# The role of Media Literacy and Parental Control in Protection of Children

11th Annual Meeting

**LUCIAN DINDIRICĂ**

Member of the Council

❑ By the term of "Media Literacy" we understand the development of ***skills, knowledge and understanding*** that allow citizens to use media effectively and safely, through critical thinking and analysis of a complex reality, where there are clearly differentiated opinions from facts
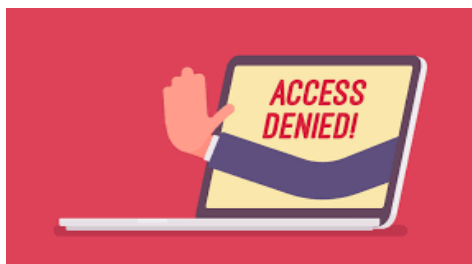
❑ On this regard, the measures aiming the media literacy focus on two perspectives
  ✓ for one hand there is ***the issuer - the content creator*** and
  ✓ for the other hand there is ***the receiver - the content consumer***

❑ In both cases, long-term education requires a good training of the targeted public regarding **what it should be offered**, respectively **what it should be consumed** in the context of the audiovisual content

❑ Art. 6a of the Audiovisual Media Services Directive (UE) 2018/1808, transposed into the Romanian audiovisual legislation at Art. 39 of the Audiovisual Law nº 504/2002 stipulates:

*Member States shall take appropriate measures to ensure that audiovisual media services provided by media service providers under their jurisdiction which may impair the physical, mental or moral development of minors are only made available in such a way as to ensure that minors will not normally hear or see them. Such measures may include selecting the time of the broadcast, age verification tools or other technical measures. They shall be proportionate to the potential harm of the programme. The most harmful content, such as gratuitous violence and pornography, shall be subject to the strictest measures.*

❑ The measures aiming at the protection of minors involve various stakeholders having different roles to fulfil and may refer to:

✓ **Content information** which is used to indicate the suitability/harmfulness of content for audiences. To this end the system regarding the measurea to protect the mnors may consist of age rating indicating suitability or harmfulness for various age categories of children. It may also be supplemented by content descriptors indicating the relevant characteristics or nature of the content, which may be in the form of label, textual guidance and warnings.

✓ **Scheduling restrictions** are used to reduce the likelihood that minors will be exposed to potentially harmful or unsuitable content. These involve restrictions on the time of day when the content may be made available within the service (e.g. in relation to a watershed) or restrictions on placing the potentially harmful content in proximity to other content.

✓ **Technical measures** describe mechanisms other than scheduling used to reduce the likelihood that minors will be exposed to potentially harmful or unsuitable content, by placing a technical barrier between the user and the content. The most common examples are various types of parental controls, PIN numbers or age verification tools - (e.g. credit card checks, proof of age and age confirmation checks).

❑ From the Media Literacy perspective, the regulation of the audiovisual content regarding the Parental Control is not enough without the involvement of the audience (both parents and minors)

❑ On this regards, some territorial inspectors from the NAC organise periodical workshops inviting parents and their children to talk about the innapropiate audiovisual content use and the harmful impact in the minors' evolution

❑ The general feedback of the NAC's inspectors workshops was that parents understood they should pay more attention to their childrens's audiovisual content consumption while their children understood they should be more carreful with
the kind of audiovisual content they consume

Thank you!