

Circom Report

CIRCOM Regional Newsmoonthly • CR is the European Association of 380 Public Regional TV Stations in 38 countries • July 2002/No 33

Activities, EU projects and coproductions on the CR EC agenda

Current activities on a) Prix Circom b) Training c) Euromusica d) EU projects e) Co productions were on the agenda of the CIRCOM Regional Executive Committee meeting in Kosice, last May. Here's the full report:

a) Prix Circom

A detailed written report was submitted. David Lowen stressed his concerns about the lack of entries from certain countries - no entries from Finland, one entry only from Czech Republic, Italy ... why the activities in these countries were so low? The detailed Jury report will be available by Tuesday. Next year the judging will take place in Romania, somewhere near Bucharest. David suggested that the host of 2004 judging should send one judge to Romania to get informed on the workflow. There are some questions about the present prize sponsors - TVP and France 3, as well as about newly proposed ones - Committee of the Regions and Assembly of the Regions.

The governing principle that David will propose in the paper by September is that the prize and the sponsor are to be defined for several years in a row. Discussing the Committee of the Regions' sponsoring proposal it was suggested that they should find themselves and their interests in the existing rules rather than in a special new category. Cross-border could be an excellent category for them for the next five years. The meeting on this subject should be arranged with Raymond Maxwell from the Committee of the Regions during the Conference. In defining the categories CR should find out what programs CR stations are producing and, if necessary, add some categories, or even divide documentaries as the judges have discussed it for the last two years. SG thanked David Lowen, Peter Sauer and Krešimir Macan for the job well done in organising the Prix Circom 2002 judging.

b) Training

Very extensive written report was submitted and explained by Roel Dijkhuis. There was a problem with financing the Košice Training seminar for which the budget (27.000 EURO) was lower than the one for the Porto seminar (40.000 EURO). This meant fewer participants what made some people from the Thomson Foundation unhappy.

SG explained that at the time nobody really took a note of the fact that only a total of 40.000 EURO were planned for the Seminar in the 2002 Budget due to the fact that it is cheaper to organise a Seminar in Kosice than in Porto. Since it turned out to be a big issue, some extra money was found from the reserves and some from savings on the Conference expenditures - so, instead of the planned 20.000 EURO - 27.000 EURO were coming from the

Circom budget. 4 Kosovo participants did not come because of visa problems, as well as other 2 from Bosnia. Consequently there is no funding from the Stability Pact since representatives from the countries involved in SP did not come. Previous years the SP was contributing more to the training; this year CR will receive 7.000 EURO only. If there are going to be no participants from the SP countries, then it gets difficult to claim that money.

CoE and SP financed in full the training in Budva, without any budgeting from Circom. It brought more paperwork to Secretariat since the procedures within CoE are changing and the new formats of final reports are requested. Seminar in Romania was hosted by TVR who partly financed it - with 14.274,81 EURO, and Thompson Foundation with 16.655,44 EURO (all together 30.930,25 EURO). CR should explore new ways in planning and budgeting for the years to come. The contract is working well; there were no major problems in communications. CR should have the action plan for 5 years at least - define what the target would be and then look for the money. But again, it should be applied for every year separately. Gareth Price in Annex D proposed some interesting projects regarding Stability Pact action plan - 66% will be covered by CoE, some additional funding are to be found.

c) Euromusica

Lefty Kongalides reported on the record number of registrations as of early May - 17. The critical moment of this year's Euromusica was when ERT decided to postpone it for July 2-7, 2002 because of the Football World Cup. It was hard to expect people to come to the concerts while at the same time they could watch World Cup. ERT had to pay 5% cancellation fee to the hotel that has been booked in advance and even had to move a group from the hotel in Olympia to make room for participants at the new date. Because of the change of dates there were complaints from Belgium (Pierre Couchard) and Germany (Reimar Allerdt) - they have already paid some airplane tickets or reservations and groups could not fit into the new dates, so they had to cancel their participation this year. There were also some problems in Poland (Barbara Lewandowska - there were some complaints, but in the end things worked out fine) and France (Marie-Paule Urban - the planned groups unfortunately will not be able to participate on the new date). It would be wise to have a contract or a letter of agreement with the TV organization that organises Euromusica, but since CR has problems in finding the hosts anyway, the contract could be one

→ From page 1

distracting factor. Without a contract or a letter of agreement it is very hard to get any compensation in case of such problems as this year's. Neither has the Euromusica brand been defined yet nor the frequently asked questions of Euromusica have been answered (Johan Forssblad and Esther Farkas prepared a draft rules).

