

# Circom Report

CIRCOM Regional Newsmonthly oCR is the European Association of 380 Public Regional TV Stations o October 1999 / Issue 2

## Media aid for S.E. European countries will help peace efforts in the region

Media aid currently being offered to television stations in countries of Southeastern Europe is somewhat chaotic, mostly cooperative but sometimes even counterproductive. Western European media organisations, mainly from private companies, tread on one another's toes in Kosovo, Bosnia, Albania and elsewhere in this crisis-torn regions.



By Reimar H. Allerdt, President, CIRCOM Regional

Many are trying to help, although their motives are not entirely unselfish. But those employees of Balkan television stations in need of help no longer bother to ask questions, they are simply surprised by the extraordinary interest being shown to them; one could even say, they are perplexed. But why does it always take dramatic conflict to make the international community aware of the catastrophic plight of television stations and their employees in South Eastern Europe?

Media organisations in Mid-, Western and Northern Europe, large and small, are prepared to help-rightly so, their help is urgently needed! They are providing technology, donating money, offering programme production free of charge, giving professional advice from all sides, from public television stations, from private companies, from charities. But there is no really effective coordination of this relief action. In some places too much good is being done, in others not enough.

Certainly, it is difficult to be sure where the help is really needed in this crisis-torn region. And helpers and consultants who come from democratic countries with free market economies cannot blame the

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suffering people of South Eastern Europe, whether they really need

**Media aid for S.E. European countries will help peace efforts in the region**

**Regional TV programs, training, culture and the Balcan Project**

**First French - German Forum in Paris Discusses Digitalisation**

**Czech TV hosts European Forum**

**New post-graduate tv - education opens in Holland**

**"Euromusica": showcase for folk music variety**

**Show Calendar**

**New communication policy is a "must"**

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**The "No violence against women" project calls for European consciousness**

**Key issues of interest for the Circom Report**

our help or not, for putting their own interests first.

**The battle** for control of the media, especially the battle for control of electronic media, is in full flow in South Eastern Europe. A great amount of money is being invested in building private television and radio stations, by almost mainly commercially motivated companies - and profit will surely not be long in coming.

**A balanced** system is, however, not yet in sight. Advocates of public television structures are finding it difficult to gain a foothold in the countries of South Eastern Europe, even though their solid informational and documentary programmes are much admired, are even in great demand.

**Small**, regional television stations have a particularly hard time of it ; they lack money, technology and personnel. Building new public regional stations is proving to be particularly difficult. The European Broadcasting Union (EBU) is doing its best to install and develop democratic public stations in all parts of Southeastern Europe , but much too much is expected of it.

**CIRCOM** regional has had member stations in South Eastern Europe for many years, it has already provided programming and technical aid in the region, organised training courses and annual conferences. But even this is way too little. Our association, which can operate freely throughout Europe, must become more involved with the efforts of the European Broadcasting Union.

**CIRCOM** Regional - in accordance with its aims - has to cooperate in coordination with the European Broadcasting Union and must also try to help regional television stations in the southern reaches of our continent. Together both associations have to ensure not only continuing support for existing stations, but also that new regional stations are created and given the chance of long-term survival within a democratic system.

**CIRCOM** Regional - at any time in close coordination and cooperation with the EBU - can make its infrastructures available, can create initiatives in many areas, but in order to really work successfully we need financial help from the funds of the European Community and the planned South Eastern Europe stability agreement. This money must be made available quickly and unbureaucratically, lest the media landscape in the Balkan region develop an unclear and uncontrollable life of its own with extremely negative consequences.

**Some** colleagues of CIRCOM Regional's member stations have already begun to develop a concept for a "Television Partnership Project South Eastern Europe", which envisages permanent programme cooperation between journalists and technicians combined with a practical training programme in the countries of the Balcan region. This model will be have already begun to develop a concept for a South Eastern European television partnership project, which envisages permanent programme cooperation between journalists and technicians in the Balkan region. This model will be presented to CIRCOM regional's 18th annual conference in late May/early June in Potsdam, Germany, and will be an attempt to offer practical help and

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Festivals, workshops

Whispers



Circom Report

Romanian Television  
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training / learning  
center

guidance for a democratic public system of regional television stations in South Eastern Europe.

**Throughout** our continent, politicians and the media talk of the need for a stability agreement for South Eastern Europe in the full knowledge that the recent regional conflicts represent but a small part of the troubles in this part of Europe. And yet media aid-until now, at least-has been concentrated in the crisis regions, whilst the needs of journalists and technicians in television stations in other South East European countries receive only limited attention.

