

Circom Report

CIRCOM Regional Newsmonthly · CR is the European Association of 380 Public Regional TV Stations · February 2001 / Issue 14

Hungary will host Euromusica 2001

The regional stations of MTV Sopron and ORF Eisenstadt are going to organize Euromusica 2001 in Sopron - Eisenstadt, in Hungary, Sept. 13 - 16 (approximately).

Participating groups will stay in Sopron, while MTV will organise the festival, provide hotel accommodation, transportation, hold a welcome party, a jam session and concerts in the area's villages.

The half hour report about the festival events and the Hungarian village concerts will also be produced by the regional studio in Sopron.

Administration changes in Teleradio - Moldova

There were recent changes in the administration of Teleradio - Moldova State Company. New president is Mr. Iulian Magaleas and Vice president - director general of TV is Anatol Barbei. Vice President - director general of radio is Vasile Gribincea.

The new Director of Int'l Relations and Programme Exchange is Boris Parfentiev, tel: 373 - 2 - 739155, fax: 373 - 2 - 739484. Head of the Int'l Relations Sector is Vera Galcovski, tel.: 373 - 2 - 739194, fax: 373 - 2 - 227869, E - mail: galc@moldovacc.md

By the end of February the preliminary program and the registration form are to be distributed to all CIRCOM Regional national coordinators.

Executive Committee meeting in Maribor

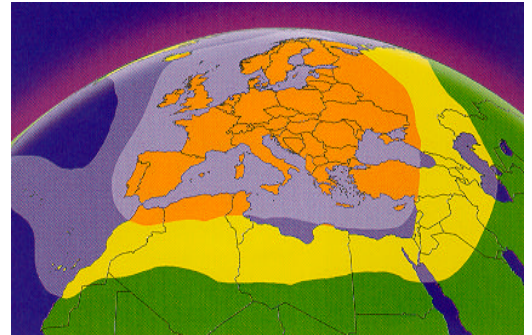
The CIRCOM Regional Executive Committee will hold a meeting in Maribor, Slovenia, March 10, with the kind invitation of RTV Slovenia.

Maribor, is 130 away from Ljubljana and 60 km from Graz.

Int'l Documentary Festival in Greece

Seventy documentaries will compete in the 3rd Int'l Documentary Festival of Thessaloniki "Pictures of the 21st Century", which will be held in Thessaloniki, March 5 - 11.

During the festival, the European Documentary Network in cooperation with other institutions, such as MEDIA Promotion, Soros Documentary fund, Media Desk, organizes the "Pitching Forum 2001". Participating countries are Italy, Spain, Portugal, Slovenia, Croatia, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Turkey, etc.



Eutelsat plans two new birds

Eutelsat will order two new craft, Hot Bird Eight and Hot Bird Nine, as replacements for the Hot Birds One and Two. Few details have yet emerged other than that orders can be expected within the year.

Eutelsat's commercial director, Jean - Paul Brillaud, speaking at the Euroconsult Satellite Summit in Paris in September, said Eutelsat currently had no plans for specific Ka-band craft but that Hot Birds Eight and Nine would each have some Ka-band capacity at 13 degrees East, complementing that already planned for HB6. "As far as a pure Ka - band satellite is concerned we have no plans," said Brillaud. Ka - band technology allows computer users and viewers to "talk back" directly to the satellite.

Eutelsat has recently completed a US\$350 million round of fresh financing and, according to Brillaud, is determinedly targeting expansionist ventures over the next year.

He said Eutelsat would have an active fleet of some 22 or 23 craft in orbit by the end of 2002. Eutelsat also expects revenues to be in the US\$535 million range for this year.

As to Eutelsat's post-privatization IPO plans, Brillaud said this was a decision that would need to be made by the privatized company, and the three-year IPO timetable currently in place was probably "conservative". He said he expected the new directors to look closely at a "much quicker route to an IPO, depending on market conditions"

EUTELSAT CURRENT CAPACITY*
53 % TV / Radio DBS / DTH, 17 % Internet backbone. 15 % Corporate services.

7 % Dedicated multimedia, 2 % Spare

*August 2000, Data: Eutelsat



Busiest Ever Year for Training in CIRCOM Regional

Circom's Training Board of Governors meets at France 3 in Paris in March to assess the past year's activities, and to plan projects for the rest of 2001. It is clear that the millennium year has been the busiest ever for Circom Regional Training.