A good idea would be to have a brochure on what Euromusica is and what kind of music is expected. It could even be made as a kind of competition - with public judging. If, for example, major cities in the host country adopt a group for one week - there would be almost no expenses for the organisers. Euromusica can have a festival theme every year - though in its core it should stay a traditional ethnic music festival.

As Eszter Farkas definitely stepped down as Euromusica coordinator, CR President Lefty Kongalides will be in charge of Euromusica for the next year. Bulgaria showed some interest as the possible host in 2003.

d) EU projects

Peter Kraewinkels reported on recent EU developments. European Year of Languages 2001 ended - CR has to send the final report to EC, for which an overview from station members what was finally aired before 1st of March 2002 is needed. There is no information on which station took programs from EbS and rebroadcast them. Therefore National Coordinators should be asked to give details on the subject during EB.

There are some recently submitted proposals: Health in Europe project still unanswered could bring CR into problems. Daphne - funds to promote prevention of violence within families - TV Brussels prepared to participate in it, concept is to provide regional stations with "toolkits" for the organisation of "theme evenings". Science and Technology week - to bring attention to the topic of research during one particular day or particular week - research in sports, music - hopefully this proposal will be approved.

News projects - Research - positive response from European Commission - they are very keen in promoting research at a larger scale - discussed with colleague from NRK, Head of Science department - magazine coproduction on science in Europe - an idea that could be developed and submitted. There are also some ideas developed together with Gareth Price - on training within candidate countries as well as on giving an opportunity to enlargement candidates "to reach out local people in the regions". Reporting through young reporters' eyes on enlargement candidates (kind of magazine).

There is going to be the signing in 2003 of an enlargement paper in Thessalonica under Greek presidency - European Commission would like it to be covered - can ERT do something about it, since it is in Thessalonica - EC wants an event on signing of the accession party - call for proposals for a show program - EC would like that accession referendums in all countries candidates end positive - push to vote - recommended to have one executive producer to take it forward till March 2003 - Circom Regional can influence call for proposals - it should be discussed on coproduction workshop. European Commission is also very keen to use next year conference for promotion of enlargement. CARDS - TACIS - can provide for training journalists in enlargement countries. PHARE - some money for the next year conference, some training - little money. Democracy and human rights scheme - re submit the revised old proposal taking into account all received remarks.

Because of everything that was mentioned that was mentioned earlier during Kraewinkels' presentation (EC's interest to promote enlargement) Brussels is still an option for the Conference next year - RTBF and TV Brussels can not make commitment yet, but they are keen to organise it. If Circom Regional wants it, then it has to see who could be its partner in organising it in Brussels. Pierre Couchard stressed that situation at RTBF, at the moment, is not so good, but Flemish TV Brussels would like to become a member and eventually help organise the Conference. Peter Kraewinkels was asked to have a written proposal for EB tomorrow for further discussion.

e) Co productions

Pierre Couchard submitted the written proposal in English and French as a working document for further discussion. It suggested that

Co productions should be open to everybody, should be close to SR for coordination and supervision and should, at the end, be validated by the members.

SG also suggested that the best thing would be to have Copro office or executive producer working close to SG, to establish a working committee on coproduction similar to BoG, for a limited period of time (one-two years), to give a new spin to future co productions. Copro office in Munich is serving just as a logistic point that is needed for CR but is not provoking new co productions. Pierre Couchard was asked to devote some of his time to co productions - to control and supervise executive producers of current co productions and to brainstorm future role of the Munich office. In the discussion that followed, it was stressed that initially the co productions were great (Alice etc.), but somehow members stopped following them and lost interest. Members should profit from all these advantages offered by CR co productions (B. Lewandowska).

It was also pointed that European Year of Languages was a great project, but with lot of its own problems, so CR should learn from its mistakes for the future (M. P. Urban) SG stressed that CR has no structure for co productions - for example, there is nobody responsible for them once they are in place. SG also stressed that CR archive is rather useless since it contains no clean master tapes and the tapes it has cannot be properly used. Thus rules for Prix Circom should change - the winner should provide an international copy of the winning programme. There was also a suggestion to clear the rights of all the entries for the limited time period, not only the winners. CR should keep in mind obligation to fully respect all authors' copyrights when considering this proposal. Namely it could turn out to be impossible to clear these rights for some entries and some stations. It was decided to prepare a concrete proposal on this subject for EB tomorrow.

