

Circom Report

CIRCOM Regional Newsmothly•CR is the European Association of 380 Public Regional TV Stations in 38 countries● June 2003/No 44

[RAI President reminds Grado conference](#)

Enlargement creates a new challenge for broadcasters

"The Enlargement is new challenge for national and regional broadcasters, who must play a fundamental role". This is underlined by Lucia Annunziata, President of RAI, in a message sent to CIRCOM Regional President Lefty Kongalides on the occasion of the conference in Grado, Italy.

In this important and sensitive message Mrs. Annunziata also puts emphasis on the mission of the public broadcasting service "which by nature, is called upon to provide its audience with the basic instructions for functioning within a complex society and to try and give more opportunities to all, greater occasions for understanding and integrating".

The full text in Italian and English is on page 8

The Grado Conference

Photos and reports from the CIRCOM Regional conference in Grado, Italy, are spread on pages 2,3,4,5,6,7 & 8 of this issue.



Participation in "Teenage Europe"

What does participating in a huge – and profitable – project like "Teenage Europe"? Program coordinator Tim Johnson, Director TV SYD, has the practical and concise answer:

"It's so easy.

You grab a camera and a mike

You go out in the street

Jump on a bus

Look for some teenagers

Ask them of their opinion of the very enlarged Europe

Edit one or two minute for your news or other broadcasts

Ask us in Coproductions if we are interested

Send the item on to us in Kolding/Lene Krüger

We use them in an European programme on the EBS

- and pay you a contribution of € 400 a minute for your production costs"

It's a easy as that. So join the team of contributors and participate in this pan-european project.



Entries invited for Best TV Freelancers

The Rory Peck Awards 2003 are now open for entries. These awards honours the best news and current affairs coverage by freelance cameramen and camerawomen around the world. The London-based Rory Peck Trust is named after the well-known freelancer who was killed in 1993. The trust provides safety training and insurance for freelancers, and provides grants for families of camera-operators who have been killed or seriously wounded while filming. This year, freelancers deserve our respect more than ever.

There are awards for Best Hard News Coverage, and Best Features.

If a TV station uses freelance cameramen or camerawomen, and they have filmed some special coverage in the last 12 months, they can enter free of charge by downloading a form from www.rorypecktrust.org The deadline for entries is 3rd September. The Awards Ceremony will take place at the National Film Theatre in London on 30th October.

Grado CR conference connecting successfully

Conference Presenter, Rick Thompson, reports on the Plenary Sessions of the 21st Circom Regional Annual Conference in Grado, Italy.

The rain stopped and the sun came out just in time for the start of the Circom conference in Grado. The location was beautiful. The hospitality from RAI and the local authorities was superb. The attendance was high. The informal networking was continuous. The Co-productions workshops were usually full and active. The two-week training workshop was a big success. But the main business of the 21st annual conference happened in the Plenary Hall over three days of high-quality presentations and intensive discussion.

One person attended every plenary session. That person was me, the Conference Presenter. So it was no surprise to be asked by Secretary-General Marija Nemcic to write this summary of the main sessions. A brief report cannot mention every speaker, or give much detail of the sophisticated presentations. And it is inevitably a personal selection of the most interesting contributions. So I hope others who attended the conference will not feel I have neglected anything very important.

The *Opening Ceremony* on Thursday May 22nd introduced this year's conference theme of "Connecting". This theme clearly worked well as a common thread running through the three days, giving a structure to the event, and emphasising the need to connect with regional communities and neighbour-professionals at a time of globalisation. Our Italian hosts gave delegates a particularly warm welcome to Grado, and Giacomo Santini, Vice-President of the European Parliament, made a strong plea for more informed television coverage of the EU over the next 12 months leading up to the next European Parliament elections, which will have an extra 10 countries taking part for the first time.

The conference itself then began with *Benchmarking Regional Television in Europe*, a presentation of the first draft of a unique survey into the state of our industry. Detailed questionnaires had been prepared by Circom and RAI; replies had been received from 20 member countries. These had been compiled and formatted by Loredana Cornero from RAI Marketing, and were analysed by Professor Giuseppe Richeri. They showed quite large differences in public TV structures, programming and strategy. Some are loose federations. Others are much more centrally controlled. The move towards 100% digital transmission varies a great deal. For example, Germany is rolling out digital terrestrial transmission on a regional or local basis, so that Berlin has an early target-date for analogue switch-off, while other parts of the country will have no digital delivery in sight for many years. The survey will be completed in the coming months, and will be updated regularly, to become a dynamic resource for use by all Circom Regional members.