### **MEDIA PROJECT**

The employees of television and radio stations in almost all South Eastern European regions live and work in almost unreasonable conditions. Much more than simple words of support from the European Community they are in desperate need of concrete help. But all regions of South Eastern Europe must be granted equal understanding, help and advice, otherwise resentment, jealousy, aggression and conflict will be the inevitable consequences. A South Eastern European stability agreement must serve all regions and not be limited to those in acute crisis.

Effective media aid, based on the much discussed but less concrete South Eastern European stability agreement must be coordinated at international level if it is to live up to its glamorous name; it needs to take all regions of South Eastern Europe in trans-frontier co-operation and consideration.

This alone is the right, albeit very small, step in the direction of peace in Europe.

## **Key issues of the CR conference in Potsdam Regional TV programs, training, culture and the Balcan Project**

A special training of program directors, head of programs, editors-in-chief and experts of electronic medias under the theme "conceptions and management-systems of regional television programs" is one of the highlights of the 18th annual conference of CIRCOM Regional to be held in Potsdam, Germany, May 30-June 4.

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Forum in Paris  
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Other highlights of the conference is a full day dedicated to "The Culture of European regions and regional television of tomorrow" and another one to the "Future of training : global - regional". Finally a very important issue to be discussed by experts and members of European institutions, governments and representatives of Balcan regions and members of CR's European Board is "The Balkan Television Project of Circom Regional"

The conference will be opened by the President of the European Broadcasting Union, who is also the Director of Bavarian Broadcasting, professor Dr Albert Scharf, who will focus on "Future concepts of Regional Television programs in the digital age".



On May 14 the training program of up to 50 young journalists, cameramen, producers etc will start to be concluded by June 3.

The conference will be held in the area of the Ostdeutsche jointly by the ARD and the Ostedeutscher Rundfunk Branderburg (ORB).

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**Key issues of interest for the Circom Report**

**Press review gives concise picture of European news**

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**Circom Report**

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## "Euromusica": showcase for folk music variety

Suggestions for the future - Structure of the event

Euromusica has through the years not only showed the variety in the folk music of Europe but also variations in the way music is presented on TV. We have seen all sorts of programmes and ways of presentation. Johan Forsblatt, who has been leading this main CR activity, has some new ideas about the future:

### The Music

- The music must be of highest quality with the best performers.
- Euromusica is to show music and a place, it is no competition. All music is the best.
- The music shall be living folk music, - song, - dance from different regions of Europe. If the music is to be arranged or to show influences by modern times it must be as a development or as an honest experiment, not as a parody.
- As Euromusica is a TV programme, the artists must function in this media.
- Don't hesitate to choose younger artists to show the survival of traditional music.

### The Programme

- There must be a center in the programme, e.g. a stage, a theater, a dance floor. It need not dominate but there must be something for the wheel to turn around.
- Satellite stages to the center, such as a church, a square, a pub, are necessary to create variations in the programme.
- It is important to show where we are. A stage could be anywhere, but the town, the village or the surrounding landscape are particular and unique. It might be convenient to connect Euromusica to an existing music festival or something alike, the streets will be more crowded, the dance floor more sweaty and Circom will be more noted. Euromusica should be possible to edit into a 50-60 minutes version as well as a 30 minute.

### The Production

**Media aid for S.E. European countries will help peace efforts in the region**

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**First French - German Forum in Paris Discusses Digitalisation**

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**Show Calendar**

**New communication policy is a "must"**

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**Key issues of interest for the Circom Report**

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- Music programmes are produced in stereo and folk music is presented live.
- Multicamera units are useful for the main stage, but often too clumsy when it comes to more intimate music sessions.
- It is important to be able to tailor - make the programme for each of the participating stations by using personal beta shots etc. This means that a presenter on stage is not necessary for the TV programme even if needed for the present audience.
- The participating stations pay their own artists, travel expenses etc. and clear all rights.
- The hosting station takes responsibility for accommodation for the artists and producers

### **Euromusica in the nineties**

- 1999 Città di Castello, Italy: 16 countries / Stations, 17 artists / groups

Theater + beta crews on location in four scenic places in Umbria: Perugia, Orvieto, Lago di Trasimeno and Cascata delle Marmore. Represented were: Albania, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Greece, Lithuania, Fyrom Macedonia, Moldavia, Russia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Hungary, Poland (two groups), Italy.

- 1998 Thessaloniki, Greece: 11 countries, 11 stations, 12 artists/groups.

