

Secretary General Annual Report 2021

The year 2021 was the second year with the coronavirus crisis. The massive lockdowns and travel bans continued until almost the end of the year. CIRCOM continued its activities mainly online until the Executive Committee and European Board meetings were held on-site in Milan in November because of easier conditions in the Italian region of Lombardy.

Meeting in person was a relevant step towards getting back to the CIRCOM true meaning – to get a strong community of professionals together, united by the common goal to advance further the regional television media in Europe. It was confirmed in Milan that an Annual Conference in person would definitely take place next May in Galway. Even though right after November there was a new wave of infection across Europe and the first Executive Committee meeting of 2022 was online again, the plans for the Conference remained.

Due to the COVID-19 crisis in 2021 a 50% discount on membership fees and 25% discount on Prix sponsorship were exceptionally implemented. However, the yearly outcome actually broke even, but some of the costs were offset to 2022, when the budget went back to the ordinary fees and sponsorships, so a financial deficit is expected.

On the other hand, 2021 was the last year of the process of updating the Secretariat contracts according to today's standards, which implied an increase in the Secretariat expenditures mainly because of tax and social costs.

Nominations and Membership

At the Annual Assembly on 21 May 2021, Jean-Marc Dubois was elected President of CIRCOM Regional and this is his first-year term.

There were no changes of membership.

Budget

The budget plan for 2021 took into consideration the subscription fees applicable for 2021 and the confirmed Prix CIRCOM Sponsorships. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the on-site activities were not held except the November meetings in Milan.

The outline budget for 2021 was approved at the Annual Assembly on 20 November 2020 held online.

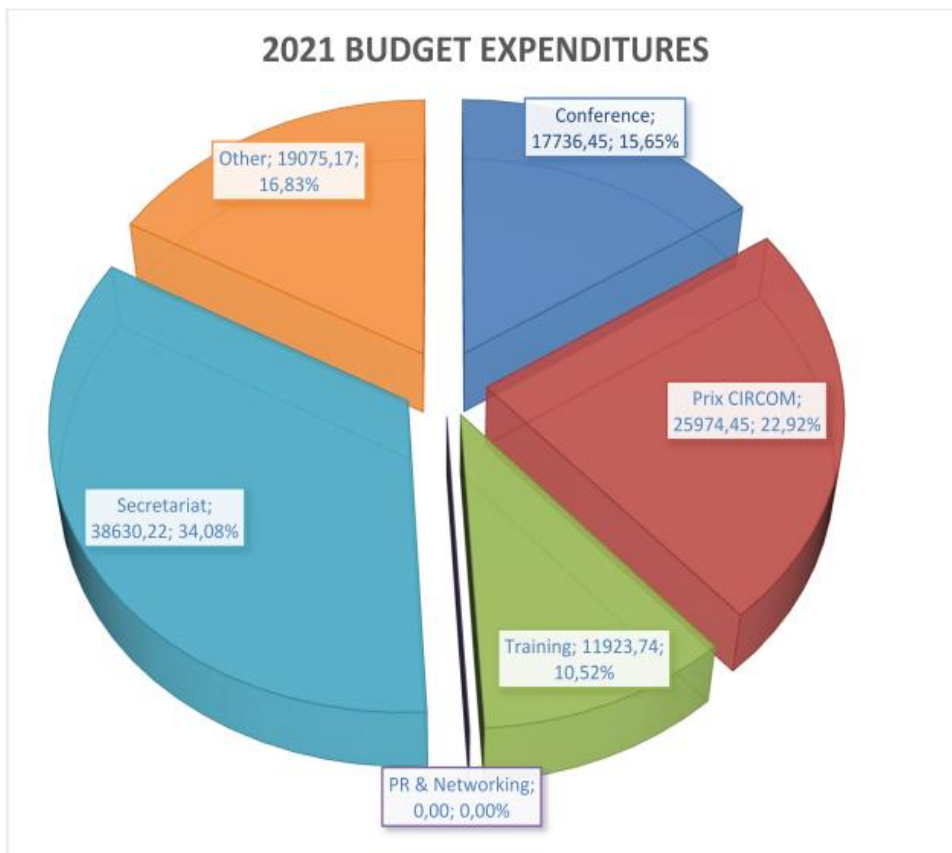
Financing

The revenues and expenditures were within the budget and there were no unexpected events.