5. Current financial standing

Zvezdana Djuranek elaborated submitted written report. There was not much spending before the Conference, since the Secretariat waited for the Conference to be over. Subscription payments are at very high lever this year. Problem with outstanding payments is with old debts, not with payments for 2001. B. Lewandowska noticed that there are organizations for which the membership fees are too high, for example RTV Ukraine. SG explained that CR couldn't risk changing the rules for certain organizations only, since it is going to have an impact on other members. It was agreed to make a kind of the last call to all the debtors - deadline October 2002 - they should at least write back to start negotiating settlement of their debts and to define their membership for the future.

Members of the EC will try to establish a direct contact with some of the debtors if possible (Sergei Erofeef with Archangels, Vostok; Elena Spanily with Moldova; Barbara Lewandowska with Ukraine; SG with ex-Yugoslavia countries etc.) Secretariat will send a reminder letter to all debtors in June, wait until the end of October for an answer and then propose a final decision on their status during EB meeting in November.

6. Report of CR Secretariat

A written report was submitted with the proposal to have written reports of CR Secretariat twice a year. The report was accepted with suggestion to give more details on the mentioned meetings and their results in the next report. SG called for a more active role of the National Coordinators.

7. Miscellaneous

Regarding old and new members status EC was informed that MDR Thuringen is cancelling their membership with the end of year 2002, while two new applicants - TV station 96 Macedonia and Soci Black See station - are still to be checked (whether they are public televisions or not). There are 6 new National Coordinators - Dr. Wilhelm Mitsche, ORF Austria, Andrew Psaila, PBS Malta, Vesna Nešovic, RTS Serbia, Peter Sauer, BR Franken Germany, Kjell Jarle Hoyheims NRK Norway, Anita Bhalla, BBC English Regions UK. Clare Morrow has asked to be relieved as ITV's National Coordinator so ITV will no longer have a National Coordinator till someone new is found.

By September it should be decided what to do with the contract proposal for creation and elaboration of the Prix Circom trophies (CR did not have any such contract before) - to have a universal statue or several statues? Next EC meeting will take place on September 14th, 2002 in Bucharest, Romania.









The future of Europe according to six members of the Committee of the Regions

The six members of the Committee of the Regions delegation to the European Convention, as the representatives of Europe's cities and regions, each set out their views on the future of the EU. Their contribution to the session devoted to Civil Society was transmitted LIVE on EbS – the satellite information service of the EU Institutions.

This was an opportunity to hear the opinions of regional and local authorities, who are responsible for the implementation of three quarters of EU legislation.

They addressed the Convention in the following order:

- Eduardo ZAPLANA, (E/EPP) Chairman of the delegation and Vice-President of the Committee of the Regions; President of the Valencia Regional Government.
- Jos CHABERT (B /EPP), Minister for Public Works, Brussels-Capital Region
- Manfred DAMMEYER, (D/PES) member of North-Rhine Westphalia parliament
- Patrick DEWAELE (B/ELDR), Minister-President of Flanders Region
- Claude du GRANRUT (F/EPP) Vice-Mayor of Senlis; Picardy Regional Councillor
- Claudio MARTINI (I/PES) President of Tuscany Region

EbS is transmitted on EUTELSAT HOT BIRD 13) East, 14,47550Ghz, POL: Horizontal, footprint Widebeam. Decoder card not required.

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Germany: digital archives helps publishers

An essential tool for publishers that will help in fact-checking and research, protect against litigation, and accelerate the editorial and production process is the implementation of a formal archive. The German media house Spiegel-Verlag has instituted such an archive and uses it strategically to access nearly 25 million documents.

The digital archive, which uses an application called DIGAS, organises the content into categories based on subjects, companies and individuals. DIGAS allows both professional researchers and journalists to perform more complete searches, which has helped reduce the number of researchers and editors needed in searching.

BBC has 'won battle of the burgundy tie'

A week after the BBC's battering for its coverage of the Queen Mother's death, executives believed they had won the "battle of the burgundy tie". Some concede in private that the corporation's coverage got off to a faltering start but the scale of the operation since appears to have silenced the critics.

Hundreds of staff have been working to produce the most ambitious outside broadcast mounted by the BBC for a non-sporting event. It has emerged that discreet preparations by the broadcasters, parliamentary authorities, Buckingham Palace and Westminster council had been in hand for some years.