Aristotelian University Concert Hall, multi - camera unit. Various concerts on location outdoors, small multi - camera coverage. Represented were: Bulgaria, FYROM, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, Norway, Russia, Slovenia, Sweden, Yugoslavia.

- Former "Euromusica" concerts were given in the following countries

1997 Trondheim, Norway  
 1996 Szekesfehervar, Hungary  
 1995 Agra do Heroismo, Acores, Portugal  
 1994 Novgorod, Russia  
 1993 Leeds, England  
 1992 Kiev, Ukraine  
 1991 Nürnberg, Germany  
 1990 Linz, Austria

### **For Circom Regional**

## **New communication policy is a "must"**

**A new communication policy should be adopted by CIRCOM Regional on the eve of the new millenium. This is what Lefty Kongalides, member of CR' s Executive Committee suggested responding to CR' s president Reimar Allerdt call for providing some ideas about the CR philosophy in the new century.**

Kongalides writes :

**Around Europe  
Festivals, workshops**

**Whispers**



**Circom Report**

**Romanian Television  
invests in year - old  
training / learning  
center**

**Media aid for S.E.  
European countries will  
help peace efforts in the  
region**

**Regional TV programs,  
training, culture and the  
Balcan Project**

**First French - German  
Forum in Paris  
Discusses Digitalisation**

- CR although a very strong union, with a strong membership, is still very introverted and keeping a low profile.
- CR in the eve of a new millenium needs is a new communication policy in all fields-with the support of all member stations.
- Starting with the simple things : all CR stations should have in their entrance a metal plaque stating "CR member station" or something like that. Should be provided by the General Secretariat at low cost.
- Once a year in weekly trade magazines, like the high esteemed "Variety", we should ask for a special supplement. What they usually ask is to provide (CR) a list of companies that could be potential sponsors. But are there any ? Like Sony and Eutelsat ? The magazine would call them and ask for ads. If there are many ads there companies that could be potential sponsors. But are there any ? Like Sony and Eutelsat ? The magazine would call them and ask for ads. If there are many ads there could be more stories about CR, its aims, its



achievements, etc. I do believe that we should ask our stronger financially station members to place ads.

- The above mentioned supplement could also be materialised with the "Hollywood Reporter" magazine - the int'l edition. Other magazines could also be considered.
- CR site that a)gets questions and gives answers b)operates as a bulletin board among members c)gets you in touch with all members d)provides photos & biographies of all CR Executive Council members and European Board members e)all available programs for broadcasting by CR members f)all prize winners (names involved, summary, etc) g)next important events in CR (dates).
- Show Calendar : A very important list of events, shows, festivals etc. to be organised by CR members. It should be promoted by all means (and by our CR Internet site as well).
- CIRCUM Report : this monthly bulletin with a journalistic aspect, needs stories, reports from each and every one.
- CR member stations or European Board members should provide lists of magazines/Newspapers etc (address, fax, phone, E-mail) to be receivers of the Circom Report or press releases.
- CIRCUM Report EBU has at least the Eurovision Song Contest boardcast around Europe and promoting the name. CR needs at leasts one annual big event. This writer has tried in thepast to organise in Thessaloniki a CR Song Festival promoting young and aspiring talent (with at least one CD in their luggage, but EBU did not like the idea and we stopped. However we could still consider a festival for young talents or an ethnic song festival with the CR stamp on it
- A press kit (including photos, brochure, list of member stations etc) should be made available to European Board members and through them to media in their respective countries.
- CR could probably link interested member stations with Ibero-American stations for something big that might be of mutual interest and made available for all CR members.
- During the last day of December we could have a link-up of

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**"Euromusica":showcase  
for folk music variety**

**Show Calendar**

**New communication  
policy is a "must"**

**EbS is now available on  
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against women" project  
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consciousness**

**Key issues of interest for  
the Circom Report**

**Press review gives  
concise picture of  
European news**

**Collection of examples  
of good practices on  
Combating Racism and  
Intolerance**

**Around Europe  
Festivals, workshops**

**Whispers**



**Circom Report**

one station from each CR country to broadcast a message by the prime minister and a song (almost four minutes X 15 stations = 60 minutes or 4 X 30 = 120 minutes). Texts should be available at least 20 days in advance and at least two months in advance the participation of interested stations must be known.