The realisation of the budget up to 31 December 2021 was:

Revenues	
Membership fees	65,745.13
Sponsor Prix	43,500.00
Other	<u>3,887.20</u>
	113,132.33

Expenditures	
Conference	17,736.45
Prix CIRCOM	25,974.45
Training	11,923.74
PR and Networking	0.00
Secretariat	38,630.22
Other	<u>19,075.17</u>
	113,340.03



Annual Conference 2021

Due to coronavirus crisis the Annual Conference was postponed again hoping that in 2022, circumstances permitting, it will be held also in the city of Galway. Some funds for the Conference were allocated to the Executive Committee and European Board meetings held in November 2021 in Milan.

Prix CIRCOM Regional

Prix CIRCOM 2021 had 191 entries in 10 categories: Documentary, Entertainment and Drama, Investigative Journalism, Minorities in Society, Most Original and Innovative, Music and Arts, News programme, News Report, Video Journalism, Young Onscreen Talent. In addition, the Grand Prix was awarded for the “best” of the category winners.

Category sponsors were: RTÉ, TV Galicia and TV Asturias, Council of Europe, France TV, NRK, TG4, RPO, SVT, BBC, TVR. The Grand Prix was sponsored by TVP.

Prix CIRCOM 2021 judging – as in 2020 – was planned to be held in April in Sitgès near Barcelona, hosted by CCMA-Catalonia. Once again, the pandemic intervened. Instead, judging groups met remotely in a series of video conferences to discuss and select winners.

The Prix CIRCOM 2021 Winners and Commended were announced online and the Grand Prix was awarded in an online Gala event in the evening in May. The winner of the Grand Prix was TVR Timisoara with *How Did I Live in a Forest*.

Winners received their trophy and certificate by post: commended received certificates by post. Travel and Accommodation was offered to the next “real life” CIRCOM Conference and Prix Gala.

The complexity of the remote judging and gala should not be underestimated. They were possible only because of the effectiveness of the support team of Branka Prazic, Tonja Stojanac and Guillaume Kuster and because many more colleagues were prepared to give up time to do the judging alongside their usual desk work and commitments at their stations.

The gala show retained its “live” feel of excitement and involvement with a great number of contributions from all over Europe – very much a “CIRCOM family” event.

During the year, plans were made to replace David Lowen after more than 20 years as President of the Prix. It was agreed that David and Mojca Recek, RTVSlo, would act as co-Presidents for 2022.

Training

In 2021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic situation, all the training program was online.

There were 14 webinars, which includes one week with 9 webinars.

Around 250 people from all over Europe attended the webinars.

All webinars have been recorded and put on the CIRCOM Website.

“Train the Trainers”, 2 February 2021 – online workshop

The session was led by Mia Costello and was focused on the skills needed to deliver training via an online platform such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom. 8 participants from 4 countries attended this half-day webinar.

The feedback was very positive.

“Learning from a global pandemic”, 8-12 March 2021 – one week of online workshops

Nine interactive sessions of 1.5 hour each, organized in two sessions per day: Social Listening, Leadership in Covid, Crunching the Numbers, Audiences during Covid, Fighting Fake News, Digital Transformation, Mental Health & Resilience, Reporting COVID-19 and the secret to winning the Prix CIRCOM.

During that week, these 9 sessions reflected on many aspects of our working lives which have been impacted by COVID-19. It was not only about that we've learnt but how we apply that learning to our future audiences.

