**PROTECTION OF JUVENILE AUDIENCE**

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**All audiences Parental guidance**

Protecting minors from programmes that may harm their physical, psychological and moral development is one of the most important tasks of the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services, which the Agency takes quite seriously.

Broadcasters and providers of on-demand audiovisual media services (such as MaxTV) must not broadcast programmes that may seriously harm minors. This refers in particular to programmes containing pornography or unnecessary violence.

This prohibition refers to other programmes as well, which are likely to harm minors, except when steps are taken to make sure that minors will not be able to hear or see these programmes in the usual manner. This is achieved by broadcasting or rerunning such programmes at a certain time and/or by implementing a certain technical measure. When such programmes are broadcast or rerun in an unencrypted form, it is obligatory to provide an acoustic warning before their beginning and an opportunity to recognize the same throughout their duration with the help of visual signs.

1. **WHO MAKES THE PROGRAMME CONTENT RATING AND HOW?**

*In November 2014, the Agency for Audio and Audiovisual Media Services adopted a Rulebook that defined the method of content rating and the broadcasting times for audiovisual programmes that may harm minors, the forms of acoustic and visual warning, the visual signs and the technical protection measures.*

Programmes containing depictions, scenes or sights of violence, erotica, sexual behavior prohibited by law, indecent (vulgar) speech, suggestive forms of conduct that are easy to imitate but harmful to one’s health and safety, conduct insulting to human dignity, are considered as programmes that may harm minors.

The audiovisual media service providers are obligated to rate the entire programme broadcast by the television programme services or offered in the catalogue of on-demand audiovisual media services themselves, with the exception of the news and informative programmes.

The rating is made on the basis of certain criteria which the Agency has prescribed in the Rulebook on the Protection of Minors.

1. **HOW MANY CATEGORIES OF PROGRAMMES ARE THERE AND WHEN MAY THEY BE BROADCAST?**

The programmes subject to rating are classified into the following five categories:

* Category 1: programmes designed for all audiences, may be broadcast at any time during the day and night;
* Category 2: programmes not recommended for viewing by children under 8, guidance from parents or guardians is recommended, may be broadcast at any time during the day and night;
* Category 3: programmes not recommended for viewing by children under 12, guidance from parents or guardians is required, may be aired in the period from 20:00 hrs until 05:00 hrs.
* Category 4: programmes not recommended for viewing by children under 16; guidance from parents or guardians is required, may be aired in the period from 22:00 hrs until 5:00 hrs.
* Category 5: programmes not suitable for audience under 18, may be broadcast in the period from 00:00 hrs until 05:00 hrs.
1. **WARNING SIGNALIZATION (ACOUSTIC WARNINGS AND VISUAL SIGNS) – WHEN, WHERE AND HOW TO APPLY IT?**

The warning signalization must be applied before the start and during the airing of the programmes of the television programme services (acoustic warnings and visual signs) and at the appropriate place next to the programmes available in the catalogue of on-demand audiovisual media services (visual sign only), as follows:

* in all types of feature programme, and
* in those programmes of informative, educational or entertaining nature which, either as a whole or with some of their parts, may harm minors.
1. **WHAT TECHNICAL MEASURES ARE IMPLEMENTED BY THE ON-DEMAND SERVICES TO PROTECT MINORS?**

The providers of on-demand audiovisual media services are obligated to provide technical measures whereby minors will be denied access to contents that may harm them, as follows:

* personal identification codes that can verify the age of the user before allowing him/her access to the contents;
* content filtering;
* implementation of independent filtering systems that analyze the programme, recognize and disconnect the harmful content on the basis of categories defined by the parent/guardian;
* implementation of other software that block minors’ access to contents that may harm them.
1. **WHAT IF THE PROGRAMME IS NOT CORRECTLY CATEGORIZED?**

When conducting supervision in terms of compliance with the provisions for the protection of minors, the Agency also takes into account the programmes’ content rating and, if it establishes that the categorization criteria have not been regarded, it takes appropriate measures (imposes a warning, i.e. initiates misdemeanor charges in case the violation has continued despite the issued warning).