

19. Have broadcasters in your country established a system of self-regulation relating to the protection of minors? Please give details of this, particularly with regard to membership.

- Paragraph 18 of Latvian Radio and Television Law determines that "Broadcasting organisations may not distribute programmes and broadcasts with such content as may be harmful to the normal physical, mental and moral development of children and adolescents, except in cases when a specific broadcasting time is designated for such broadcasts (between the hours of 22.00 and 7.00) or technical blocking devices are used (coding of broadcasts). Such programmes and broadcasts shall be specially noted both when distributing them and when publishing broadcast schedule listings (in a programme of broadcasts). Between the hours of 7:00 and 22:00, broadcasts containing physical or psychological violence (in visual or verbal form), bloody or horror scenes, as well as scenes relating to the use of narcotics, may not be distributed. The text may not contain vulgar or rude expressions and must not refer to sexual acts. This provision is not applicable to cable television if technical blocking devices are used."

Television broadcasters in Latvia have not established a system of self-regulation relating to the protection of minors, but they take note of film annotations where are suggestible age restrictions seen.

20. Does this system of self-regulation include a code of conduct regarding the protection of minors and harmful content?

- As yet there is no self-regulation system in broadcasting organizations, there is no code of conduct. But National Broadcasting Council of Latvia has appointed the Commission On the Protection of Children and Minors from the Harmful Influence on Violence in Television Broadcasts where are three experts from National Broadcasting Council, one expert from National Cinematography Center, one psychologist and one expert from police. This Commission discusses about broadcast and film compliance with the above quoted paragraph 18 of Radio and Television law. The Commission controls broadcasts and films after they have been broadcasted, because the Council has no right to evaluate programs before they are broadcasted.

21. Are on-screen warning icons required, either by law or by codes of conduct, for potentially harmful television programs? Are acoustic warnings before such programs required, either by law or by codes of conduct? Where such measures are used, are they considered to be effective?

There are no acoustic warnings required for potentially harmful television or radio programs, but in 1996 National Broadcasting Council has adopted the decision about on-screen icons for potentially harmful television programs – there are two icons (one

for sexual acts and the other for physical or psychological violence and bloody or horror scenes). Television broadcasters are obliged to use these on-screen icons between 22.00 and 7.00 and most of them do use the icons.

22. Do any broadcasters established in your country use technical filtering devices to ensure that minors may not view harmful programs?

Technical filtering devices are not used by air television broadcasters, they just have to observe paragraph 18 of Radio and Television Law about not showing such content programs between 7.00 and 22.00, but some cable operators use coders.

23. Please describe measures which have been taken in order to improve media-literacy?

In Latvia there are no special measures taken to improve media-literacy.