More than 350 people, 100 cameras, 15 control vehicles, a further 100 support trucks, 10 mobile radio studios and 1,000 miles of cable were quickly put into service for last Friday's procession to the lying in state and tomorrow's funeral.

Mark Byford, director of the World Service - deputising for the director general, Greg Dyke, who was on holiday - pointed out that while some criticised the BBC for lacking respect, many viewers appeared to believe the response overdone.

He said of the row: "I'm not sure where it came from and what its motivation has been, but it's clear to me that the BBC's response [to the death] has been comprehensive and sure-footed. There has been a debate about one person's tie, but we followed our own guidelines, which were that he should be appropriately dressed. In our view he was."

Pay TV set to skyrocket in Italy

Italy is set to become one of the fastest-growing markets for pay-TV in Europe, a recent survey by PriceWaterhouseCoopers found.

At the end of 2000, the Italian pay-TV market generated E1.42bn. This figure is expected to jump to E3.27bn by 2005. Between 2001 and 2003, the Pay TV market in Italy is expected to nearly double from E1.5bn to E2.6bn.

Annual Awards for Freelance Cameramen

The Rory Peck Awards 2002 is now open for entries. This annual awards event, sponsored by Sony, is the only showcase to celebrate freelance camerawork in TV news and current affairs worldwide. It is named after the cameraman who was killed while filming in Moscow in 1993. The London awards event raises money for the Rory Peck Trust, the charity which promotes safety and security for freelancers.

The awards, to be presented in London on October 30th, will honor those freelancers who have shown initiative, skill and courage while filming in difficult circumstances during the previous year (2001). If your station employs a freelance camera-operators who has done some outstanding work, he or she can enter for the Features Award, for a programme of up to an hour, or the Hard News Award, which can be a single story or a portfolio of short items. To ask for entry forms or for more information, contact Tina Carr, Director of the Rory Peck Trust, or Assistant Director Melanie Brooks. Tel: +44 207 262 5272 email: rptrpa@dial.pipex.com The closing date for entries is September 3rd.

Weather junkies cheer channel's anniversary

"I can watch it for six to eight hours at a time, easy", said Andre Trotter, a 23-year-old computer engineer from Lexington Park, Md. "There are a trillion different ways things can happen. You can never get bored with the weather." The Weather Channel has made weather junkies out of many TV viewers.

This month, the channel celebrate 20 years on the air. Since its first broadcast on May 2, 1982 - when a forecaster welcomed viewers to "the non-ending weather telethon" - the Weather Channel has spread to 85 million US homes and earned a place in American pop culture.

Forecasters at the network say its success lies partly in its availability - National Weather Service forecasts, tailored for hundreds of US cities, are presented six times an hour. They also believe viewers rely on their calm, studied presentation of the weather, even in severe events like hurricanes and blizzards that send some local TV news anchors into hysterics.

"It's not about violence. It's not about sex. It's not about wars. It's not about the economy", said Dennis Smith, who has worked on-air at the network since its birth. "And yet it's something that could make an impact on their lives."

'Polite police' target BBC bullies

A BBC boss has launched a new "polite police" initiative to force journalists to be courteous and civil in the newsroom. Simon Waldman, editor of News 24, said he wanted to rid the corporation of "aggression" and replace it with an atmosphere of "co-operation".

Journalists will be asked to sign up to a new code of behaviour aimed at stamping out abusive language, intimidation and bullying.

Mr Waldman dubbed the trial scheme, which may be extended throughout the wider news operation, as the "polite police". But he said it is more serious than that: "It's about changing the culture from one of aggression to one of co-operation".

He introduced the scheme under the umbrella of Greg Dyke's controversial "Cut the crap" scheme. Part of the plan is to send BBC workers on anger management courses if they are unable to curb abusive behaviour.

Editors will be made to spend half an hour in the transmission suite before programmes are broadcast to help them appreciate the pressures others are under. And people whose only relationship is 'shouting at each other down the phone' will be encouraged to meet face-to-face to alleviate tension.

