Nordic Council of Ministers: Nordic Countries Apply Similar Rules to Broadcasting Advertising

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The Nordic countries have enacted legal rules and other regulatory texts concerning advertising in broadcasting which are broadly similar. All five Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden) have also largely implemented the recommendations on "Joint rules for television advertising", adopted by the Nordic Council of Ministers in 1991, according to a recent report from the Nordic Council of Ministers. All Nordic countries subscribe to the principle that advertising must be clearly identifiable as such. They have all enacted legislation making ethical demands on advertisers, particularly in relation to improper marketing and business practices. And they all provide for the particular protection of minors in relation to advertising. While Norway and Sweden have a general ban on advertising for under-12 audiences, the Danes restrict participation of children in such advertising. All countries assign to their consumer affairs authorities the responsibility for monitoring advertisers, while in Finland, Norway and Sweden consumer protection agencies also partly monitor the broadcasting companies. In Norway and Sweden this monitoring is systematic, while the other national consumer authorities react to complaints from the public.

The report by a ten-member panel of national consumer council legal officers provides a comprehensive description of the current (1998) situation in regard to legal instruments and monitoring of television and radio advertising in each country. It also provides a nation-by-nation review of compliance with the 1991 Nordic television advertising recommendation, before finishing by discussing the situation following the De Agostini verdict of the European Court of Justice (C-34-36/95; see IRIS 1997-8: 5-6).

Nordisk samarbete rörande TV- och radioreklam. TemaNord 1999:541.

Report from the Nordic Council of Ministers. TemaNord 1999:541.

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