In this first session, the European Commission's Director of Communications, Niels-Jorgen Thogersen, said that the continuing health and development of public television at the regional level was vital for Europe. According to the latest figures, 80% of Europeans now use television as their main source of news, and this percentage is rising. He drew the attention of the conference to a major Call For Proposals issued by the European Commission in the previous week, with up to 16 million Euros set aside for grants for TV and radio programmes about EU issues. He urged Circom to enter programme ideas, and assured non-EU members that the process would be flexible; he hoped to see accession countries and other non-EU countries included in the programme plans. He pointed out that the deadline for the first set of proposals – about Enlargement – had been set for the end of June, so time was short.

Connecting Experiences was the second session on the first morning. Different models of regional television were offered from the UK, France, Netherlands and Norway. The BBC's Director of Nations and Regions, Pat Loughrey, gave the keynote address, with a passionate call for television which touches communities and individuals. He identified

three worrying trends in European society – the fragmentation of society caused by social and religious changes in the past half-century – a growing poverty gap with the rich getting much richer and a growing proportion of poor people – and a digital divide, in which some people will be information rich and others information poor. He explained how the BBC had decided to invest more in local services, particularly with more local radio stations, and that it was trying to use interactivity to stimulate public access and debate at the very local level.

Marc Lesort from France 3 spoke of the difficulty of defining public service broadcasting. He said France 3 is fully committed to covering local culture, but politicians never seemed to be satisfied, not recognising that the audience wants good light-entertainment in their television diet, not just high-culture. He emphasised the value of the France 3 network of regional stations exchanging programmes, ideas and cultural experiences. Roel Dijkhuis from TV Noord took a rather different view, celebrating the complete autonomy enjoyed by regional stations in the Netherlands. "We focus on our own communities. We know them. They know us. It works". From Norway, Grethe Haaland described the changes at NRK which have been forced by increasing competition and the need to cut costs. They have reduced the number of separate regional programmes, but increased the local presence. And NRK is keen to develop more multi-skilling as fast as possible.

Connecting the Content with Viewers was the title of the next session, with a series of sketches of the types of programming which can work well at local level. Contributions came from France, Italy, Netherlands, and Denmark. An unusual presentation was offered by Helen Thomas, head of the BBC Hull regional station in England. For the past 18 months, she had been conducting an experiment in extremely local TV, with maximum interactivity, such as video diaries from viewers. This was all TV-on-demand, delivered to a small community via broadband. Ms. Thomas said very local services were hugely popular, but the question remained on how to finance them in the long-term.

The theme of co-production, programme sharing and practical collaborations was investigated in the session called *Connecting Broadcasters*. Successful trans-frontier projects from France and Italy were explained, along with the well-established Balkan Magazine, Alpe-Adria, and Mediterranean projects organised by the CMCA. It was already clear that this 21st annual conference was seeing a dramatic resurgence in co-productions, after several years of low activity. Many ideas were being discussed, some of them stimulated by the European Commission and Parliament. For the rest of the conference, the co-production workshop rooms seemed to be packed with people. Coordinators Tim Johnson, Peter Saur and Valerie Joyeux reported that it was an exhausting series of discussions, but should prove to be a rewarding experience for participating stations. Clearly new life has been breathed into Circom Co-Productions.

The evening of the first day saw the Prix Circom presentations, with clips of 19 commended and winning programmes in the six award categories, and some elegant new trophies. The enjoyable ceremony was smoothly produced by Prix Circom President, David Lowen, who said though the the number of entries was down on 2002, the quality of entries had been extremely high. It was the second time that the same TV channel had won both the "Grand Prix" awards. It had been Polish television both times, with TVP3 Poland picking up this year's prizes for best documentary and best news programme. He hoped that more countries would enter in 2004, when the judging would be hosted by TG4 in Ireland. He was already seeking a TV station to host the judges in 2005.

The following morning, conference delegates had the chance to find out how the six Prix Circom winning programmes had been made, in the session called *Meet the Winners*. This year it was a particularly interesting presentation. There were many energetic and witty ideas in the winning news programme from Poland, "Fakty Tydzien". The winning documentary, Bobrek Dance, was revealed to be the result of

long preparation which enabled the production team to become part of a deprived Polish community. The winning current affairs programme from BBC Northern Ireland had also been carefully prepared; its investigation into people-smuggling had been the result of a daring undercover operation using hidden cameras, which provoked a debate about when secret filming should be permitted. The editor of the winning cross-border programme, Euro3 from France 3 Nord, had been unable to persuade neighbouring countries to screen the programmes, but remained committed to a broader view of his own region. The team behind BBC Scotland's special award team told how they had overcome a series of information barriers as they investigated the mysterious deaths of four young soldiers. In contrast, the most original programme, from Omroep Flevoland in the Netherlands, was the result of very little planning, with the team sometimes knocking on doors at random to find human stories, such as the elderly lady who plays drums in her living-room.

