[DE] Agreement on Television Warning to Protect Minors

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The provisions on the protection of minors contained in Article 22 of the EC "Television without Frontiers" Directive (97/36/EC) are to be transposed into German law through the corresponding regulations of §3 of the Rundfunkstaatsvertrag (Agreement between the Federal States on BroadcastingRfStV) as set out in the 4. Rundfunkänderungsstaatsvertrag (4th Agreement to Amend the Agreement between the Federal States on Broadcasting), due to enter into force on 1 April 2000 (see IRIS 1999-5: 11).

Paragraph 3.4 of the Agreement states that programmes which, in accordance with sub-paragraphs 1-3, may only be broadcast between 10 pm and 6 am, must either be preceded by an acoustic warning or identified by the presence of a visual symbol throughout their duration. This provision applies in particular to films with a 16 or 18 certificate.

At the end of January, following extensive discussions, representatives of public and private television broadcasters agreed on a standard wording for the acoustic warning.

In future, therefore, programmes considered harmful to minors are to be preceded by the following spoken warning: "The following programme is unsuitable for viewers under 16 (or 18)". There will be no visual symbol during these programmes.

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