[GR] Symbols for Films Adopted

IRIS 2000-4:1/15

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A presidential decree (no. 100/2000) has just been published in the official gazette, transposing into domestic law the provisions of Directive 97/36/EC of 30 June 1997. The decree covers the full text of Directive 89/552/EEC on "Television without frontiers", as amended in 1997.

In accordance with this decree, the Minister for the Press and the Mass Media may, further to a suitable opinion or following a proposal from the National Radio and Television Council (NRTC), order an advance ban on the re-broadcasting of programmes broadcast by television bodies under the supervision of other Member States where this would constitute a serious and manifest infringement of the interests of minors or incitement to hatred on the grounds of race, religion, nationality or gender, subject to respect for certain conditions and a certain procedure (Article 4).

The decree also transposes into Greek law the provisions of Directive 97/36/EC on teleshopping, sponsorship, the protection of minors, the right of reply and the broadcasting of European works.

The protection of minors is reinforced by the compulsory introduction of classification system for all television programmes (except advertising spots and teleshopping) categorised according to their impact on the personality and moral and mental development of minors (Article 8). Each category is represented by a visual symbol or an acoustic warning. The visual symbol must be present on the screen for the entire duration of the programme or for a specific amount of time. A decision published by the Minister for the Press and the Mass Media defines the categories of programme, the visual symbols and acoustic warnings, and the time restrictions attached to classification. According to this decision, programmes may be classified either by viewing committees at the television stations or by the committees for the classification of cinema films which operate within the Ministry of the Press and the Mass Media, with their membership extended to include NRTC representatives. The ministerial decision (published recently in the official gazette) leaves the decision on which option to take with the television bodies. It defines the visual symbols (following the example of France) as follows:

- a diamond inside a green circle (suitable for all)

- a circle inside a blue circle (suitable for all, but parental guidance desirable)

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- a triangle inside an orange circle (suitable for all, but parental guidance essential)

- a square inside a purple circle (over 15 only)

- a cross in a red circle (over 18 only).

For the information of viewers, these symbols must be shown alongside the programmes published in newspapers and television magazines. The symbols must also be shown on the screen at the beginning of each programme time zone (eg, morning, afternoon, evening).

Decree 100/2000 bringing Greek law into line with the provisions of Directive 97/36/EC.

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