# Eurovision voting exposes divide in Irish public opinion on Israel-Palestine conflict



Amid significant public demonstrations in Ireland supporting Palestine, a recent Eurovision public vote has ignited concerns about the level of support for Israel among the Irish populace, revealing a rift between public sentiment and political actions. While thousands rallied in cities like Dublin and Belfast against the ongoing violence in Gaza, awarding 10 points to Israel during the Eurovision Song Contest has left many activists confounded.

The stark contrast was evident over the weekend, with tens of thousands protesting in Dublin, standing in solidarity with Palestinians amidst devastating reports of over 53,000 casualties—predominantly women and children—due to the Israeli offensive in Gaza. Initiatives like Gaels for Gaza in Belfast aimed to raise funds for humanitarian aid, underscoring the urgent need for compassion and action among Irish citizens in these contentious times.

The Irish government has professed strong backing for the Palestinian cause, with recent recognition of Palestinian statehood highlighting its ongoing commitment to advocacy. Yet, this government’s approach has been criticized for being more performative than effective, particularly against the backdrop of a soaring humanitarian crisis. Prominent officials have condemned Israeli military actions, but their words lack the substance necessary for meaningful change.

The Eurovision results have complicated this narrative. Israel’s representative, Yuval Raphael, a survivor of the October 7 Hamas attack, surprisingly garnered 10 points from Ireland, finishing second overall. This result has prompted backlash from those who see it as a stark contradiction to the overwhelming pro-Palestinian sentiment expressed in public protests. Zoe Lawson, chairperson of the Irish Palestine Solidarity Campaign, voiced her disbelief at the voting outcome, suggesting that it could represent a skewed demographic disconnected from the true views of the Irish populace. Concerns have proliferated over social media, where the integrity of the voting process has been called into question, revealing a troubling trend of individuals boasting about voting multiple times for Israel.

In light of this controversy, activists are calling for a boycott of the Eurovision Song Contest, aligning with a broader movement for solidarity with Palestine that is gaining traction across the globe. Protests in cities like Malmö, Sweden have similarly demanded Israel's exclusion from the event, laying bare the growing discord between the contest’s purported spirit of unity and the harsh political realities surrounding its participants.

Protests culminated outside RTÉ, where performers and speakers urged the national broadcaster to reconsider its coverage of the event, mirroring the discontent felt across Ireland. As many push for stronger advocacy for Palestinian rights, there are calls for RTÉ to pressure the European Broadcasting Union either to exclude Israel or withdraw from the competition altogether.

Despite the momentum behind these protests, figures like Taoiseach Leo Varadkar have cautioned against boycotts, framing them as counterproductive actions that risk ostracizing Israel's liberal voices. This perspective prioritizes diplomatic nuance over the urgent need for accountability, raising questions about the efficacy of a government that seems timid in the face of moral clarity.

As this discourse unfolds, one crucial question arises: can public demonstrations genuinely reflect societal sentiment amid such a complicated geopolitical landscape? The Eurovision voting incident demands a deeper examination of public opinion, entertainment participation, and the responsibilities inherent in international cultural platforms, particularly given the contentious backdrop of the ongoing conflict in Gaza. The ongoing political landscape illustrates the need for a robust alternative that champions true accountability and solidarity instead of hollow diplomatic gestures.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.irishnews.com/news/northern-ireland/ireland-gave-israel-10-point-at-eurovision-does-it-mean-theres-more-support-for-the-state-than-pro-palestine-demonstrations-would-suggest-S4UJPJPV35AWPDOXODZZU2Z4I4/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.irishexaminer.com/world/arid-41391631.html> - Thousands attended a pro-Palestine rally in Malmö, Sweden, ahead of the Eurovision Song Contest. Demonstrators chanted 'dirty, dirty competition, Israel out of Eurovision' and called for Israel's exclusion from the event due to the ongoing Gaza conflict. The protest highlighted the tension between the contest's unifying message and the political controversies surrounding Israel's participation.
3. <https://www.irishtimes.com/ireland/2024/05/02/protesters-call-for-rte-to-boycott-eurovision-during-demonstration-outside-studios/> - Activists, musicians, and actors gathered outside RTÉ in Dublin to call for a boycott of the Eurovision Song Contest over Israel's participation. The protest featured performances and speeches, with participants urging RTÉ to withdraw from covering the event, citing concerns over Israel's actions in Gaza and the potential normalization of these actions through the contest.
4. <https://www.rte.ie/news/ireland/2024/0502/1447061-eurovision-protest/> - Protesters gathered outside RTÉ headquarters in Donnybrook, calling for a boycott of the Eurovision Song Contest. The demonstration, organized by the Ireland-Palestine Solidarity Campaign, featured performances and speeches, with participants urging RTÉ to withdraw from covering the event due to Israel's participation amidst the Gaza conflict.
5. <https://www.irishtimes.com/politics/2023/12/25/varadkar-opposed-to-boycott-by-ireland-of-eurovision-over-israels-participation/> - Taoiseach Leo Varadkar opposed Ireland boycotting the Eurovision Song Contest over Israel's participation, stating that such a move could 'ostracise' liberals in Israel and hinder efforts for peace. He emphasized that excluding Israel from international events might make it harder for proponents of peace within Israel to advocate for human rights.
6. <https://www.ft.com/content/97a5c7c4-3596-44ed-9eca-1213cfbcc118> - Eurovision organizers are preparing for pro-Palestinian protests in Malmö, Sweden, in response to Israel's participation in the contest amidst its offensive in Gaza. Protests have already included actions by climate activist Greta Thunberg, and heavily armed police are deployed to manage expected large crowds. The situation underscores the tension between Eurovision's unifying message and the political controversies surrounding Israel's participation.
7. <https://www.thejournal.ie/irish-boycott-of-eurovision-protest-6701009-May2025/> - Actor Stephen Rea joined a pro-Palestine demonstration outside RTÉ studios in Dublin, calling for Ireland to boycott the Eurovision Song Contest due to Israel's participation. The protest highlighted concerns over Israel's actions in Gaza and the potential normalization of these actions through the contest, with participants urging RTÉ to withdraw from covering the event.