[NL] View of the Dutch Government on the protection of youth against harmful consequences of audio-visual media

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On 10 March 1997, an interdepartmental working group presented a paper to the Chairman of the Lower Chamber (Tweede Kamer) of the Dutch Parliament, with the title: (Niet voor alle leeftijden: audiovisuele media en de bescherming van jeugdigen) " Not for all ages: audio-visual media and the protection of youth ". This paper represents the view of the Dutch Government on the subject of the protection of young people against harmful material in the wide area of audio-visual media. Attention is paid to recent developments being the subject of this policy, in the Netherlands as well as in a European context.

Keynotes in this proposal are: i) better protection for young people through the formulation of more stringent and appropriate norms and a supervised application of these norms; ii) a system that will work for new developments in the audio-visual sector as well; iii) harmonisation between the various branches in the audio-visual industry in terms of classification methodology; iv) better enforcement including sanctions; v) a balanced system in accordance with the Dutch Constitution and international law.

This proposal is based on the own responsibility of the parties involved, this being the parents and other tutors, the companies that offer audio-visual products and the government. The purpose is to develop a classification system for media products, which, in view of the differences between the audio-visual media, can be realised by each branch separately. Recommended is a private law arrangement by branch with sanctions included. The different branches of the audio-visual industry are recommended to jointly set up an independent private law institution as a national support centre. If they do, there would be no need anymore for the existence of the Dutch Film Censorship Board. The Law on the Film Performances of 1977 would be repealed.

To be able to take criminal action afterwards when harmful material is being offered to young people, Article 240a of the Criminal Code has to be adjusted. The suggestion is to penalise `making available to young persons harmful images on video, film or disk' (het in handen van een jongere stellen van gegevensdragers met schadelijk beeldmateriaal) and to increase the penalties to one year of imprisonment and/or a 25,000 guilders fine. Information on law related policy developments which may have legal consequences but of which no documents or

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other texts are available yet.

Tweede Kamer, vergaderjaar 1996-1997, 25 266, No 1, p. 1-24

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