Forty-seven young journalists and technicians took part in the main workshop in Potsdam, twenty-eight producers attended the Circom seminar on Reporting Minorities hosted by TVP in Krakow in September, and fourteen editors-in-chief from Central and Eastern Europe attended the first Newsroom Management Seminar hosted by France 3 in Strasbourg. Participants have come from 26 countries, the largest number we have had in any one year. It was pleasing to see more Western European stations taking part.

With the year dominated by the dramatic political changes in Yugoslavia, it was important for Circom Regional to encourage independent and professional TV journalism in Serbia and Montenegro, and with the help of Ljiljana Breberina, our coordinator for independent stations there, thirteen excellent delegates from Yugoslavia took an active part in our training

programmes. The Balkan region will be a high priority this year also.

The feedback from participants in 2000 has been very positive. Circom has clearly established a high reputation for training which offers practical advice based on firm principles of public-service, specialising in journalism at the regional level, and using the Circom network to bring together TV professionals to compare experiences, and to establish the best methods of

working. Appreciation scores for the quality of our teams of volunteer tutors have been particularly high. I am personally very grateful for their dedication and professionalism, and to the member-stations who have released experienced staff, or provided equipment and technical staff, notably ARD, France 3, the BBC, SVT, TVP, MTV, RTV Slovenia and TVR. Our technical director Karol Cioma has organised all our production superbly, despite his very demanding job running the resources unit at BBC Bangor.

Invaluable financial support for Circom Training has been given by the Council of Europe and the European Parliament, and once again Sony have provided some of their digital equipment and technical support, at no cost to Circom, to enable the important practical programme-making to be a central element of

our workshops. But finance remains our main headache. The demand for Circom Training has steadily risen. The level of activity is limited only by the funds available. I hope national coordinators who would like to host a Circom workshop will approach the European Commission offices in their own countries, to seek "Micro-project" funds for local initiatives.

The future strategy for Circom Training was confirmed at the last Governors meeting, held under the chairmanship of Roel Dijkhuis in Amsterdam in September, when board members were able to also look at some of the new broadcasting technology on show at the big IBC congress. The board agreed that while support for democratic change remains a very high priority, the digital revolution has also brought a need for re-skilling, and for training initiatives, to ensure that public-service broadcasting at the regional level can remain competitive in a multi-channel and multi-media Europe.

Plans for 2001 are already well-developed. We hope to hold a week-long workshop for 24 younger TV journalists from stations in Yugoslavia and neighbouring countries. If finance can be agreed with the Council of Europe, this will probably be held in Montenegro this

spring. We hope to hold our regular main workshop immediately before the annual conference in Porto, and Marie-Paule Urban has also requested funding from the Council of Europe for an ethnic-minorities broadcasting seminar during the "At Home" Festival in Poland, and for another senior seminar for newsroom managers at France 3 in Strasbourg, this time open to all member stations of Circom Regional.

This will be my fourth year as the Coordinator for Training and Development, and it is likely to be my last, due to pressure of other work, though I hope I may be invited to appear as one of the tutors in future years. Since our first workshop in Iasi in 1994, about 500 journalists, producers and editors have benefited directly from Circom Training, which has become well-known for its practical approach. Thanks to the determined support of the Executive Committee and the European Board, I am sure that Circom Regional is now widely respected for its commitment to the development of quality television, based on high values, and a spirit of friendly cooperation and mutual respect across all the regions of Europe.

Rick Thompson.
Training Coordinator.



34 public and private television channels in 25 countries

The EGTA (European Group of Television Advertising) is a trade association based in Brussels, which is currently composed of the advertising sales houses or commercial departments of 34 public and private television channels in 25 European countries and a non-European partner in Korea.

Together, EGTA members represent close to 60% of all advertising investments in Europe, i.e. 13 billions Euro (see chart below). Through the years (EGTA celebrated our 25th anniversary in 1999), the EGTA has clearly become the reference centre for advertising in Europe.

