

## GR COMMENTS

Greece welcomes the initiative of the Spanish Presidency on enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector.

They could, without doubt, empower young people to participate in shaping European Culture and their own future by 'imagining, creating and exchanging cultural values and heritage through game-making'.

They could be also effective in learning, and help in changing social norms if designed using value-sensitive methods.

Additionally, the video games have significant impact on economic sector, creating new jobs, since they have become one of the fastest-growing cultural sectors worldwide.

In this context, please find our proposals in track changes.

**Draft Council conclusions on****Enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING:

1. The fundamental role that culture plays for the European Union and its citizens as a key tool in enhancing the European identity, strengthening our democracies and values, and triggering sustainable, diverse and inclusive development, and as a driver for growth and employment<sup>1</sup>;
2. The heterogeneity of the set of subsectors that make up the creative and cultural industries, which share common elements, but also have their own particularities and realities;
3. The great potential that the video games sector has for growth and innovation within the framework of the digital transition adopted by the European Union;

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<sup>1</sup> The ICC sector represents an economic weight of 3.95% of the EU value added (EUR 477 billion), employs 8.02 million people and involves 1.2 million businesses, according to 'Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard. Thematic analysis. Cultural and Creative Industries. April 2022' [https://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic\\_analysis/scoreboard\\_thematic\\_analysis\\_culture.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic_analysis/scoreboard_thematic_analysis_culture.pdf)

## TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THAT:

4. The video games sector is an integral part of the ecosystem of cultural and creative industries. It interacts with other sectors and has great potential to transmit cultural content and highlight the value of the richness of European creation, heritage and history, as well as having a significant impact in terms of job creation and making a significant contribution to GDP;
5. While Europe has established itself as one of the world's leading markets for video games, with an estimated value of EUR 23.48 billion in 2022, and plays a key role in all stages of their development (from design to distribution), there is a lack of detailed, harmonised and sector-specific data;
6. The European video game industry consists mainly of small and micro enterprises<sup>2</sup>, which limits the international competitiveness of the sector;
7. While the European video game market is growing in absolute terms<sup>3</sup>, its share of the global market is gradually shrinking<sup>4</sup>. In the European Union, video game users are found in all age segments, but especially in the youngest<sup>5</sup>;
8. Despite the efforts made in terms of the accurate, equal and non-stereotypical representation of women in video games, there is significant inequality in all positions in the value chain<sup>6</sup>;

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<sup>2</sup> 80% of the 4 600 existing companies have fewer than ten employees.

<sup>3</sup> It reached EUR 179 billion in revenue in 2022, which represents an annual growth of 5.4%.

<sup>4</sup> It is expected to account for 7.3% in 2025, compared to 8.7% in 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Although the average age of players is 31, more than 70% of young Europeans between 6 and 24 years of age are video game users.

<sup>6</sup> Of the 125 million people who use video games, women represent 47.8%, but this figure drops to around 22% when it comes to women working in the sector.

9. The video game industry has a wide value chain in which intellectual property plays a fundamental role and in which creativity, innovation and technological development flourish. The creation of video games requires the application of advanced technologies that contribute to the development of new business models which will foster cultural and creative growth, as well as the development of other policy areas and virtual worlds;
10. The European Union Work Plan for Culture for the period 2023-2026 includes ‘Enhancing of the cultural and creative dimension of the video games sector in Europe’ as one of the main actions to be carried out in the context of the priority area ‘Artists and cultural professionals: empowering the cultural and creative sectors’;

INVITES MEMBER STATES TO:

11. Explore all possible options for the implementation of support frameworks aimed at promoting the creative and cultural dimension of video games and preserving them as part of Europe’s cultural heritage;
12. Share information and good practices, in particular relating to public aid supporting the production, promotion and distribution of video games, to access to finance, and to effective measures to contribute to equality and diversity, as well as to the sustainable development of the video games sector;
13. Consider supporting, in cooperation with the video games industry, initiatives aimed at the preservation of European video games as a cultural asset, taking into account existing projects and in cooperation with national video game museums and archives;

