[BA] Recent Initiatives in Promoting Internet Safety and Media Literacy

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Several initiatives have been launched recently in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) in order to promote awareness of responsible and safe use of the Internet, with a special focus on the protection of minors and the risks that young people may be taking in the online environment.

In December 2010, as a part of the wider media literacy campaign, the Regulatorna agencija za komunikacije (Communications Regulatory Agency - RAK) launched the TV spot “Where is Klaus” adapted for broadcasting in BiH, as well as a newly-produced radio version. The TV spot has been made available by the EU-supported initiative for Internet safety Klicksafe from Germany, and it aims at raising parental awareness of the importance of safe Internet use for children and adolescents. The spot makes reference to the website www.sigurnodijete.ba, which has been designed as a national information hub on different aspects of Internet safety, serving parents and children alike and fostering ongoing Internet safety awareness and education. The site was launched in March 2010 by the Ministarstvo sigurnosti BiH (Ministry of Security of BiH) along with partner-NGOs: the International Solidarity Forum EMMAUS, the OAK Foundation and Save the Children Norway. It was created as a part of the Sigurno dijete (Safe Child) Project in relation to the National Action Plan on preventing child pornography and sexual abuse of children through the use of ICTs for 2010-2012. One of the most important activities in connection to this Project is the establishment of a hotline for receiving reports about allegedly illegal content and use of the Internet, which became a part of the International Association of Internet Hotlines - INHOPE-network.

The launch of TV and radio spots by the RAK represents a follow-up activity within the wider campaign on the promotion of media literacy and public awareness of media influence on children initiated in late 2009. The first step was a conference on the protection of children from unsuitable television content held in November 2009, backed by a short study covering aspects such as children’s ability to interpret audiovisual content, their susceptibility to manipulation and the impact of violence and explicit sexuality and pornography.

An important part of these activities is the discussion on audiovisual content classification and rating. The Kodeks o emitovanju radiotelevizijskog programa

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(Broadcasting Code of Practice) stipulates the obligation of broadcasters to appropriately warn viewers of a particular content, and although most broadcasters use certain ratings, a uniform rating system does not exist. Under the auspices of UNICEF BiH and the RAK, a set of written guidelines for the classification of potentially harmful audiovisual content is currently being developed, which will hopefully help to define a common rating standard.

The above activities in promoting Internet safety and media literacy are a work in progress; however, they are calling for the involvement of the broader community - educational institutions and parents in particular.

Sigurno dijete

http://sigurnodijete.ba/

Safe Child Project

Media Literacy and Protection of Children and Minors in BiH

http://rak.ba/eng/index.php?uid=1272016986

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