The EGTA in figures:

- *34 members
- *25 countries
- *13.000.000.000 Euro turnover
- *60% of the TV advertising investments in Europe
- *over 80 channels + a number of local and regional channels
- *roughly 4.000.000 spots in 1999
- *2.000 people who deal with similar issues on a day-to-day basis
- *450 senior managers and executives who receive the EGTA Newsletter

In short, EGTA's aim is basically to defend the members' interests in all possible ways:

- *Monitoring, analysing and advising on public policy and legislation that affect Commercial Communications and the Information Society
- *Triggering a dialogue with the European institutions against unjustified restrictions
- *Acting as a spearhead in all sectors which may directly or indirectly influence the world of television advertising
- *Meeting with various industries or groups of advertisers (directly or indirectly threatened by an excessive legislation or unaware of all the advertising possibilities offered by television (in conjunction with other media)

They are also extremely anxious to keep the members informed of all interesting evolutions happening both on the European market and around the world. Their activities therefore comprise:

- *The dissemination of information likely to help the members stay one step ahead of the market, best sell their channel's advertising space and thereby optimise their revenue.

EGTA: all about TV advertising in Europe



- *Contacts with equipment manufacturers, software and hardware developers or even with "think tank" organisation or similar professional associations. Subjects like interactivity, convergence, enhanced contents, change in viewership habits,... are of course at the very heart of their reflection.
- *Working parties (Sports and Advertising, Marketing and Sales Methods, European Affairs, Interactivity and Advertising).
- *"Thematic days" on highly specialised topics
- *Training programmes (mainly for new members) and modules in the framework of a Summer University
- *Study trips
- *The creation of databases (European Guide to TV sponsorship, General Interest Advertising, Technical and Marketing factors with an influence on the c/000,...)

The easiest way to understand who EGTA members are and what they do is definitely to visit their website (www.egta.com) where you will find a list of our member televisions as well as a short description of our activities.

The EGTA is an international, non-profit making association registered under Belgian law. It is governed by the General Assembly,

which is composed of representatives from the 34 sales houses or sales departments that make up the association.

The 2000 General Assembly in Austria

The General Assembly meets once per year. It appoints the Executive Committee and its Chairman for a two-year term and makes decisions regarding the orientations, aims and strategies submitted to it by the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee is in charge of managing the association and has therefore set up an operational head office. This office is based in Brussels and is composed of the Secretary General and his team.

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With the financial support of the European Union

The BalkaNet links public broadcasters in the Balkan area



A wide range of issues concerning the collaboration among the public radio and television organizations of the Balkan area were discussed and determined during the “BalkaNet” conference which took place in Thessaloniki last December.

According to the decisions made by the participants, the “BalkaNet” network will establish the collaboration in the audiovisual sector based on a number of initiatives, such as the Balkan Audiovisual archive, the promotion of television programmes and co-productions, the creation of the Balkan e-Radio, the training of personnel

The Balkan audiovisual archive.

Every TV station will announce the content of the audiovisual material that can offer to the archive, so that it can be used freely by the other members. Eventually, the Balkan Audiovisual Archive will consist a complete database to which every station - member will have access, while the material could also be sold to any interested independent producer

Collaboration in the field of news - making

Within the context of a closer collaboration in news making, the participating states have agreed to promote meetings among news directors, make use of the “BalkaNet” network in order to exchange news material and

facilitate -when possible- the work of correspondents.

Promotion of television programmes

Within the “BalkaNet” network, electronic “video-library” will be created, so that television programs can be exchanged or sold. In order for the members to be informed, an annual catalogue will be published, while every year a fair will be organized in a Balkan capital, where representatives of European stations will be invited to see the material and



sign agreements.

Parallel to the above, is the initiative of co-production; on an annual basis, two or more stations will produce television programs of various types.

The Balkan e-Radio

The Balkan States have agreed to extend their collaboration to radio as well. This, an electronic radio will be created so that radio programs can be transmitted through the Internet.

In order for the Balkan e-radio to

function, a common website will be designed where all Internet users will have access to music programs and news in all Balkan languages. It ought to be noted that the content of the e-Radio will comply to the principles and ethics pre-agreed.

Training of personnel

Special emphasis is going to be given on the training of personnel. This effort will rely on structures, such as distance-learning programmes, transfer of technical knowledge and skills.

Collaboration in the cultural field.