Around 200 people registered for the Week. The average number of people attending the webinars was 32 people. The general feedback received was positive with a high level of appreciation concerning the content.

“Children’s News Programmes”, 9 June 2021, online workshop

This session hosted by CCM3 TV3 (Spain) presented a few cases of Children’s News Programmes from across Europe on public service media. Experts in this field were brought together to discuss the challenges of making news for a younger audience. 39 people from 10 countries registered, 22 people were present and 15 of them sent very positive feedback. They found it informative, useful and clear.

“Finding and Telling Climate Stories – A Fresh Approach”, 23 September 2021, online workshop.

This session was hosted by Ma Costello and joined by two working journalists from the Solutions Journalism Network: Sophie Roland, and Charlotte Horn. The workshop was focused not only on the problems of climate change, but on how people respond to these problems. 27 people from 8 countries registered. 21 people were present and 8 of them sent feedback. The delegates found the workshop interesting, inspiring and excellent. They liked the content and solutions approach.

“The Digital Doctors Surgery”, 20 October 2021, online workshop

This session designed to help share solutions to the challenge of digital transformation was hosted by Mia Costello. Three speakers shared their experience in digital transformation: Adrian Johansen, Head of News, NRK Nordland Norway, Xavier Collombier, Responsible for the digital in FTV France and Anton Svenden, Editor-in-Chief, SVT Nyheter Västi Sweden. 35 people from 10 countries registered. 26 people were present and 12 sent feedback. The opinions were very positive, most of participants thought the webinar was useful, with excellent presentations of the speakers.

EuroPCom 2021: “Changing communication – Communicating change”, 8-9 November 2021

This two-day online conference organised by the European Committee of the Regions focused on three main themes: Democracy, Green Deal and Digitalisation. CIRCOM Regional delivered one half-day online workshop **“Open Sources Intelligence: Hands on”, on 8 November** hosted by Guillaume Kuster and Nelly Pailleux (Check First network) on how to track down fake news using journalistic skills and Open Sources Intelligence techniques. 26 people in total registered – 18 people from CIRCOM Members from 9 countries and 8 from EuroPCom registrations. The overall impression of the session was good. Participants found it excellent, very informative and well presented with good learning resources.

Coproduction

This COVID-19 period in 2020/21 coincided with the period of the renew of policies of EU institutions funding. CIRCOM decided to renew its coproduction projects as well, and started reflexions about content, format, sharing of funds, among other new approaches. Various online meetings were held, as well as online discussions during trainings sessions, EC and EB. New projects were envisaged, especially in the field of fact checking, but also in networking, training, dissemination including coproduction & various partnership approaches. This work in progress following the renew of EU calls was still ongoing in 2021. Concrete conclusions and actions were defined at the end of 2021, especially in physical meetings of the Executive Committee and the European Board in Milan. It was decided to send a survey to receive the needs of members in these matters. This was done at the beginning of 2022. The results, possible projects and related EU calls will be presented at the next Executive Committee and European Board in Galway.

Public Affairs and Networking

The pandemic again slowed down activities in this area.

The Deputy Secretary General attended the annual meeting of the Advisory Committee of the European Audiovisual Observatory (online) on 11 March 2021. CIRCOM is one of the members of this institution linked to the Council of Europe.

The Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General participated at the (online) meeting of the Advisory Committee of the European Audiovisual Observatory on 8th September. CIRCOM is one of the members of this institution linked to the Council of Europe.

CIRCOM Regional took part in the EuroPCom Conference “Changing communication, communicating change” on 8 November. CIRCOM organized the workshop “Open Source Intelligence” lead by Guillaume Kuster and Nelly Pailleux.

The training was open to CIRCOM journalists and communicators.

Networking

Throughout the year, the networking was focused on publishing the Newsletter monthly (except in August). The communication was about the training programme, Prix CIRCOM, new member or national coordinator.