

NORWAY

Answers regarding questionnaire concerning the Recommendation of the Council of 24 September 1998 on the development of the competitiveness of the European audio-visual and information services industry by promoting national framework aimed at achieving a comparable and effective level of protection of minors and human dignity (98/560/EC).

Internet

1. Norway has an association for ICT companies which also includes ISPs. This is the Norwegian ICT-organisation; IKT-Norge – available on www.ikt-norge.no
2. The Norwegian ICT-organization is one of the co-founders of the Internet Self Regulatory board Nettnemnda. This board has established a code of conduct, which can be found on: www.nettnemnda.no/netregler.html
3. Public authorities were not represented in the drawing up of the code of conduct, but a draft proposal was sent to the relevant ministries and to the political parties in Norway before the adoption. The same procedure will be followed if the code needs to be revised or amended.
4. At present, there are no legal requirements that apply specifically to ISPs. However, a white paper regarding the implementation of the E-commerce Directive 2001/31/EC, will most likely result specific legal requirements regarding ISPs by the end of 2003.
5. There are no specific requirements for ISPs to inform the police or judicial authorities about illegal content available over the Internet
6. A "hotline" for reporting child pornography and racist content found on the Internet is located at the Norwegian Criminal Investigation Unit, KRIPOS. The hotline operates by e-mail. The hotline is also available on the SAFT national coordination node web site as a tip-form with specific questions on the following URL:<http://www.saftonline.no/Rapporter/160/>. The national coordination web-site and the tip-form is financed through the Norwegian Internet Action Plan, run by the Norwegian Board of Film Classification and supervised by the Ministry of Family and Children Services.

The Norwegian branch of Save the Children also operates a hotline, financed through their ordinary budget. It is located as a mail-in at: children@risk.online.no.
7. In general between a half and three quarters of the problematic Internet content reported to the Norwegian police is hosted outside of Norway. Of this content between a half and three quarters is hosted outside of the EU.
8. Since the hotline at present is located at the EU/IAP-funded SAFT project, their general PR efforts have also benefited the hotline itself. The hotline has been a key player in the development of the SAFT web site, and coordinating awareness and hotlines have proven to be very efficient so far.

9. Until the launch of the SAFT web site, the police hotline for reporting problematic Internet content has not been well known. Neither the public nor the ISPs have had a good knowledge of where to report illegal or harmful content. Most of the reporting has gone through the Save the Children channels. The police receive 2-3 tips daily regarding illegal or harmful content. Since the SAFT launch is relatively recent, we do not at this stage have updated figures on the amount of tips.
10. We have no knowledge of any serious efforts to develop a filtering or rating system for the Internet in Norway. Numbers from the SAFT representative parents and children survey suggests that Norwegian parents generally do not believe in filtering as a safety tool, and that awareness and dialog between parents and children is the best way to provide a safe environment and practise and empower the users. This view is supported by the government through the current Minister of Culture and Church Affairs and the Minister of Children and Family Affairs.
11. There are no obligations for the ISPs to inform subscribers about available filtering and ratings systems and age verification systems. The Internet self-regulation board “Netnemnda” has produced a best practice paper on routines in regard to information control on the Internet.
12. At the national level the Norwegian Ministry for Children and Family Affairs has launched an action plan to promote awareness and safer use of the Internet for children and young people. The action plan is run by a secretariat in the Norwegian Board of Film Classification. At the international level the Norwegian Board of Film Classification coordinates the IAP SAFT project. SAFT's purpose is to provide trustworthy, balanced and well-researched information on safe use of the Internet and new communication technologies, while firmly holding on to the Internet's positive aspects. The main target group is the children, whether reached directly or through parents or teachers. The SAFT project comprises seven partners in the five countries of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland and Ireland, as well as several affiliated local entities. The partners include government bodies, pedagogical organisations, professional pollers and ICT industry organisations. SAFT strongly believes in user empowerment, knowledge and awareness, and this is based on three pillars: (1) awareness based on facts, not assumption, (2) the establishment of national safe use and awareness nodes, and (3) national and international coordination, with a sharing and re-use of resources. SAFT has conducted an international comparative study on actual risk behaviour and information needs, before starting the implementation of the awareness measures. The study has shown discrepancies between the parents' perception and their children's real Internet use, and has given valuable information on how to make the awareness actions reach parents, teachers and the children themselves through their preferred channels. The outward focal point of the project is the web portal, a one-stop-shop for awareness information across Europe. Concrete outcomes are:
 - a. Representative survey on parent's knowledge, attitudes and fears, and on children's actual use of the Internet and other new media. Over 11 000 children and their parents have participated in the survey in the 5 countries included in the SAFT project.

- b. One stop-shop web portal for all relevant Internet safety information.
- c. Education program on Internet safety to be implemented in schools.
- d. Common guides and awareness material distributed through a wide range of industry stakeholders.
- e. Massive media efforts and press coverage.

All of the above efforts are coordinated within Norway and with national nodes in Sweden, Denmark, Iceland and Ireland through the SAFT project.

The SAFT-project receives funding from both the EU-system and from private funds. None of the initiatives mentioned above are a part of a larger national plan for "media education" etc.