- Has any European Board member gone back after a conference and given an interview (on any media) about CR ?
- It is not too early to consider our involvement in the 2004 Olympic Games to be held in Athens - although this is a project beyond our means.
- In this extroverted policy I'm suggesting big events organized by our member stations could be held under the auspices of CR, or at least the name CR be added, and CR undertaking the task of promoting to other members, endorsing it, etc. It would be wonderful to have a CR Children Song Festival in Valencia or a CR Teenagers Skating Championship somewhere in Norway or a CR Chorus Week in Poland.

## Press review gives concise picture of European news

### A weekly EuroMedia Services production

EuroMedia Services has been bringing out a 3-minute weekly review since September 1996, initially on behalf of channels such as Euronews, Arte, Deutsche Welle and RAI...

The televised press review is unique of its kind in that it captures in a glance the different sensitivities expressed throughout Europe on two or three topical themes. It gives a concise picture of European news, through the comments of national weekly magazines.

Production is ensured with the technical means of the European Commission. It is, however, a purely journalistic product: EuroMedia Services (EMS) groups journalists working in Brussels, who, in a strictly independent capacity, report on the major themes of European interest from the headlines of the weekly press. The European Commission does not have any editorial control over the content of the press review. The choice of articles selected from the weekly press are made on journalistic criteria alone.

Since 1 January 1999, the press review has been managed directly by EMS. In this context, they are seeking to enlarge the audience and hope to find partner channels in each European country, which would, of course, enjoy exclusive rights to the product in their field of broadcasting.

The press review is transmitted by satellite every Friday at the end of the day (18h-20h). It may be put on the air by each contracting channel from Friday evening on. They would recommend that the press review be broadcast rapidly - by the weekend at the latest - so

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**Media aid for S.E. European countries will help peace efforts in the region**

**Regional TV programs, training, culture and the Balcan Project**

**First French - German Forum in Paris Discusses Digitalisation**

**Czech TV hosts European Forum**

**New post-graduate tv - education opens in Holland**

**"Euromusica": showcase for folk music variety**

**Show Calendar**

**New communication policy is a "must"**

**[EbS is now available on Internet](#)**

that the magazines covered in the sequence are not out of date.

Each press review is transmitted in a French and an international version. The text of the review is sent by fax or e-mail earlier on Friday so that the commentary may be translated and recorded in the language of broadcast. It may also be translated into some languages from Brussels.

EMS grants an exclusive contract for the diffusion of the press review according to the following terms:

- National channels: 400 euros per press review (plus 21% VAT).
- Local channels: sliding scale depending on the number of partner channels.

EuroMedia Services - 8 chaussée de Stockel, B - 1200 Brussels / Tel. :fax (32 -2)7792273 - e-mail : [mchel.theys@euronet.be](mailto:mchel.theys@euronet.be)

**The "No violence against women" project calls for European consciousness**

**Key issues of interest for the Circom Report**

**Press review gives concise picture of European news**

**Collection of examples of good practices on Combating Racism and Intolerance**

**Around Europe Festivals, workshops**

**Whispers**



**Circom Report**

**Romanian Television invests in year - old training / learning center**

DG X offers CR co-operation and co-financing  
**The "No violence against women" project calls for European consciousness**

**Media aid for S.E. European countries will help peace efforts in the region**

**Regional TV programs, training, culture and the Balcan Project**

**First French - German Forum in Paris Discusses Digitalisation**

**The European Commission (DG X) - reports Boris Bergant, CR General Secretary - offered Circom Regional its co-operation and co-financing for a coproduction project with the aim to call the European consciousness to the problems of violence against women, especially against violence in families. Having produced a couple of video spots they are ready to co-finance the production of four 30-minute documentaries. The topics and the angle is entirely up to the authors of the spots and the participating stations of Circom Regional. However, they have to correspond with the proposed theme.**



CR considers it appropriate that regional TV deals with this issue, since it can deal with it from an interesting and in-depth angle adding different kinds of experience and backgrounds.

The condition for participation is filing in a concept and script. All stations from European Union member countries have the right to participate. It would be desirable, that all participating stations broadcast also all other programmes of the project, which should be available for broadcasting by other Circom Regional members stations as well.

Four selected programmes will obtain an EU / Circom Regional subvention of 10.250 Euro each and additionally there will be 28.000 Euro at disposal for translations, co-ordination, etc.; these means will be allocated according to common agreement.

CR considers participation in this project interesting, especially since it is known that some stations already have programmes of this kind, which could be entered entirely or with some minor modifications. Furthermore, the financial subvention is considered appropriate.

All interested are invited to send their proposals enclosing a treatment or script to the Secretariat in Ljubljana latest by October 15, 1999. In case there will be more than four proposals sent in, a selection committee will be called, which will select the best projects.

