

Online Debate on Media Literacy Held by AAVMS and RESIS

Skopje, 30 November 2021 – As part of the Media Literacy Days 2021, the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services and the Resis Institute held an online debate yesterday on the topic of “Gender Analysis in Children’s TV Programmes: Are We Building Critical Awareness in Children?” The discussion covered several segments, from what the psychological impact of children’s programmes on their growth and development, to the way in which media policies and the programmes intended for children should be created .

After the introductory address, Agency Director Zoran Trajchevski went on to point out that, according to the findings, the Public Broadcaster had been pursuing a planned and well-thought-out programme policy regarding the children’s population, but this conclusion applies much more to MRT1 than to MRT2. As regards the programmes of the commercial television stations, the findings show that there is no well-thought-through or careful editorial approach in the selection of shows intended for different age groups of the juvenile audience.

Igor Micevski, MA, from the *Resis* Institute, presented the findings of the research “Analysis of the Gender Aspects in Children’s Programmes Aired by the National Terrestrial Television Stations”, which had been prepared for the needs of AAVMS. In this, he gave several examples of the fact that the general lack of concepts for selecting children’s shows was reflected in the portrayal of gender roles as well. Prevailing in the feature programmes of domestic production were serials imitating the patriarchal notions of the gender roles of the 19th-century societies, while there was a lack of contemporary

shows in which gender issues were treated from a liberal point of view. On the other hand, foreign-made feature programmes were obtained without taking into account if they were part of a certain franchise (sale of dolls, video games, children's school equipment and other products), which stimulated the development of consumerism in children. These shows abounded in hard-to-obtain, idealized depictions of the female and male bodies.

Regarding the results of the research in terms of the developmental aspect in children, Dr. Ana Blazheva, of the PSIHOTERAPIKA Institute, pointed out that the presence of the patriarchal matrix and values in much of the content, especially in the feature programmes, which did not correspond to today's walk of life, created a frustrating situation and could lead to destructive behavior.

The creation of an educational television programme intended for young people that would meet both European and the national needs is a specific need present all around the world, and not only in our country, said the editor-in-chief of MRT1, Aneta Andonova, M.A.. It is very difficult to create an educational television programme that will keep children audience in front of the screens, as research shows that children no longer trust television.

The participants in the debate agreed that a lot of work needed to be done to create good-quality programme concepts and content that would meet the needs of children and young people and turn them into an audience that is critically aware and media literate.