Festivals, workshops and more around Europe and the world

- July 15: Co.Pe.A.M. Committee of Direction Reunion (Algier)
- July 15: July issue of "CIRCOM Report"
- July 19-28: Asian Cinevision. Asia Society & Museum. New York www.asiancinevision.org
- August 7-9: Satellite Broadcasting & Communications Association. Las Vegas. www.sbca.com
- August 14-25: Edinburgh Int'l Film Festival www.edfilmfest.org.uk
- August 22-26: "Balkan TV Magazine" meeting (Greece)
- August 27-29: Int'l Satellite & Communications Exchange Conference & Expo. Long Beach, California. www.satcomexchange.com
- August 28-Sept. 7: Venice Int'l Film Festival. Venice, Italy www.veneziafiere.it
- September 9-13: Le Rendez-Vouz 2002. French TV Screenings (Saint Tropez) www.tvfi.com
- September 10-14: Le Rendez-vous: French TV Screenings. Sain Tropez, France www.tvfi.com
- September 12-17: IBC. Rai Centre. Amsterdam www.ibc.org
- September 18-22: Cartoon Forum. Gwynedd, Wales, UK www.cartoon-media.be
- September 30-Oct. 4: ECOC. Rai Center, Amsterdam www.ecoc-exhibition.com
- October 1-3: ABTA: Pay TV Telecomm International Congress & Tradeshow www.abta.com.br
- October 5-6: MIPCOM Junior: Youth Program Screenings www.mipcom.com
- October 7-11: MIPCOM www.mipcom.com
- October 11-20: Hot Springs Documentary Festival www.docufilminst.org
- October 15-17: BCE: Broadband Communications Europe www.broadband-convention.com
- October 29-31: Expo Comm Mexico Norte Cintermex www.ejkrause.com
- October 29-November 2: Broadcast India 2002 www.saicom.com/broadcastindia
- October 29-November 2: Expo Comm China South www.ejkrause.com
- November: News Editors Seminar (Strasbourg)
- November 1-2: Promax UK www.bda.tv
- November 3-6: Western Show www.calcable.org
- November 6-8: Broadcast Worldwide – BCWW 2002. TV Programme, Film, Animation, Exhibition & Conference Coex Seoul, Korea. www.bcww.net
- November 12-13: Athens. Global Sport Forum conference and exhibition, looking ahead to the Olympics in 2004, organized by the Stefi Production House. Tel: +44 20 7436 9120 www.globalsportforum.com
- November 12-14: ATVC/Jornadas www.atvc.org.ar
- November 18-21: DSLCON Europe www.dsicon.com
- November 19: International Emmy Awards Gala www.intcouncil@iemmys2000.com
- November 19-20: Promax Latin America 2002 www.bda.tv
- November 19-22: News World, the annual forum for the broadcast-news industry, at the Burlington Hotel, Dublin. 020 7491 0880 info@newsworld.org
- November 21-December 1: Int'l Documentary Film Festival www.idfa.nl
- December 1-5: German Screenings 2002
- December 2-3: Promax Asia www.bda.tv
- December 2-4: Streaming Media East www.streamingmedia.com
- December 2-7: ITU Telecom Asia www.itu.int/telecom
- December 2-5 Asia TV Forum 2002 www.asiatvforum.com
- December 3-5 Streaming Media Europe 2002 www.streamingmedia.com
- December 4-5: CASBAA www.casbaa.com

Broadband deal for BBC

BBC News and Sports coverage will be available via broadband for the first time in the UK, following the signing of distribution deals with Freeserve and Blueyonder.

Users will have on-demand access to the BBC's main news broadcasts, as well as round-up of the latest sports news and the top eight BBC News stories.

MGM networks hits Europe

US major MGM is rolling out four new foreign channels, including a European launch for the first time. A movie channel will launch in Portugal and MGM-branded channels will also hit Russia, Malta and South Korea.

MGM's partners will include Cabovisao in Portugal and cable outfit Melita in Malta. The new launches add to one launched in the Middle East earlier in 2002.

European TV advertising shows signs of recovery

After a miserable 2001 for European commercial broadcasters—most of whom weathered a huge slump in the advertising market—analysts are forecasting the first green shoots of recovery, let by the US. The improvement will be patchy, however, and certain territories look set to continue suffering for some time yet. Demand is returning in the US, and upfront pricing is understood to be higher than in 2001. In Europe, France and Italy are set to post the swiftest recoveries, with the German outlook poor and the UK still yet to bottom out.

Circum Report

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All member stations are considered as potential contributors for this publication, with stories about new and innovative ideas, co-productions, exchanges, modern technologies, etc. Especially welcome are short stories and one-liners.

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