The second session on the second day, *Connecting with Democracy*, concerned one of the big issues facing every regional TV station in Europe – how to make politics interesting, without promoting colourful extremists or sensationalism? The subject produced a great deal of reaction, with animated discussions continuing over coffee well after the end of the formal session. The introduction used PowerPoints to give examples of academic research and recent elections to show that there is increasing apathy and cynicism about politics in many countries. Paul Cannon from the BBC explained that senior executives had recently completed a major study about their political coverage, which had concluded that they must emphasise much more the impact

of policies on ordinary lives, and that local politics must take centre-stage. "There are political producers and political consumers. We should give more time to the consumers at the point of delivery." A new political TV show had been launched which integrated regional coverage. From Rotterdam, Cees van der Wel described the amazing political rise of the controversial and charismatic Pim Fortyn, who until his murder had attracted a huge following in the Netherlands by manipulating the media and being entertainingly radical. "I still can't understand how it happened", said Cees, who suggested that we must find ways of making

mainstream politics more interesting to viewers. From B92 in Belgrade, correspondent Milorad Vesic reminded everyone how difficult it is to report politics in Serbia, where the Prime Minister had recently been assassinated. Journalists across South-East Europe found it very difficult to establish true information, in an atmosphere of cynical manipulation, concealment and even intimidation.

In the following plenary session, *Connecting with Digital*, moderator Gerry Reynolds introduced a number of case-studies showing different applications of the digital revolution. Some of the latest newsgathering techniques were illustrated by Steve Pearce from BBC News. He showed how store-and-forward internet transfers of high-quality pictures had been used in Iraq. This system has potential applications for regional stations wishing to bring pictures into base without having to use expensive satellites. The expansion of national digital channels in Germany was described by Rolf Czernotzky from ARD, and contrasted with the very local service of TV2 Nord Denmark, explained by Bent Bjoern. RAI's director of strategy, Luigi Rocchi gave an overview of the technical challenges facing digital transmission in Italy.

When the Big Story Breaks was a very interesting workshop session in the plenary hall, which reflected the large number of major events which have affected regional newsrooms in recent years. There were dramatic pictures from the firework factory explosion in Holland, the eruption of Mount Etna, the bombardment of Dubrovnik, and the huge chemical factory explosion in France. The speakers agreed that every regional newsroom should have a plan for the big unexpected events, which usually occur at awkward times, often at weekends. Marcel Oudewesselink from RTV Oost Holland said, "The best thing the boss can do is leave the journalists to do their jobs, provide food, give staff safety top priority, and plan the coverage for the next day".

A parallel workshop considered *The Challenge of EU Enlargement*. Those who attended said it was very useful to be reminded of the significance of the expansion of the EU to 25 countries, and of the free TV facilities on offer from the European institutions. Kirsten Tingsted-Andersen made it clear that, in addition to the European Commission's grants, significant co-production funds would be available from the European Parliament during the build-up to the EP elections in June 2004. The EP audio-visual unit would expand its media-relations operations to cope with coverage of a much bigger parliament.

On the final day of the conference, Saturday 24th May, *Connecting Communities with Global Events* reminded delegates of the need for great sensitivity when reporting the divisions in local communities caused by such events as the Iraq war, the war against terrorism, and large-scale economic migration. There was a notable contribution from Khurshid Ahmed, the Chairman of the British Commission for Racial Equality, who was generous about European television's record, but suggested that special efforts should be made to reflect all parts of the TV audience in each locality, and that producers should really understand the religious and cultural differences in their own communities.

Before the closing ceremony, *Young Circom* was an opportunity for the participants in the Circom Journalism Workshop, which the Thomson Foundation had organised before and during the conference, to show delegates what they had been doing. A young journalist from Slovakia introduced a half-hour film made by the workshop team. It contained a series of features about Grado and its surrounding area. These showed excellent television techniques, with well-composed

sequences of shots, very good natural sound, many human examples, and interesting narrative structures, all presented in a second language, English, with style and imagination. On behalf of the trainees, Suzanna the presenter appealed directly to any bosses present to allow the young journalists to try such techniques when they returned to their home stations, and not to ignore or obstruct their fresh ideas!