Given that the mass media contribute to strengthen the cultural bonds, a series of activities will be organized; cultural events (music, cinema, ethnic music), live transmission of common television programmes, festivals and competitions regarding new creators etc, production of CD and publications.

Balkanet Report

Apart from the Balkan TV Magazine, which is going to enrich its content, the Balkan States are prepared to publish the “BalkaNet Report” which will be distributed for free, and which will contain pieces on collaboration issues, new technological developments and news about the audiovisual field of each state.

The meeting point of CIRCUM Regional members

Porto: the city where the independent Portugal was born in the 12th century



Porto is a city proud of its status as the founder of the Portuguese nation. It was here that the independent Portugal was born in the 12th C, and it is to the former denomination of this region - Portucale - that the country owes its name. Porto lies on the right bank of the river Douro. Its origins can be traced back to the beginnings of history, when a Celtic settlement grew up on what is now the Colina de Se around the city's cathedral. This settlement made use of its location close to the river.

During the Middle Ages, the city expanded as a result of its trading links with Britain and Ireland. By the 14th C the city walls were built and Porto was dominated by a wealthy merchant class.

Porto played a major role in the maritime discoveries of the 15th and 16th C, and it was here that Henry the Navigator, the inspiration behind the Discoveries, was born. A bastion of anti-monarchist liberalism, which is reflected to this day in its strong sense of independence.

However English influences on the city are to be found in fine gardens and traditional private clubs. Porto has been the centre of the port wine industry - the wine is produced upriver on the slopes of the Douro - since the 17th c. Port was "discovered" when two Englishmen added brandy to preserve the local wine, turning



it into a drink which soon became popular in England and throughout Europe. Aged in oak casks and transported by road to warehouses in Gaia, things have changed greatly since the saga of the treacherous journey of the wine down the river Douro in boats called "rabelos", but the tradition and memory remain.

The historic centre was awarded UNESCO World Heritage status in 1996. Numerous mediaeval and Baroque palaces and churches are to be found here among the steep streets on the hill facing the river. But it is in the narrower streets where the unique atmosphere of old Porto is to be found, where "cultural heritage" is an everyday fact of life for the local population. The facades of the houses in the city are dark, many of them covered in ceramic tiles but if the old air of the centre surprises, it lends a special enchantment, for while maintaining a strong sense of the traditional the city is nevertheless committed to constant innovation.

All these are reasons for the choice of Porto as the headquarters of the 2000 Portuguese Discoveries Commemoration event and its selection as European Capital

of culture for 2001.

With approximately 400,000 inhabitants, Porto is Portugal's second-largest city and the nerve center of an area of great vitality with a population of over 1.5 million. This surrounding region is of major industrial and commercial importance, and is noted for its textiles, shoes, furniture and jewelry, while Porto itself is known for its gastronomy and its unique combination of tradition and modernity. To get your bearings in Porto and organize your visit, it is a good idea to get to know the names of the principal areas and bairros, or neighborhoods, of the city. Each neighborhood has its own distinctive character which is evident in its architecture and the atmosphere of its streets. The Bairro de Vitoria and the Bairro de Se are the heart of old Porto and date from mediaeval times. Some of

the city's most emblematic buildings and monuments are situated here, such as the Se cathedral, S. Bento station and the Clerigos church. The Ribeira and Barredo areas stretch along the banks of the Douro and are distinctive for their narrow, lively streets. Some traditional restaurants are to be found along the arcades

facing onto the river. A closer look at Porto can yield some interesting discoveries. The Cordoaria zone, the heart of which is the park of the same name, is remarkable for the Cadeia de Relacao, a large neo-classical edifice built at the end of the 18th C and later renovated to adapt it to an arts and cultural venue. Santa Catarina is a bustling commercial zone of pedestrian precincts, fin-de-siecle architecture and an enormous selection of cafes, restaurants and shops. Adjacent to Santa Catarina is the Bolhao market, housed in a grandiose fin-de-siecle building. Boa Vista is a modern zone of avenues, hotels, shopping centres, cinemas and apartment blocks. Foz is an exclusive neighborhood of 19th C chalets and large houses. Porto is unique for its harmonious blend of styles and epochs, and for this reason is best explored on foot, and at a leisurely pace.