- 13. We have seen no signs that the development of the Internet has slowed down because of public fears concerning harmful or illegal content which can be accessed over the Internet. Norwegian parents are generally positive towards the Internet, and SAFT survey results show that 96% of all children between 9 and 16 are using computers with Internet connection. 68% of all households with children between the age of 6 and 16 have Internet access.
- 14. Any increase in the international cooperation is seen as a benefit. At present, the above-mentioned SAFT project is coordinating awareness efforts on a cross-European scale, both within the project and by cooperating with other awareness projects, as well as hotlines, content rating organizations, the ICT industry, NGOs and other relevant entities.
- 15. The extension of the EU-Commissions Internet Action Plan aims to let the above mentioned self-regulation initiatives cover also the UMTS-network.
- 16. Controlling online chat-groups is the responsibility of the service provider. The Norwegian government is working on implementing the E-Commerce Directive which partly describes the duties of a service provider in relation to monitor content in chat-rooms. In addition, on-going awareness efforts aim to educate children about the potential dangers of meeting net-friends in real life.
- 17. The SAFT project is media literacy and will in the future also include mobile devices, computer games etc. The SAFT project is in the testing phase of their educational programme, a programme designed to educate school children on safe and fun use of the Internet, and planned for the official curriculum. The program will be module based and with both on and offline activities. Also the program includes parents in the activity. The program will be a collaborative effort with SAFT partners in four other countries.
- 18. There is no specific regulation in Norway regarding the question of the right of reply with respect to online-media. We have no knowledge of concrete problems with regard to this during the last two years.

19. There are no self-regulation schemes established through collaboration between the Norwegian TV channels, related to the protection of minors. However, on the other field of regulation of the press (e.g. standards of media ethics etc.) there is a high extent of self-regulation through the system of press commission. This commission produces codes of conduct and monitors the media and adjudicates complaints related to standards and fairness in the press and media. The self-regulation on the field of protection of minors is in effect through traditions of each broadcaster. The interpretation of what programmes that should be broadcasted after the watershed (2100 hours) is based on the practice of Norwegian broadcasters. Thus, it is considered that the implementation of the EU Council Directive 89/552/EC regarding the watershed is only a formalisation of a practice already in place.
20. TV-broadcasters have no formal and uniform code of conduct. Each broadcaster, however, has its own code of conduct. Even if law does not determine it, all Norwegian TV channels do announce the age rating set by the Norwegian Board of Film Classification, if available. The way they announce it varies. The age ratings are present in the newspaper's programme schedules and in TV magazines. However, the acoustic or visual announcement varies. Both public and commercial channels must practice under the same legal provisions. They also implement the same system of age classification when it comes to films rated by the Norwegian Board of Film Classification. When it comes to programmes or films not rated by the Norwegian Board of Film Classification, the age classification is a work of editorial consideration of the TV channel itself. This classification is not legally founded. The legal provisions only prohibit TV channels to send programmes with content that may harm minors, earlier than 2100 hours. The public and private channels have the same system of classification.
21. On-screen warnings or acoustic warnings are required by law for potentially harmful television programmes. There is a great potential for making it more effective and informative for the public.
22. There are no Norwegian broadcasters using technical filtering devices to ensure that minors may not view harmful programmes.
23. To our knowledge we do not know of any directed measures to improve media-literacy in relation to teaching children how to make a responsible use of television, apart from those already mentioned in question 17.

Video Game Software

24. The sale of video games is regulated in the Criminal Code Section 382 which prohibits the sale or rental of games that contains "unmotivated use of gross violence for entertainment purposes" (our translation).
25. Norway is supporting the ISFE self-rating system for age and content rating (PEGI).
26. The Norwegian Government will consider further regulations if the ISFE/PEGI system proves not to be fully effective.

27. Online games are covered both by the provision in the Criminal Code mentioned above and by the ISFE/PEGI system for self-regulation. The age rating and content symbols will be used also in an online environment.

Other Content Delivery Systems

28. There have been no major changes since 2000, and the media mentioned are all covered by the Film and Video Act.

General

29. No specific measures have been taken to implement the Recommendation as such. However, both consumer organisations and NGOs have been involved in the SAFT project and the preparation of the ISFE/PEGI system for computer games.
30. Lack of coherence between rating systems has been seen as a problem, especially when the same content (e.g. a film) is transmitted through different media (TV, cinema, video) with different ratings and regulatory regimes. The Norwegian Board of Film Classification has commissioned a scientific study of consumer reactions, conducted by the University of Oslo, that addresses this problem. There has also been cooperation with the NICAM Institute in the Netherlands to study their model of cross-media rating. With respect to video games, the new ISFE/PEGI system, which Norway supports and chairs, will hopefully solve the problem of different national ratings occurring on the same game and in the same medium.
31. The Norwegian Board of Film Classification – responsible for both film and new media – has set up an advisory board consisting of academic experts in the field. A number of scientific studies has also been undertaken by the Board; e.g. of video games and violence, children's reactions to films and young people's behaviour on the Internet.

32. Scientific studies:

SAFT comparative survey, representative study of parents and children use of the Internet. See www.saftonline.org for more information.

Synne Skjulstad: Kontroversielt innhold på Internett (Controversial content on the Internet) published by Norwegian Board of Film Classification.

Faltin Karlsen: Dataspill og vold (Computer games and violence) published by Norwegian Board of Film Classification.

Taran Bjørnstad og Tom Ellingsen: Nettsvermere. En rapport om ungdom og Internett (A report on young people and the Internet) published by Norwegian Board of Film Classification.