As the conference closed with votes of thanks for all involved in the organisation, it was clear that Circom 2003 had been a big success. The facilities were good. The production team had been very helpful. There had been much more use of visual aids

than in previous years, with more speakers using video-clips or PowerPoint for illustrations. A conference of TV professionals should use well-prepared visual aids; this year there was good progress in that direction. There had been some excellent speakers.

For the future, Circom might consider limiting the number of speakers on stage for each session. Some sessions had involved too many speakers, over-running the time, and preventing any meaningful interaction with the audience. Perhaps the plenary hall was a little too large. And some sessions were not well-attended as they were competing with a busy Co-production workshop. A reduction in the number of main sessions might be worth considering. But overall the 2003 conference has been one of Circom's most enjoyable and interesting events. The feedback from delegates has been very positive.

The success of Grado will be hard to follow in 2004, when TVP3 in Poland will host the conference. The Director of TVP Wroclaw, Richard Novak, ended the conference by inviting delegates to his city in May next year, and showed a film about this vigorous international city, situated near the borders with Germany and the Czech Republic. It will be particularly appropriate for the 22nd Circom conference to be in Poland, by far the largest of the 10 countries which will join the EU on May 1st 2004, ending two generations of division in the heart of Europe. And Circom will be meeting during the campaign for elections to the European Parliament, with the accession countries taking part for the first time.

In summary, it is clear that all who attended Circom 2003 can look back on the 3-day conference, the board meeting, the co-production workshops, the Prix Circom, the training workshop, and the informal networking during the wonderful social programme, and say that in Grado we were definitely '*Connecting Successfully!*'

RICK THOMPSON Director T-Media. Conference Presenter.



The CIRCUM Regional Conference in Grado

Here's the welcome speech to CR members, by President Lefty Kongalides, during the opening ceremony in Grado, Italy:

"In the past two years while I had been addressing this audience in the annual CIRCUM Regional conference I repeatedly underlined the fact that this union is a part of a great family – a family that is getting bigger and bigger. And of course I was referring to the European Union, which just last month grew to 25 member nations. I cannot avoid speaking about this family – again, as CR is an offspring of the European Union – working within the EU, benefiting from generous funds for projects materializing through our chain of 380 stations in 38 countries of Europe and offering precious services informing / among other important issues / the citizens of Europe as a whole, what is the Enlargement, the real dimensions and advantages of being a member nation.

We are only 13 countries short before all the member countries of CR become some day in the future accepted in the European Union as equal partners. And I would like to remind to everyone here that CIRCUM Regional was a pioneer organization in accepting as members all the public stations in countries of the former Iron Curtain, even before the European Union did so.

So CR was looking into the future and predicting the future. This happened through the insight of great people who before us were Presidents, General Secretaries, Ex. Committee and European Board members of CIRCUM Regional. And I believe this is the right time and the right place to pay tribute to all these wonderful people, whose task we are now carrying on. Please join me and give them a big hand.

Now what is CR? CR is the voice of the regions and the regions of Europe is real Europe, the heart of the continent, where time has not erased customs, values, traditions, centuries old habits. And we feel forced to define this picture of CR because on the contrary with the capitals of the nations we represent the small, medium and bigger stations of CR which have always been and are the source, the tank of fresh, new talent and ideas. This is because, perhaps, the easier, stress-less way of living, that allows people in the regions to let their inspiration explode and talents are poached under ideal conditions.

I have repeatedly used in my speeches around Europe the great task of CR which is working together. As the family is getting bigger it is more and more important to find the codes, to find the ways of working together, understanding each other, communicating, sharing the experiences. Working together means

that friendship, peace, and solidarity are enhanced in the region. Working together means exchanging programs at absolutely no cost. Working together means coproducing which you can also interpret as cutting in half or more pieces, the cost of producing.

And this is only the beginning. CR is here in between to help, to promote, to create the ambience for working together. All you have to do is take advantage. What's the future for Television? What's the future for CIRCUM Regional?

One can predict that we are in touch with the era when we will have 1000 channels in our disposition, specialization will be the key word and the satellite transmission will prove the cheaper, easier, better way of broadcasting than the terrestrial.

So the high cost for a TV station on a daily basis will be programming. This is where CIRCUM Regional has been a pioneer and is giving the good and, prudently, the right example.

