

Study Guide - Week 1

Eurovision Committee - The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Music Production

1) TLDR:

The advent of artificial intelligence (AI) can be viewed as a symbol of humanity's dedication to technological advancement. The implementation of this new discovery into the mechanisms of both international corporations and individuals to help create things faster and to automate certain processes. As such, AI has had a significant impact on creativity-based fields, especially in the music industry, where "AI slop" (any content created with AI in an effortless manner) can now be easily found on social media. In some cases, content might not strictly be AI-generated, but rather lightly edited with such tools. While these technologies have aided in music production, they have created serious concerns for artists, producers and those who hold copyright over original products.

This is the main issue the Eurovision Committee faces. Composed of nations that participate in the annual Eurovision Song Contest, where artists show off their vocal and technical skills, it must now debate on the issue of AI's involvement in music: should it be treated as a tool that helps human artists? Or as a technology incompatible with the spirit of the competition? And whether or not it accepts AI in the contest, what kind of mechanism could it use to measure and control its usage in artists' songs? How would it be enforced? And can this committee's ruling be used to set a wider, internationally-accepted standard?

2) Background

For content creation, among other things that require generation, a certain type of artificial intelligence is used, simply called "generative artificial intelligence" (GenAI). These models are trained on pattern recognition in order to then create content based on those patterns. It would be easier for a person to recognize whether something was created with AI years ago in comparison to the present (see Will Smith Eating Spaghetti).

In the context of music, GenAI models have been trained with musical pieces from many genres, enabling them to replicate many functions present in editing software. For example, AI-based mixing and mastering systems can analyse an audio track and automatically adjust parameters such as equalisation, compression and loudness, optimizing the amount of manual work required from professional producers and engineers. Developments in GenAI have enabled it to produce melodies, rhythms and instrumental arrangements, while language models generate the lyrics - all of the above being elements that, when combined together, result in a song ready for publishing.

One significant benefit of these developments is that these tools are readily accessible online. One such AI model is Suno, where the user can insert prompts to determine the style of the song and the lyrics of it. This simplicity is perfectly suitable for small, independent artists who lack a large production budget or the expertise associated with music production. Of course, professionals can also benefit from these tools, allowing them to experiment with different styles and ideas to expand their knowledge or to simply overcome episodes of creative block.

Even with such breakthroughs, the rapid development of AI has created new legal and ethical problems. AI systems are often trained using large amounts of existing material, including copyrighted songs, recordings, lyrics, and other creative works. Artists may not know whether their work was used to train an AI system or how it was used. Another major concern is AI's ability to generate voices. A person's voice can potentially be copied or imitated without their permission. This can create problems when an AI-generated song sounds like a real artist or appears to use their identity.

Up until recently, no international body has legislated rules on regulating artificial intelligence. In July, the European Union was the first ever to pass a legal framework that regulates the usage of AI. The AI Act establishes regulations not the AI tools themselves, but the applications of AI. With respect to music, under section IV, article 50, service providers are obliged to inform the user that they are interacting with an AI system and that any content, either generated by or manipulated with AI is marked and detectable as artificially generated. In addition, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) is an agency of the United Nations that promotes and protects intellectual property (IP). It, however, does not have any legal authority to enforce IP rights; it mostly serves as an administrative hub for 28 international IP-related treaties. In general, cases relating to violations of IP are still decided on a national level.

3) Key Issues

3.1) AI Involvement in Music Creation

AI tools that are used in music production are usually trained on large sources of data, so it would not be surprising if some of it were to be protected under copyright. Businesses stress that this approach is necessary for technological development. On the other hand, artists argue that their intellectual rights should not be violated and instead be protected. From the contest's perspective, the question lies in giving proper credit to the artists involved in the production of the submission and whether or not the efforts of those responsible for the songs that have been fed into AI models be mentioned as well. Or perhaps there is a lack of originality when artists repetitively take samples from the same models. The committee must also consider AI as a tool for musical editing: does it show the same level of creativity or does it neglect the human element of the competition?

