[BG] Draft Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children

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Nikola Stoychev
Dimitrov, Petrov & Co., Law Firm

On 8 June 2022, *Съветът за електронни медии* (the Council for Electronic Media – CEM) has initiated a public consultation on a *Проект на Кодекс за поведение относно мерките за оценка, означаване и ограничаване на достъпа до предавания, които са неблагоприятни или създават опасност от увреждане на физическото, психическото, нравственото и/или социалното развитие на децата* (Draft Code of Conduct on Measures to Assess, Label and Restrict Access to Programmes which are Harmful or Pose a Risk to Affect Adversely the Physical, Mental, Moral and/or Social Development of Children – the Draft Code), pursuant to Decision No. RD-05-44/8 June 2022.

CEM has prepared the Draft Code jointly with the Association of Bulgarian Radio and Television Broadcasters (ABBRO), the Bulgarian National Television (BNT) and the Bulgarian National Radio (BNR).

The Draft Code would be a mandatory legal act and is a form of co-regulation adopted in accordance with Directive 2018/1808 and Article 17a of the Radio and Television Act. It will be applicable to both linear and non-linear media service providers under the jurisdiction of the Republic of Bulgaria, as well to video-sharing platform services under Bulgarian jurisdiction.

The Draft Code does not limit the application of other legislative acts in the field of child protection (such as the Child Protection Act, the Radio and Television Act, etc.). The already established practice has been taken into consideration.

The aim of the Draft Code is to implement effective measures to assess, and label content and restrict access of children to broadcasts and user-generated videos which may be harmful or pose a risk which adversely affects children's development. The Draft Code does not differ greatly from the currently applicable secondary legal acts concerning child protection (also adopted by CEM). In fact, the Draft will replace and merge these acts, and will add some novelties.

To be noted is that specific provisions concerning non-linear services have been adopted – on-demand providers now have to categorize programmes in accordance with the Draft Code, may adopt additional measures for the protection of children and upon assessment may restrict access to the media services so as to guarantee that only adults have access, etc.

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The procedure for public consultation was open until 8 July 2022. The final Code of Conduct has not been published yet and it remains to be seen what the final wording shall be.

Проект на Кодекс за поведение относно мерките за оценка, означаване и ограничаване на достъпа до предавания, които са неблагоприятни или създават опасност от увреждане на физическото, психическото, нравственото и/или социалното развитие на децата

https://www.cem.bg/actbg/6147

Draft Code of Conduct on measures to assess, flag and restrict access to programs that are unfavorable or pose a risk of harming the physical, mental, moral and/or social development of children

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