- * First by exchanging programs
- * Second by coproducing

CR will go on promoting these two key issues in the European TV world while in the same time never cease offering training programs either for young journalists and producers, and for senior editors

as well, or for technicians to get all the information they need for new technology. CR will also never cease play the role of carrying, through its vast number of TV stations, the messages needed by the community in which we live, that is the European Union, so that almost half a billion people are well informed about perspectives, achievements, and new balances in this continent. If we – at least most of the countries of Europe share the euro, we also have every right to share information and especially information for our present and the future. And CR member stations are here to help as a media force of unique vitality and strength and able to reach people and communities in the most remote corners of the European Continent.

Prix Circom

The Prix Circom jury members met this year in Sinaia, Romania, under the guidance of David Lowen. The event was hosted by TVR and Elena Spanily.

The 2004 jury meeting will be held in Ireland – according to the confirmation we had by TG4 Ireland and RTE. It is vital for our members that every year there are prizes for the best programs produced by our member stations. And we always had pleasant surprises with the results, especially with excellent programs produced with a very low budget.

Database

This year for the very first time CIRCUM Regional is completing the CR Database containing detailed up-to-date information about regional broadcasting across Europe. With the help of our national coordinators this was made possible.

Training

* Last March we had the Technical Training conducted by Karol Cioma in London's Pinewood Studios.

* Also last March the TV Middle Management Course was held in Zagreb with HRT Croatia and the Thomson Foundation as hosts. The lead trainer was J. Philip Daves

* The Ethnic Minorities Course took place in Budapest, earlier this month, with funding from the Council of Europe and organized locally by Judit Klein. The lead trainer was Arwel Ellis Owen

* May 12-23 is the Annual Conference Journalism Training held this year here in Grado. The Council of Europe supports the activities this year again

* Next November the Strasbourg News Management Workshop, initiated

by our former Deputy Secretary General Marie-Paule Urban, will again take place with local host France 3-Alsace

Two coproductions

Two major coproductions are underway "The last straight line" Executive Producer is Peter Sauer of Bayerischer Rundfunk in Germany and "Teenage Europe". Executive Producer is Tim Johnson of TV Syd-Denmark

Thanks

Before closing this speech, on behalf of all CIRCUM Regional members I would like to: Express our gratitude to the Council of Europe and the European Parliament, the European Commission and the Committee of the Regions and Europe by Satellite, and, of course, Avid for supporting CIRCUM Regional through the years.

I would also like to Congratulate and thank RAI for organizing so successfully this conference in a site which we will never forget. Isola di Grado will probably see many of us return for summer vacations. I would especially like to thank Pier Luigi Malesani and his hard working team who did everything possible to turn this con Bienvenuti a Grado And let me paraphrase a 1961 Italian hit song for the finale of this speech: 24.000 grazie

Goodbye to Marie-Paule

It was a short but very touching moment for all CR members when CR President bid farewell to Marie-Paule Urban, stepping down from the post of Deputy Secretary General. Here's the farewell speech:

"And now the spotlight is on a dear, good old friend whom, most of us, have known for the past eight years as Deputy S. General, Madame Marie-Paule Urban. Marie-Paule has been so much dedicated to Circom Regional and has worked so hard for our association that one can hardly believe that she will not participate in our meetings any more. The comfort is that she has been promoted by France 3.

Marie Paule is a kind, polite, tender, sweet, caring person, always thoughtful and helpful, generous and sensitive and this is the picture of her that will always keep in our hearts and our minds. Marie Paule, let me reassure you, on behalf of every single member of Circom Regional, that the doors of this organization will always be open for you.

And to be more precise: Nella cattedrale del nostro cuore sara sempre accusa una candela per te.

And for the English speaking audience: In the cathedral of our hearts a candle will always burn for you. Marie Paule Urban, mille merci, for everything."

"Ritornerai"

CR President mixed Italian and English to thank Bruno Augusto Pinat, Commissario Straordinario dell'ERSA (Ente Regionale per la Sviluppo Agricoltura) for his hospitality during the Grado conference and the result was funny, pleasant and didactic.

"Bruno Augusto Pinat, Commissario Straordinario dell'ERSA (Ente Regionale per la Sviluppo Agricoltura) Caro Signor Commissario,

In this magnifico area where the green of the fiori and the trees has an eternal rendezvous with the blue of the mare and cielo, where the vino and polenta, prochiuto di San Daniele, the Montasio and Latteria friulano formaggio, Coppa di Sauris and grappa, have won laurels from experts and ordinary popolo, from around il mondo, we have to admit that philoxenia, (that is the ancient Greek work for hospitality), has been overwhelming in every single action, gesture, hour etc of our hosts here in Villa Kioja and in Italia.