The committee will consist of CR representatives (Copro Office Munich, Secretariat Ljubljana and the EC representatives). CR members will be informed about the results latest by November 1, 1999. The funds will be transferred still in 1999. The deadline for the production of the programmes is February 1, 2000. The programmes should be broadcast in the first quarter of the year 2000.

**Czech TV hosts European Forum**

**New post-graduate tv - education opens in Holland**

**"Euromusica": showcase for folk music variety**

**Show Calendar**

**New communication policy is a "must"**

[EbS is now available on Internet](#)

**The "No violence against women" project calls for European consciousness**

**Key issues of interest for the Circom Report**

**Press review gives concise picture of European news**

**Collection of examples of good practices on Combating Racism and Intolerance**

**Around Europe Festivals, workshops**

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**Circom Report**

## Romanian Television invests in year - old training / learning center

Training activities at TVR are mainly spread out through the Training Center, a new compartment in our company, only about one year old. The permanent staff of the training center includes only four persons; the teachers come from TVR, Romanian Radio and the Academy for Theater and Film.

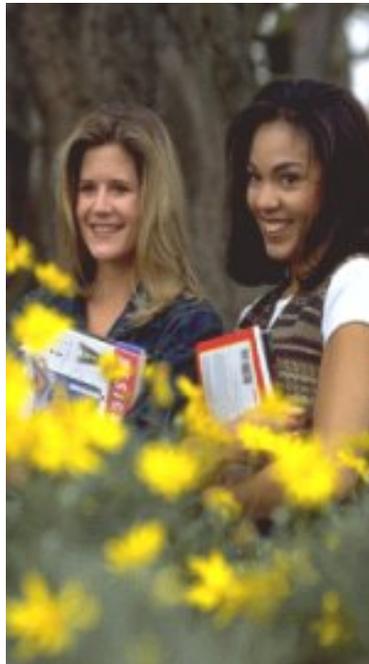
We think that our main task is to do the best to keep alive the training idea and with it, this long term investment. We are very determined to convince everybody that a company under restructure has to be a learning organisation.

I dare to say that in such a crazy competing world, with so quick changes, training has to be a main tool of the management team and of the human resources strategy.

Through training, employees can better understand the goals of the company, they become more efficient, they start to be a better team with common language and understanding.

Courses or seminars or workshops proved to be an excellent opportunity to communicate, to better know each other, to start a new kind of competition. During courses students get new knowledge or understand better what they have learned on site, they start to get rid of mediocrity and fight for better results.

The main course TVR training center is organising is a general one for TV production. It is destined to people already working in the company for a while, but also for newcomers.



**Romanian Television invests in year - old training / learning center**

**Media aid for S.E. European countries will help peace efforts in the region**

**Regional TV programs, training, culture and the Balcan Project**

**First French - German Forum in Paris Discusses Digitalisation**

**Czech TV hosts European Forum**

**New post-graduate tv - education opens in Holland**

**"Euromusica": showcase for folk music variety**

**Show Calendar**

**New communication policy is a "must"**

**[EbS is now available on Internet](#)**

**The "No violence against women" project calls for European consciousness**

**Key issues of interest for the Circom Report**

The production course includes modules as: TV production, basic technologies, sound, editing, video camera, management, marketing, multimedia, audience research. The course lasts for eight weeks and ends with an exam and certificate attesting the knowledge.



Up to now the TV production course has been finished by about 120 employees belonging to our company. It is just now that a new group is having exams.

Some PC courses have also been given and we intend to go for others

this Autumn.

Last year with a follow up for this year we had a very successful collaboration with Media Academic Hilversum, The Netherlands, concerning training matters.

In 1998, TVR got some MATRA founding from the Duch government and we started courses for the Regional TVR studios. Each regional studio sent to Timisoara, the host of courses, a team of four : a cameraman, an editor, a presenter / reporter, an engineer.

Courses have been held in English, in modules, daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., theory and practice. Modules were on TV basics, production, editing, video camera, digital TV. Teachers and students were very motivated and they build up an excellent team.

In the evenings the teachers organised so called "evening sessions" opened to all employees of the regional studio, answering all kind of questions.

The course had also an additional aim: the trained students had to know how to teach others about what they have learned. That is why, the main course included a "Train the trainer" module. The students have been fought how to give their knowledge, how to structure a lesson and a lot other things. They even practised giving lessons in front of colleagues, students from University.



