

[NL] Public Broadcaster in Joint Venture with Private Luxembourg Broadcaster; Other Public Broadcasters Join Forces

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The Dutch broadcasting organisation Veronica, currently licensed to broadcast in the public broadcasting system of the Netherlands, is going ahead with its plans to become a private commercial broadcaster. The broadcasting organisation has concluded an agreement with Endemol, a major independent production company based in the Netherlands, and with RTL4 and 5, the Dutch language private commercial channels of the Luxembourg based organisation CLT. Endemol will produce most of the programmes for the joint venture. The new conglomerate will broadcast three television programmes: the existing RTL4 and RTL5 programmes, joined in September by Veronica's programme. The agreement was due to be signed on 15 March.

At the same time, three other Dutch broadcasting organisations licensed to broadcast in the public broadcasting system of the Netherlands who were already coordinating their broadcasts, are planning to merge their activities. They are convinced that integration of the broadcasters operating in the public broadcasting system will offer the best guarantee for an independent public broadcasting service. Therefore, the VARA, VPRO and NPS (former NOS) - currently broadcasting on the channel Nederland 3 will co-produce programmes starting this Fall with the ultimate aim of merging the three organisations into one in five years time. The agreement to this end between them is in a state of draft at the time this issue of IRIS going to press. As with the developments with Veronica/Endemol/RTL, IRIS will keep a close watch on these developments and will report on them in the next issues.