Io voglio thank you, on behalf de tutti the public television stations, from all parts of Europa, being present, for your hospitality, warmth and for this excellent serata.

This is such a dolce notte and everything is so vicino, which with the agiuto of the excellent vino, we have consumato, mi permetta to say guarda che luna and to promise you that we look forward for quando vien la sera when we'll be back or in the parole of a Bruno Lauzzi canzone "Ritornerai". Mille Grazie"





Newsletter #3

By M. Nemcic CR Secretary General

Dear Colleagues, Dear Friends,

Allow me to say a few words after the 21st CIRCUM Regional Annual Conference in Grado.

180 participants attended the Annual Conference. There were 16 Workshops in which 47 speakers participated and almost each one of them had either video or Power Point presentation. To put it briefly, the Conference was both a very successful one and professionally a very interesting one. Next year in Wroclaw we shall try, of course, to go one step further.

During this Conference, a special interest was shown in Co-production Workshops (the biggest attendance ever so far) and a particular interest in Library (more than 150 programme viewing).

Young Circom (Training for young journalist held once a year) proved its quality and a huge need for professional education of young journalists. This is best proved by the fact that the number of applicants for Training was double than usual.

Therefore, on this occasion I would like to express our thanks and congratulations:

- to Pier Luigi Malesani, to his crew and to the whole RAI for the perfect organisation of the Conference, for their professionalism, for the effort they put in their work and for their extraordinary hospitality;
- to all the Moderators and all the Speakers;
- to all the Winners of Prix CIRCUM;
- to all the Sponsors of Awards (European Parliament, Committee of the Regions, TVP3, France3);
- to all the collaborators in Training (particularly to Thomson Foundation and the international team of trainers);
- to the Council of Europe for financing the Training;
- to all the National Co-ordinators for their professionalism and their patience in filling-in the Questionnaires, for their active work during the whole year, for answering mails;
- to the hosts of the 2004 Annual Conference in Wroclaw (TVP3, Ryszard Nowak, Piotr Borys).

On this occasion may I remind you that as of this June 1st the EbS co-ordination will be done in Zagreb. Therefore I kindly ask all those who have been contributing the programmes for EbS transmissions, to send their programmes to Zagreb, urgently (contact is Branka Prazic). The Prix Circom winning programmes will be transmitted on EbS on 04/06/03 at 21:00 CET, on 05/06/03 at 05:30 and on 0/06/03 at 12:00. Of course, these programmes will be re-transmitted.

Do not forget to visit the new CIRCUM Web page (<http://www.circum-regional.org>). We do expect your reactions impatiently.

Once again, on behalf of the CR Secretariat in Zagreb, on behalf of the CR Secretariat in Strasbourg and from me personally, please accept our gratitude for your work and understanding. It is a great pleasure to be part of the CIRCUM family.

With best regards,
Marija Nemcic
Secretary General
CIRCUM Regional

High level summit on eContent and eMedia in Athens

European Dynamics an Information Technology and Telecommunications company, is staging a high level European Commission sponsored think tank summit, entitled "Towards Ubiquitous Digital Content - Building the foundation for digital content business in the enlarged European multicultural society", which will take place on June 13, 2003 in Athens Hilton Hotel. The event is included in the Greek EU Presidencys official agenda

This think tank summit, is organised in the context of eContent, a European Commission programme. The aim of the summit is to promote the use and distribution of European digital content and present to policy makers and the digital content industry the future challenges and opportunities they will have to meet, especially in the context of the enlarged European Union.

The summit will be attended by high-level executives of government and public institutions, the media, advertising and telecommunications industry, etc (please check indicative names in the draft agenda attached). It will contribute to the creation of a common vision with regard to technology, address business opportunities, and establish a strong foothold and visibility for the European digital content industry.

The following topics will be addressed during the summit:

- The role of the EU towards a multicultural eContent market.
- eContent and the Media and Advertising industries.
- The future of new technologies and mobile media. Their role in the dissemination of digital content.
- eContent and the Advertising and Tourism industry.
- Presentation of innovative eContent projects.

The event will lead to the definition of the roadmap for the development and ways of distribution of digital domain and its contribution to an integrated and multicultural Europe, especially after the EU enlargement.

More details on the venue place, the precise schedule, eContent project presentation scenarios, and a possibility to subscribe online are provided through the conference website

www.eurodyn.com/conference.