In Autumn 1998 we organised some workshops in central studio Bucharest on management and, for our teachers, a course on "Train the trainers".

Taking into account the evaluations we got from students and chief of departments, the Media Academy course was a succesful one.

That result made us to ask for a long term protocol with Media Academic in order to support us futher on with TVR training activities.

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**Collection of examples of good practices on Combating Racism and Intolerance**

**Around Europe Festivals, workshops**

**Whispers**



**Circum Report**

**Romanian Television invests in year - old training / learning center**

We were lucky to get another MATRA founding so that recently we had modules for Format Development, Management Technics and Budgeting and

Controlling. The courses have been attended by the people in the company. Again the evaluations were good.

During this autumn TVR will get courses for Producers, Basic technologies, Camera, Editing, TV production, Presenters, Lighting in studio and outside.

Also we hope to be able to start a new sound course, the TV production course and others in order to answer a lot of demands as legal affairs, economic items.

It is also to be mentioned that we have an international activity within the EBU.

I am a member of the training Steering Committee being elected in October 1998.

Due to the EBU and its care for training employees in member organisations a lot of seminars and workshops are to be organised.

Our training center has also a publishing activity : six time per year we give out a thematic magazine in which you can find all kind of information concerning the center and the main subject of issue.

Sometime, when we find something of hot interest for the company we give to responsible people here a kind of short handout. Maybe it could help in organizing knowledge that for sure have already.

GEORGETA BATUCA  
Technical coordinator Training Center  
TVR  
Phone : + 40-1-2312804



# Whispers

**The CR** Executive Committee will propose to the European Board of CR David Lowen, former President of CR, to follow up Jurgen Hassel in organising the Prix Circom in 2000....Prix Circom Regional will have a special judges award for contribution to regional television given to a person, an initiative or a company....The Dutch national public tv network and the independent, public financed, chain of regional television stations in Holland are talking about cooperation. That could result in using the regional broadcasting network for national news and sports for some hours a day. The project should bring more money to the regional stations and more news exposure to the Dutch viewers....

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**BBC Worldwide** and Granada Media are to form a new company which will develop and place US versions of sitcoms and drama series based on and inspired by UK originals ....The Spanish Government will impose a new legislation obliging all the country's TV stations to announce their daily schedules eleven days in advance....TeleDamark, Denmark's largest cable company, carries 150 mainly int'l channels....

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**Finlands'** public broadcaster YLE is likely to start up at least part of its digital platform prior to the Olympics in September 2000 ....A temporary increase of 25 % for viewers of digital television, starting in April 2000, was proposed by an independent committee advising the UK government on the future of the BBC licence fee....Cyprus is first-time entrant to the 27th Int'l Emmy Awards to be held in New York, November 22....

XXX

**Spanish** channels will have to invest 5% of their annual revenue in films, according to a new law....It is likely that one of RAI (Italy) three TV networks will be sold off. The corporation intends to expand into new media....Budget cuts, job losses and speculation about the privatisation of public networks in the Baltic Republics due to the economic recession....

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**Poland's** National Council of Radio & TV has awarded a national TV licence for a Catholic channel, Family Television....A 24-hour telenovela channel was to be launched by a Colombian producer in Bulgaria....CNN's former star correspondent Peter Arnett is now working on the web, with foreign tv.com....

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**Media aid for S.E.  
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**Regional TV programs, training, culture and the Balcan Project**

**First French - German Forum in Paris  
Discusses Digitalisation**

**Czech TV hosts  
European Forum**

**New post-graduate tv - education opens in Holland**

**"Euromusica": showcase for folk music variety**

**Show Calendar**

**New communication policy is a "must"**

**[EbS is now available on Internet](#)**

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**Key issues of interest for the Circom Report**

**Press review gives concise picture of European news**

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**The value** of European soccer rights has driven key media players to invest in top football clubs....Franco -German cultural channel Arte launched in 1991 has agreements with public broadcaster in Belgium, Switzerland, Spain, Austria, Poland, Italy, Finland....Spanish digital - platform football provider Via Digital has launched Futbol Total, a 24-hour football channel offering league games from France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, UK and Portugal....

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**B Sky B** only shows about 60 out of 360 football games in the UK. The broadcaster owns the rights for all 360 games in the U.K.... Neil Roberston (ITV Border TV) is stepping down as the ITV national contributor, to be replaced by Clare Morrow, the News Editor at Yorkshire TV....A CR Digital Chat Room is already available with the initiative of Gerry Reynolds, CR Vice President....



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**Circom Report**

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