[MK] Rulebook on the Protection of Minors from Programmes that Might Harm their Physical, Mental or Moral Development

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Sašo Bogdanovski
Broadcasting Council of the Republic of Macedonia

On the basis of Article 37 para.1, point 5 of the Act on Broadcasting Activity, the Broadcasting Council of the Republic of Macedonia adopts decisions, rules, conclusions, recommendations, instructions and other acts, and also adopts views and proposals for the implementation of the law. Among the recently adopted Rulebooks, one that had certainly caught the public attention in the Republic of Macedonia was the Rulebook on the protection of minors from programmes that might harm their physical, mental or moral development. The media, NGO's and individuals contributed to the productive public debate in order to establish a coherent system for the protection of minors, and a willingness was expressed to support the informative campaign regarding public awareness of the Rulebook provisions.

At its third session held on 9 February 2007, the Broadcasting Council of the Republic of Macedonia adopted a Rulebook on the protection of minors from programmes that might harm their physical, mental or moral development. This Rulebook regulates the categorisation, the forms of acoustic and visual warnings, as well as time slots for the broadcast of radio and television programming that might harm the physical, mental or moral development of children and young persons. The Rulebook is related to the functioning of Article 71 of the Law on Broadcasting Activity and to the clarification of Article 68 about conduct offending human dignity, Article 69 regulating the issue of national, racial or religious hatred and intolerance, and Article 70, in particular paragraphs one on pornography and two on excessive violence.

The Council of the Republic of Macedonia declares its respect for the professional journalism principles according to which broadcasters enjoy independence and full editorial responsibility in designing the programming. However, it also maintains that it is necessary, according to the needs and expectations of the audience, to adjust broadcast contents relevant to different spheres of society that are harmful to minors. The Rulebook determines the categories of programmes, including the time slots (in)appropriate for broadcasting programmes potentially harmful for minors as well as the forms of acoustic, textual, verbal and visual warning signals indicating the type of programming. The programmes subject to the categorisation may be classified in five categories: (i)

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TV programmes for general audiences, (ii) programmes containing depiction, scenes and/or sights that can be disturbing for minors with recommended parental or guardian guidance, (iii) programmes not recommended for children under 12 with required parental or guardian guidance, (iv) programmes not recommended for children under 16 with required parental or guardian guidance, and (v) programmes not appropriate for an audience under the age of 18.

In order to obtain unity in both understanding and implementing the Rulebook, the Council has also developed an additional text entitled Comments to the Rulebook.

Pravilnik za zaštita na maloletnata publika od programi koi što možat štetno da vlijaat vrz nejziniot fizički, psihički i moralen razvoj / Služben vesnik na Republika Makedonija br.21/07

Rulebook on the protection of minors from programmes that might harm their physical, mental or moral development, Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 21/07 of 22 February 2007

http://www.srd.org.mk/WBStorage/Files/2007%20Rulebook%20minors.doc

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