For a panoramic view of the city, cross to the left bank of the Douro, site of the famous Port Wine Warehouses in Gaia.

*Porto is the site of the 2001 CIRCUM Regional conference from June 21-23.

Coordinating and cooperating TV stations across Europe

The co-production office of CR at Bayerischer Rundfunk, Munich

1. The Co-pro Office of Bayerischer Rundfunk

Since 1990 the co-pro Office of CIRCOM Regional is located at Bayerischer Rundfunk. The goal is co-ordination and co-operation between 358 TV stations of CIRCOM Regional. In some of the co-productions we are involved personally – others we are just looking for.

A booklet made by us gives you a survey on which CIRCOM-partner is planning or working on which issues, when, where and how.

You can also find this survey in the world wide web: www.circom-regio.si

2. What does the Co-pro Office of Bayerischer Rundfunk do and what is it good for?

For the last nine years, we have been co-ordinating the TV-broadcast "Christmas in Europe", and for six years "Easter in Europe". When we started off, these broadcasts were set up every two years, since 1995 it is every year. We phone, fax or email to our partners all over Europe and ask them to contribute with sending in features about customs in their countries. We copy these features and send back a tape to our partners which has all features on it.

The idea is simple: Partners send in a tape with a short feature about customs and habits in their own country and get back a tape with a lot of features on customs and habits all over Europe.

BR does produce two broadcasts every year with these tapes, each broadcast up to twenty or thirty minutes.

3. What is the situation now?

I'm sorry to say the situation is not really good. Many of our former partners don't want to contribute in "Easter in Europe" and "Christmas in Europe" anymore. It is hard work to convince at least up to ten TV stations to participate. Many of the features contributed are not up to the standard we need. As for the technical standards: The quality of the tape is quite often bad, no International Sound-track, script missing. And, unfortunately, some features do not tell a story.

4. What we would like to have:

Tradition and customs as a native lives it. A native can be a family, an individual, or a club. It's nice when the audience do not only get to know an old custom which is new to them, but also get to know the persons who live this custom. It would be perfect when the audience can have a look around the country. It's like travelling into a foreign country and get know people.

5. Arguments for co-operation between European Regional TV stations:

Finances

Producing for TV is expensive. The more TV stations come together with producing and

exchanging their productions, the cheaper it is.

The idea is: Every station gives his share. The more stations lump together, the more they get out of it. The more regions participate, the bigger and more interesting is what we can offer in return.

You get back features even from European regions you would never think of going there for financial reasons.

So, this offer makes sure you get a lot for little effort.

It would be ideal if we can make it a win-win-business to all of us.

And, we can even try and find sponsors for our productions: Like the European Union has supported quite a few things already - but we can also try to make business, trade and industry support us.

Content

We would gain a deeper knowledge of different



customs, traditions and regions in Europe. We can widen our minds and transfer the idea of Europe in our own TV stations. It would help to make visible the idea of a Europe of regions.

6. Preconditions for a successful co-operation:

It will only work when certain standards will be respected.

It will have to be a co-operation "amongst equals". This means we must find and develop common ideas of what our product must look like in the end. This must be true for both technical standards and content.

For example, as far as technical standards go:

- Format Beta SP (digital would be perfect)
 - International Sound track
 - No inserts and subtitles
 - copies should be technically ok, that means no drop-outs and scratches etc
- As far as the **content** goes:
- Feature should tell a story, it should not be just pictures of something
 - Length of features should be equal (5 to 8 minutes would be perfect)
 - There should be a script which has a time code
 - There should be a list with the music used
 - And, most important: Deadlines should be watched exactly, because if a feature comes in too late, this means the whole process of putting the feature together will be late!

7. How can we achieve this goal?

We have tried several times to talk about these problems at CIRCOM meetings. We sent faxes and two weeks ago we sent questionnaire. This questionnaire was just to find out whether and

how material on Easter and Christmas in Europe is used. But there was hardly response to our efforts. (Only 7 partners answered)

8. Suggestions for further co-operation:

We should define common goals and these goals should be accepted as obligatory.

We think this is the only way to co-operate on an equal level and to make sure there are standards which are satisfying everyone. The results from defining common goals could be written down in a contract, which should be signed by all partners.

