[IT] New Self-Regulatory Code of Conduct on Television and Minors

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Marina Benassi
Attorney at law

On 29 November 2002, Italian public and private broadcasters signed a self-regulatory Code of Conduct and presented it to the Ministry for Communications in order to provide adequate protection for under-age viewers and to actively limit minors' exposure to harmful content on television. The Code, called Codice di autoregolamentazione TV e Minori' (Self- regulatory code of conduct on television and minors) is a provisional instrument, which will be applied until extensive legislation on this matter is adopted. The main objective of the Code is to protect minors from manipulative advertising and from unsuitable programming and exploitation. The Code also aims to stimulate broadcasting of programmes serving the educational and information needs of youngsters. The Code singles out two main broadcasting "bands": the first, "general" one, from 7 a.m. to 10.30 p.m. and the second one, the "specifically protected band", from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. During these three hours, specifically devoted to "children's television", no advertising whatsoever is permitted for alcoholic drinks, added-value phone services and prophylactics, and several restrictions are imposed with regard to the kind of programming to be broadcast. In general, it is forbidden to broadcast advertisements which may mislead or deceive minors, or put undue pressure on them to ask their parents to purchase advertised material. Also, advertisements must accurately represent the advertised products or services.

The Code provides for the creation of a Comitato di Controllo (Supervisory Committee) to ensure correct application and due compliance with the new rules, which was set up on 28 January 2003. In case of non-compliance or incorrect application, the Committee will refer the matter to the Autorità per le Garanzie nelle Comunicazioni (Italian authority for communications). The enforcement measures range from fines ranging from EUR 5.000 for minor breaches to EUR 250.000 for more severe cases. Where extremely severe or repeated breaches occur, the Authority can suspend or revoke the broadcasting license.

Nuovo codice di autoregolamentazione TV e Minori 2002 dal 29 novembre 2002, Ministero delle Comunicazioni

New self-regulatory code of conduct on TV and Minors 2002 of 29 November 2002, Ministry for Communications

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