later between 1977 and 1980, as the Eastern bloc's answer to Eurovision.

Russia was banned from Eurovision in February 2022 following its full-scale invasion of Ukraine.

Many Russian artists have competed in Eurovision, including Alla Pugacheva, Philipp Kirkorov, Little Big and Manizha. Singer Bilan remains Russia's only Eurovision winner, taking the title in 2008 with his song "Believe."

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