3.2) Performer Identity in the wake of AI-Generated Voices

The singers, their voices and their identities are a central part of the Eurovision Song Contest. AI's ability to reproduce a person's speech with a high level of accuracy can have both positive and negative effects. While this can be useful for creative purposes, such as experimenting with vocal effects, it can also be used without the artist's permission. An artist's voice is closely connected to their identity and career - one could expect a typical fan to easily recognize their idol from it. Using it without consent could therefore create both financial and personal problems, especially if there is intent to damage the artist's reputation.

3.3) Regulating AI in the Eurovision Rules

Currently, AI is not mentioned anywhere in the rulebook of the Eurovision Song Contest. Instead, national broadcasters set their own regulations when it comes to the usage of AI. As an example, for its 2027 submission, the Swiss Broadcasting Corporation has disallowed AI-generated songs, but has permitted tools that utilize it in the creative process. The committee could look at suggesting revisions to the rules of the contest, including but not limited to setting a clear policy on AI in submissions, as well as the introduction of a mechanism that can combat potential misuse of AI tools in submissions.

4) What can the Eurovision Committee actually do?

The ad hoc Eurovision Committee is a UN-style assembly with similar rules of procedure. It is composed of delegates representing the countries participating in the Eurovision Song Contest. The committee cannot create international law, its main purpose is to advise its parent organization, the Eurovision Broadcasting Union, on changes to the rules of the Eurovision Song Contest. Alongside that, it can, for example:

- Create guidelines for the proper and acceptable uses of AI in the Eurovision Song Contest;
- Propose eligibility rules for songs that make substantial use of AI as well as requiring participants to disclose use as necessary;
- Develop a Eurovision-wide system for detecting and labelling AI-generated and/or AI-manipulated content in songs;
- Recommend penalties for violations of AI-related rules, including but not limited to possible disqualification;
- Encourage cooperation between broadcasters, artists, record labels, and AI technology companies.

4.1) Major Stakeholders

- The Big Five (France, Germany, Italy, Spain, United Kingdom): They provide a vast majority of necessary finances to fund and produce the event. Delegates would prefer to have their support than not to.
- Sweden: As the winner of the most Eurovision Song Contests, Sweden is willing to protect human songwriting while also advocating for AI inclusion in the contest.
- Ukraine, Armenia: Two countries whose submissions have largely been influenced by their cultures, they would argue for the protection of artists' rights and cultural identity.
- Switzerland: As a politically neutral nation, Switzerland would look to protect the integrity of the Eurovision institutions and to advocate for strict rules.
- Australia, Canada: Two non-European participants in the competition, they should advocate for international cooperation between Eurovision and the world to protect intellectual property.

5) Questions to Consider

1. Should AI-generated music be allowed in Eurovision?
2. Should participants be required to disclose their use of AI?
3. Should artists have to give permission before their music is used to train AI?
4. Should AI companies compensate artists whose work is used for training?
5. Should AI-generated vocals or cloned voices be allowed?
6. Should artists have ownership rights over AI-generated versions of their voices?

7. Should fully AI-generated songs be eligible to compete in Eurovision?
8. How can Eurovision protect human creativity while allowing technological innovation?
9. Should there be a common international standard for AI-generated music?
10. How can the committee prevent AI from being used to mislead audiences or impersonate artists?

6) Sources + Further Reading

- European Commission – Artificial Intelligence Act - <https://artificialintelligenceact.eu>
- World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) – Administered Treaties - <https://www.wipo.int/en/web/treaties>
- Eurovision Song Contest – Official Rules and Regulations - <https://www.eurovision.com/newsroom/rules-of-the-contest>
- Will Smith Eating Spaghetti - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/articles/z4rsmbk>
- IFPI – Global Music Report - https://www.ifpi.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/03/GMR2026_SOTI.pdf