[DE] Regional media authority publishes position paper on youth protection on the Internet

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Jan Henrich
Institute of European Media Law (EMR), Saarbrücken/Brussels

At its closed meeting on 22 March 2019, the assembly of the Landeszentrale für Medien und Kommunikation Rheinland-Pfalz (Rhineland-Palatinate Media and Communication Authority - LMK) adopted a position paper on the protection of children and young people in the media. The LMK is the regulatory body for broadcasting and telemedia services in Rhineland-Palatinate.

The paper talks in particular about a technical paradigm shift. Despite legislation and the involvement of numerous actors, protection from content and the risks of Internet use is still inadequate. Children and young people are now only a mouse click away from extremely disturbing content. According to the LMK, recent findings have shown that protection systems are unable to keep up with the risks and dangers associated with technical progress and new, sometimes global forms of use. It refers to the JIM study published in November 2018 and the progress report entitled “Jugendliche sicher in Social Media” (Keeping young people safe on social media) published by jugendschutz.net. Both of these studies investigate the modern media consumption habits of young people and the complaints and protection mechanisms on social media platforms.

The LMK believes that action is required at several levels. Teaching media literacy is not enough, since content and service providers also need to be more accountable. The most common operating systems should be equipped with filter software interfaces and configuration options. Service providers whose users provide content should also offer a content classification system and require users to categorise their content. Network filters could be activated as standard on routers or service provider infrastructure.

The LMK also calls for greater use of the potential offered by automatic content recognition systems for the protection of children and young people. Freedom of opinion and the protection of children and young people in the media, which are both protected under constitutional law, are in a state of constant tension that must be repeatedly re-evaluated.

The LMK now plans to involve other organisations in the discussion in order to find allies to help implement their list of measures, which it hopes will be supported by the boards of all the regional media authorities.

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Positionspapier der Landeszentrale für Medien und Kommunikation vom 22. März 2019

https://lmk-online.de/fileadmin/user_upload/Bilder/02_Aktuelles/02_Presse/2019/20190325_Positionspapier.pdf

Position paper of the Rhineland-Palatinate Media and Communication Authority, 22 March 2019

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