9. Future of co-production and co-operation in CIRCOM Regional:

We all have the same goal:

wishing to offer our viewers demanding TV programmes without squandering money. One possibility is to co-operate and to co-produce amongst equals.

According to the principle: to give a bit and get back a lot, to save money by sharing programmes, to install a win-win business to all of us.

Apart from this:

Co-operation and co-production between different European countries

can widen our minds and transfer the idea of Europe of regions.

Please don't hesitate to give your opinion to these suggestions!

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CNN launches German language website

CNN has launched its eighth local language website, this time in German. CNN.de is being launched in partnership with n-tv, the German cable channel, and Die Teleboerse, the Frankfurt-based investment magazine produced by the Handelsblatt Group. The new site comes less than a month after the launch of CNN.com Europe, CNN's English-language site reporting international news from a European perspective. CNN.de is produced by joint online editorial teams in Berlin, Atlanta and New York where journalists have access to the full content of CNN.com. The site combines international news from CNN, German news from n-tv and business and financial news from Die Teleboerse. CNN already has language sites in Italian, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Spanish, Portuguese and Japanese.

Provision of interactive services and lease of digital capacity

A change in management at OTE, Greece's state telecoms operator, has led to a thorough reassessment of its digital TV plans.

For the past three years, OTE had been planning the launch of a digital satellite platform for the Greek market at considerable cost and has even fired up a transponder on Hot Bird at 13 degrees east with a free-to-air promo channel and several encrypted services.

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the OTE transponder.

OTE had already chosen Videoguard as an encryption system because of its secure nature and had concluded a preliminary agreement with state broadcaster ERT and private terrestrial station Alpha for the launch of a joint satellite digital platform.

Now this preliminary agreement has been cast aside, leaving both ERT and

Alpha in the cold. ERT already possesses a broadcasting licence and is awaiting final approval of theirs. But it seems most unlikely that either of these two broadcasters will be able to rival the already established Nova platform in the relatively small Greek DTH market.

OTE's change of management led to the rapid departure of its digital TV



project manager and there are several voices within the Greek government itself which are

unhappy with this sudden change of direction.

The OTE has issued a statement declaring that it would now restrict itself to the provision of interactive services and would be seeking a European partner to further its commercial success in this field. It would also be seeking to lease digital capacity to interested broadcasters from its Hot Bird transponder.

Co-productions meeting in Budapest held by the Baltic Media Centre



A Co-production Managers' meeting will be held in Budapest, Hungary, Feb 23-25, by the Baltic Media Center.

During this meeting further regional co-productions will be discussed and planned on the developments of the ecology program already being in production by that time and on the most viable ways of producing Competitive and attractive youth and cooking & wine programmes.

BMC will come with a detailed information on its contribution.

Co-production managers of Heads of Documentary Departments, who have the authority to plan and decide on future co-productions have been invited.

(e - mail: ilze@bmc.dk)

Advertising seminar held in Madrid

"In January, EGTA, the European Group of Television Advertising, organised a seminar on Local and Regional Advertising in Madrid. The seminar attracted more than 50 participants from 15 countries. The discussion evolved around the special features of advertising on local and regional television in Europe, the specific angles of messages carried by those broadcasters, as well as around some methods and instruments enhancing advertising. The seminar was addressed also by the Secretary General of Circom Regional, Mr. Boris Bergant, who presented the current state of the system and programmes of local and regional broadcasting in Europe. Advertising on regional level will also be one of the topics at the annual conference of Circom in Porto."

BBC move attracts 300.000 new viewers

The BBC said on Wednesday that moving their Nine O'Clock News programme to 10 o'clock had attracted up to 300,000 new viewers. The BBC also said there was a two per cent rise from last year in the number of viewers watching its peak time shows on BBC One from 6pm until 10.30pm.

"It shows viewers are appreciating not only their news at 10 pm but also the rich scheduling being offered between nine and 10 pm," a BBC spokeswoman said on the BBC's website.

Circom Report

The "CIRCOM Report" is a monthly publication of CIRCOM Regional, the European Association of Public Regional TV Stations - available on the CR Internet site and coming to CR member stations and personnel either through E-mail or as an A-4 size printed newsletter, through the CR General Secretariat from Ljubljana. The French version of the CIRCOM Report is conceived and published by the Strasbourg Secretariat with support from the Region Alsace, the Conseil General du Bas-Rhin and the City of Strasbourg.