New challenge for broadcasters

A message from Lucia Annunziata, President, RAI

"Mr Chairman,

It is with deep regret that today, for reasons outside my control, I can only be with you with a message that runs the risk of making my deepest convictions appear as a mere civilities. On the contrary, I do consider hosting the 21st yearly Circom conference in a city and a region that are best placed to interpret the meaning of "transition" in our history as a great honour and a unique opportunity for RAI. The enlargement of the European Union stands as a new and challenging frontier in European integration, and a new starting point in a dynamic process that – although many fail to remember it – has given our continent an unparalleled period of stability and progress. But there is more than that. The European cooperation model has indeed proven to be the most advanced in the world, as well as the most exportable.

To achieve integration while respecting diversity is something extraordinary, and a value per se. It stands as the most reliable answer to the threat of disintegration and attacks against democracy which unfortunately taint the current international scenario. Today more than in the past, communication bears witness to this transition, and it is my conviction that we have reason to take additional pride in the fact that we have indeed made a step forward. In fact, for years we have experimented an "enlarged Europe" at EBU, in whose context we have achieved solidarity through our concrete behaviours, considering differences as an asset.

To us, regional identities, and the role they play in the European construction, are no recent discoveries, and, most importantly, they are no mere wishful thinking. They have on the contrary taken the form of common experiences, exchanges, co-productions, technical assistance and training. Beyond facts, however, we share a common vision of the world: a network of 376 broadcasters in 38 different nations would not hold if it did not share values representing our real European heritage. This includes pluralism in viewpoints, and respecting ideas different from our own, principles thanks to which during the Enlightenment Age, after decades of massacres, Europe managed to put an end to the wars of religion, and start a new development phase. Only those who are unfamiliar with our history, or, better, our histories, may mistakenly take the complex and variegated European reality for lack of identity. Europe has an ancient soul of which it is as yet not fully aware. It is based on this awareness that both national and regional broadcasters must play a fundamental role, and rise once more to a new challenge. That of explaining that globalisation is not in contrast with, but is on the contrary compatible with the valuing of national and local identities. Explaining that, the more you grow, the more you need to keep peoples united, by developing social cohesion, and a common set of values, which is something other than having a single frame of mind.

Explaining, as suggested by the various workshops in this Conference, that a real globalisation process does not entail homogenisation, but rather connection; i.e. the possibility of being with the others, without losing oneself in the process. This challenge represents a mission for the public broadcasting service, which, by nature, is called upon to provide its audience with the basic instructions for functioning within a complex society, and to try and give more opportunities to all, greater occasions for understanding and integrating. Quite recently Censis, a famous social research institute, has shown that in Italy the gap between the well-off and the poor continues to widen. Unfortunately, this phenomenon is widespread in all our Countries. It is based on this awareness that we must also face the new technological scenarios, including the development of the Internet, and the onset of the digital. Social participation and inclusion are a key to our future ventures, but they are also the only way to provide the world with prospects for peace and hope. It is for this reason that I wish to extend to you all my warmest wishes for a fruitful outcome to your efforts, and for Circom's initiatives to be successful."

LUCIA ANNUNZIATA

"Gentile Presidente,

è con particolare rammarico che oggi, per motivi indipendenti dalla mia volontà, sono con voi solo attraverso un messaggio che può rischiare di fare apparire di rito le espressioni di alcune delle mie convinzioni più profonde. Considero, infatti, un grande onore ed una grande opportunità per la RAI ospitare la 21a Conferenza annuale della Circom in una città ed in una regione che molto bene interpretano il segno di un "passaggio" della storia. L'allargamento dell'Unione Europea rappresenta la nuova ambiziosa frontiera della integrazione europea ed il nuovo punto di partenza di questo processo dinamico che, spesso molti dimenticano di dire, ha regalato al nostro continente un periodo di stabilità e di progresso senza eguali. Di più. Il modello di cooperazione Europea si è dimostrato nei fatti il più avanzato al mondo ed anche il più esportabile.

