



29th Conference of COPEAM

NEWS EXCHANGE COMMISSION

19 May 2022

(online on the Zoom platform)

Summary of the works

INTRODUCTION

Mrs Paola Parri, Deputy SG of COPEAM, welcomed the attendees and presented the meeting agenda. Then, she gave the floor to the President of the Commission, Mr. Zakaria Bensedira from the public Algerian TV (EPTV), which coordinates the ERNMed – Mediterranean Regional News Exchange.

ERNM EXCHANGE REPORT

Reminding the main goal of the ERNMed exchange – which is that of promoting mutual understanding and intercultural dialogue between Mediterranean peoples - Mr. Bensedira presented the 2021-2022 annual report and statistics, particularly focusing on the period Oct. 2021 – May 2022.

He underlined the progressive decrease of the overall exchange in the last three years, stressing that this year's figures show a further decline in contributions, with 256 exchanged items, which represent an average of 5 stories per week. The reasons might be found in the persisting Covid-19 emergency and in the people's reduced presence at office, in addition to "traditional" problems within part of member organizations, namely the lack of ERNM dedicated news coordinators and the difficulty, for some of them, to have access to rush video material.

He then highlighted the ASBU overall contribution of 39 items (from TNERTT/Tunisia, JOJRTV/Jordan, PSPBC/Palestine, BHBTB/Bahrein and SYORT/Syria) - of which 11 mark the positive return back of the Syrian public broadcaster – and that Southern members are more active than Northern ones and that Algerian and Moroccan offers represent more than the half of the overall exchange in the considered period.

From the editorial point of view, the most of the items are of cultural nature (80), followed by others on economy and then on business and religious affairs. Thanks to the general reopening, also tourism has come back as one of the exchange topics (*see Report and Statistics attached*).

Finally, Mr Abes from EBU showed a synoptic table on the evolution of the ERNM exchange between 2005 and 2021 - with an evident peak between 2009 and 2011 thanks to the EU-funded Euromed News project and a sensitive fall down in the last 3 years – and some figures on the ERNM items' broadcast and use by other EBU members (*see EBU slides attached*).

ERN-MED PRIZE

The slight participation of members in the 2021 ERNMed Prize was confirmed in 2022, with only 4 items in competition: two from RTVE/Spain and two from SNRT/Morocco. The difficulties having affected the work routine in the last two years, along with this year's topic - *Media and global instabilities what contribution to peace?* - may constitute some of the reasons of such small involvement, but a joint reflection has to be made on the real objective of this initiative, which was established in 2016 to improve the exchange at both quantitative and qualitative levels.

It was announced that the results of EBU-COPEAM-ASBU jury's evaluation of the last edition would be communicated after the present meeting.

ERNM COORDINATION

Once again, The Commission's President called the attention on members' participation in the ERNM, in particular on the decreased offers from Rai/Italy, TRT/Turkey and RTP/Portugal and on the total absence of CyBC/Cyprus and ERT/Greece.

The exchange's editorial criteria were also reminded, notably: regional interest, promotion of mutual knowledge and dialogue, dissemination of cultural traditions and events across the Euromed region.

National-related items or bilateral dealings between two countries are not to be considered as interesting contents for members.

As a final point, the prospect to adopt a rotating coordination of the ERNM exchange was also evoked, with the view of sharing this responsibility among members.

ERNM FUTURE

Beside a stronger and motivated involvement of members, especially those of the northern side, the turning coordination of the ERNMed exchange constitutes the main challenge for the future of this intercultural tool. Some proposals are under study and possible related developments will be communicated further on.

Finally, the Commission's members have pointed out some recommendations that are the following:

- ✓ Back to normal with only or mainly cultural offers (*members*)
- ✓ Items submitted by BCs to the ERNMed Prize have to be picked among those exchanged during the year (*members*)
- ✓ Promote the ERNM Prize within the respective Organizations (*members*)
- ✓ Enlarge the ERNM Whatsapp chat to the news coordinators and enhance exchanges on a regular basis between the latter and the coordination centre (*coordination centre*)
- ✓ Re-launch cooperation with ERNO (*coordination centre-UER*)
- ✓ Select the best item of the month according to "the most used" criterion (*EBU*)
- ✓ Identify a *focal point* within members' news desks (*EPTV-EBU-COPEAM*)

OTHERS

Ms Farida Dahmani from ASBU made a presentation (*here enclosed*) concerning the contribution of the ASBU Programmes Exchange Centre to the ERNMed, displaying some main numbers and a video summing up the offered items in the last 5 months. On behalf of her Union, she recommended in particular that the ERNM central coordinator takes part in the ASBU daily editorial conference, sends a copy of the ERNM daily news outlook to ASBU Center in Algiers and elaborates a calendar of the most important news events relevant to the Mediterranean exchange.

At the end of the meeting, Ms Parri informed the attending members that the TV spot on the 2022 annual Conference of COPEAM would soon be made available to the members for its dissemination during the month of June. She concluded by announcing the 2nd edition of the *Day of the Mediterranean* – organized by the Union for the Mediterranean on the 28th November 2022 – and inviting members to get involved in this interesting initiative, set up to celebrate our Region and its beauty and richness.