The "CIRCOM Report" is planned and edited in ERT 3, Thessaloniki, Greece.

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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.

***Sony and Eutelsat are the official CIRCOM Regional sponsors**



TRT, TVR, ERT 3 are partners in major Balkan co production

The first major co-production in the Balkan area involving the public TV networks of Turkey, Romania and Greece is in process.

The script proposals by TRT (Turkey), TRV (Romania) and ERT 3 (Greece) will be discussed later this month in Ankara by the President / General Director of TVR Cristian Hadji Culea, the President of ERT 3 Demetris

Katsantonis and the Director of TRT Yucel Yener.

“Life in the Balkans” is the working title of the co production, which has been in the planning for almost a year.

Whispers

UPC TV has launched two more specialty channels, Expo 24x7 and Innergy, in Austria and the Netherlands....**Extreme Sports Channel** and **Club** have been launched in Hungary....**Eurosport** has started up a 24-hour news Channel to complement its Sports Services. Eurosport News debuted last September offering a comprehensive round - up of sports news from all over the world in 15-minute blocks. Localized services in Polish, Spanish and Turkish will also be available....

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Direct access to 300 video trailers and 10.000 programmes offers TV France International through its site (www.tvfi.com). The web site has French, English, Spanish, Japanese and Chinese versions.... “**The new** role of local and regional advertising in an increasingly global economy” was the topic of the 3rd EGTA thematic day held in Madrid, Spain, Jan 11-12....**Hishan** Makki, Director General of the Palestinian Radio and Television (PBC), was killed last month. “Man of wisdom and moderation” is how COPEAM Secretary General Giulio Giordano described him, expressing COPEAM ‘s deepest sympathy....

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Carlton communications has formed a joint - venture with UK food retailer J. Sainsbury to launch the UK’s first TV and Internet food and drink channel. The launch is expected this spring....**Once** a luxury, original programming is now a necessity for US cable networks with ratings steadily rising, and ad revenues coming on leaps and bounds, both pay and basic cable networks have been pushing hard into this area....**Germany** has more private television stations than most other major markets, but the real control lies with just tow groups: RTL and Kirch.

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The current ever-increasing fresh supply of telenovelas is coupled with the opportunity to exploit new territories that haven’t had the telenovela experience yet. Romantica, as a dedicated telenovela channel is looking at the Middle-East for its next move. Yet, in Poland the trend towards locally - produced versions of reality formats is taking hold at the expense of novelas, even though the ratings are not dissimilar. GMA7’s Barcelona also sees an increase

in local production. Last November the AMC Empire Theatre in Manhattan hosted a milestone event, the delivery of a digital motion picture via satellite from LA to NY and from the downlink site to the theatre by fiber optics. Through twelve other films have been shown in digital format, this was the first time the file had been transmitted coast to coast....**The UK’s** ITV network will launch an interactive service for its children block CITV in February 2001. The new interactive CITV will be available seven days a week to ITV viewers with digital terrestrial receivers....

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With a combined annual budget of around \$6.5 bn, Germany’s national, public service networks, ARD and 2DF, are among the world’s best-funded public broadcasters, financed by a combination of license fees and advertising....**The entries** for the Europa World Year Book 2001 are now revised. The two - volume work covers international organizations and the countries of the world £225.00. E-mail: info@warc.com.

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To combat web-pressures, a group of news - oriented channels, consisting of BBC world, CNBC, CNNI, Euronews plus Discovery and Eurosport, have formed a loose association, the Pan-European TV Group (PETV). During the first half - year of 2000, the PETV advertising cake grew b 44 per cent....**For channels** which make their living cultivating viewer tendencies toward voyeurism, the success of current programmes such as “Big Brother” and “Survive”, have inspired a whole new push towards erotic programming. Television X claims to have had some 4.000 answers to an advertisement for contestants willing to “go beyond the boundaries of “Big Brother” in the area of naughtiness....**All** over Europe, the battle for control of sports rights has never been more commercially critical. In specific, soccer and Formula One rule the game. Last year, BSKyB paid US\$ 1.575 bn. to renew its relationship with the English Premier League for three more years (the 2001-4 seasons)....

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