Riuscire ad integrarsi nel rispetto della diversità è un fatto straordinario ed è un valore in sé. La risposta più convincente alle minacce di disintegrazione e agli attacchi alla democrazia che purtroppo caratterizzano l'odierno scenario internazionale. Oggi più di ieri, la comunicazione è protagonista di questo passaggio e credo che noi possiamo avere un motivo di compiacimento in più nel verificare di essere già un passo avanti. Da anni, infatti, sperimentiamo "l'Europa allargata" dell'UER, nel cui ambito abbiamo sviluppato la solidarietà nella concretezza dei comportamenti, facendo delle differenze la nostra ricchezza. Per noi le identità regionali ed il ruolo che svolgono nella costruzione europea, non sono scoperte recenti e soprattutto non sono buone intenzioni: sono esperienze comuni, sono scambi, sono coproduzioni, sono assistenza tecnica e formazione. Dietro gli aspetti fattuali c'è però soprattutto un'idea del mondo: una rete di 376 televisioni in 38 paesi non si terrebbe insieme se alla base non ci fosse la condivisione dei valori che sono il vero patrimonio dell'Europa. Tra questi il pluralismo delle voci ed il rispetto delle idee altrui, principi grazie ai quali l'Europa illuminista, dopo decenni di massacri, riuscì a chiudere il capitolo delle guerre di religione e ad aprire una nuova fase di sviluppo. Solo chi non conosce la nostra storia, le nostre storie, può confondere la complessa e articolata realtà europea con una mancanza di identità: l'Europa ha un'anima antica di cui difetta ancora di piena consapevolezza. E' in questa presa di coscienza che le televisioni, nazionali e regionali, hanno un ruolo fondamentale da svolgere, una sfida in più da raccogliere. Spiegare che la globalizzazione non solo non è in contrasto ma è compatibile con la valorizzazione delle identità nazionali e locali. Spiegare che quanto più si cresce tanto più forte è la necessità di tenere unite le popolazioni, sviluppando la coesione sociale e un comune modo di sentire, che sono cosa ben diversa dal pensiero unico. Spiegare, come suggeriscono i diversi atelier di questa Conferenza, che un reale processo di mondializzazione non richiede l'omologazione ma la connessione; la possibilità cioè di stare insieme con gli altri senza perdersi.

Questa sfida diventa missione per il servizio pubblico chiamato, per propria stessa natura, a fornire al pubblico le istruzioni d'uso essenziali per una società complessa, a cercare di dare a tutti più opportunità, più possibilità di comprensione e di integrazione. Proprio di recente il Censis, un importante centro di ricerche sociali, ci ha mostrato che in Italia cresce il divario tra le popolazioni agiate e quelle più povere. Questo fenomeno, purtroppo, investe tutti i nostri paesi. E' con questa consapevolezza che dobbiamo affrontare anche i nuovi scenari tecnologici, tra cui lo sviluppo di Internet e l'avvio del digitale. La partecipazione sociale, l'inclusione, sono la chiave del nostro lavoro futuro ma anche l'unica via per dare al mondo una prospettiva di pace e di speranza. E' per questi motivi che rivolgo a tutti voi, a tutti noi, il più caloroso augurio di buon lavoro e di pieno successo per le iniziative della Circom". LUCIA ANNUNZIATA

SEE Satellite TV project gets full support

BELGRADE –

The proposal for the "Satellite TV Channel of the SEE Countries" project of a common TV channel (multicultural, multilingual) and focused in common cultural heritage and peaceful development of the Southeast European area, has the attention of around 10 public and commercial broadcasting organizations from for time being: Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovenia, Albania, FYRO Macedonia and Greece.

The project has the full support of international organizations EUTELSAT, EUREKA Audiovisual and UNESCO. The project has also been given the backing from the EBU and Stability Pact, CIRCOM Regional, as well as from the biggest broadcasting organizations in Europe, gathered in the Bruges Group which transmit their programs via satellite. All organizations expressed their will to join the project actively, and have promised to help.

In the meantime, the international expert Task Force group has finalized its idea project. The project was expected to gain the international intergovernmental support at the EU – West Balkan Summit in Thessaloniki end of June. In order not to waste time, the agreement has been reached inside EUREKA Audiovisual to intensify the started work, and to affirm the agreement of the potential founders of the project with the signature of LoI, with aim to begin the making of relevant project documentation, which should hold all the program, technical, economical and organizational aspects. Due to case of Force Majeure and closing of all activities by the end of June EUREKA Audiovisual has past its mandate to accomplish of this very important project for this Region to the Association SEE TV Channel located in Paris. The next step should be coordinating the actions of all the potential partners during the realization of experimental phase of the project, with the signing the agreement about it in the MoU.

An agreement has been reached with a Bulgarian company "Interactive Technologies", which has leased the space segment on the satellite W2, to let us use the part of the segment free of charge, over the experimental period of the project of 100 days during the last quarter of this year. Of course the project is open for the new members from the SEE Region. TIHOMIR DIVJAK

Circom 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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