

MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENT

COOPERATION BETWEEN THE AGENCY FOR ELECTRONIC MEDIA AND UNICEF

Zagreb, 5 September 2014

The Agency for Electronic Media and UNICEF have signed a Memorandum of Understanding in order to support the development of media literacy of parents and children, as well as to encourage the electronic media to take advantage of their potential as much as possible in order to improve the quality of life of children and their families. The cooperation will include a research on the television viewing habits, as well as consultations with the stakeholders for the purpose of improving the regulatory framework concerning the protection of children.

The cooperation resulted from the need to consider a new regulatory framework and categorisation of contents in order to bring it in line with the European trends, or with the changes in the television viewing habits. A body of research shows that, for example, elementary school pupils watch television for more than three hours daily.

"The cooperation with UNICEF makes us extremely happy because we wish to encourage the electronic media, parents and children to show a proactive attitude towards regulated media consumption, enabling children, in the course of their education, to be exposed to programmes free of hate speech and prejudice and which promote tolerance. The research will help us, among other things, to revise the Ordinance on the protection of youth in the electronic media, while our joint activity represents an expression of our intention to promote the media literacy of all stakeholders in this process", said Ms Mirjana Rakić, head of the Agency for Electronic Media, on the occasion of signing of the Memorandum of Understanding.

UNICEF's regional conference titled "Communicating with Children", held in April 2014 in Budva, gathered around a hundred television experts, representatives of regulatory agencies, and scientists from the region, who agreed that children's programmes should promote positive values, such as tolerance, social justice, non-violence and freedom of religion. The recommendations from the Budva conference, as well as from the publication with the same name ("Communicating with Children") presented at the conference, encouraged the Agency and UNICEF to cooperate more intensively in the promotion of children's rights in the electronic media.

The signing of the Memorandum of Understanding marked the beginning of cooperation, which will, apart from the Agency and UNICEF, involve the professional community, children and parents with the aim of promoting programmes in the electronic media that will be appropriate not only in principle, but also in practice, promoting the values important for children's growth.

"Children are not merely passive observers. They are also active media users, and therefore a great importance should be placed on the significance of what they watch on different screens they are increasingly surrounded by, and how they watch it. I believe this cooperation will support both children and their parents in their appropriate choice of programmes offered by the electronic media", said Ms Valentina Otmačić, head of UNICEF's Office, on the occasion of signing of the Memorandum of Understanding.

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