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

14. Improve information on the video game sector by standardising data and statistics, inter alia through the possible creation of a European Video Game Observatory, in collaboration with the video game industry;
15. Promote talent and initiatives aimed at providing specialised training in professions linked to the video games industry, focusing on the cultural, creative, technical, legal and economic particularities of these professions as well as the applicable intellectual property framework;
16. Promote initiatives aimed at protecting users, in particular measures to increase people's sensitivity and provide information on and support for the use of tools that can improve the protection of young people, in particular minors;
17. Consider supporting initiatives aimed at promoting businesses adjacent to the video game sector. In order to drive growth, innovation and international competition for SMEs, an improved framework of B2B services such as localization, animation, quality assurance, marketing & publishing is vital to the multi-industrial process of video game production;
18. Consider supporting localized, public-facing initiatives that foster expertise and knowledge. Empowering local communities, associations and educational institutes to carry out these initiatives encourages knowledge exchange, fosters a resilient community around the sector and has the capacity to inform and encourage students to follow a game development career path.

INVITES THE COMMISSION, WITHIN ITS AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

19. Explore the possibility of proposing a European video game strategy that promotes European values and cultural diversity, and contributes to the development of the economic, social, educational, cultural and innovative potential of the video game sector while consolidating its leadership in the global video game market;
20. Further promote equality in the video games sector and analyse the feasibility of developing an action plan to ensure gender balance at all stages of development of the video game

industry as well as avoid creating, perpetuating or exacerbating stereotypes, in particular about gender;



21. Encourage cross-border co-productions of video games between Member States, as well as collaborations with other cultural industries and other sectors of the European economy, in order to exploit the opportunities and synergies offered by cooperation in terms of funding, resources and expertise, and to improve competitiveness and international standing;
22. Support and stimulate the competitiveness of European video games sector companies, in particular SMEs, through a review of the application of state aid rules, in particular, where appropriate, the General Block Exemption Regulation.

**References**

- Council Resolution on the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026 (OJ C 466, 7.12.2022, p. 1)
- Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (OJ L 187, 26.6.2014, p. 1) and successive amendments ('General Block Exemption Regulation' or 'GBER')
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- Conclusions on Europe's Media in the Digital Decade: An Action Plan to Support Recovery and Transformation (2021/C 210/01)



- Council conclusions of 30 November 2021 on increasing the availability and competitiveness of European audiovisual and media content
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  - European Parliament resolution of 14 December 2022 on the implementation of the New European Agenda for Culture and the EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations (2022/2047(INI))
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Brussels, 14 July 2023  
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11813/23

LIMITE

CULT 87  
AUDIO 70  
SOC 535  
EMPL 378  
RECH 354  
DIGIT 141  
IND 391  
PI 115  
JEUN 204  
GENDER 166

#### NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Draft Council conclusions on enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector - <i>Presidency text</i>

With a view to the Cultural Affairs Committee (CAC) meeting on 24 July 2023, delegations will find attached a Presidency text for draft Council conclusions on enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector.

Without prejudice to the discussion that will take place at the CAC meeting on 24 July 2023, delegations are invited to send their comments and drafting suggestions to the Presidency (eduardo.fpalomares@reper.maec.es; pilar.barrero@reper.maec.es; asistente.cultura@reper.maec.es) and the GSC (andres.tobias@consilium.europa.eu; eycs@consilium.europa.eu) **by COB on 14 August 2023**.

On that basis, the Presidency will prepare a revised text that will be circulated by 28 August with a view to the next CAC meeting on 4 September 2023.

## SLOVAKIA'S SUGGESTIONS

Slovakia welcomes and appreciates the topic of the proposed Council Conclusions, reflecting the fast-growing sub-sector of the CCSs and realising its economic potential. We also believe that the text should reflect various types of videogames (“commercial” as well as “more artistic/independent” ones) and different types of support required by those categories in line with Member States cultural policies in this field.

Please find below Slovakia's suggestions highlighted in red.

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THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING:

1. The fundamental role that culture plays for the European Union and its citizens as a key tool in enhancing the European identity, strengthening our democracies and values, and triggering sustainable, diverse and inclusive development, and as a driver for growth and employment<sup>1</sup>;
2. The heterogeneity of the set of subsectors that make up the creative and cultural industries, which share common elements, but also have their own particularities and realities;
3. The great potential that the video games sector has for growth and innovation within the framework of the digital transition adopted by the European Union;

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## TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THAT:

4. The video games sector is an integral part of the ecosystem of cultural and creative industries. It interacts with other sectors and has great potential to transmit cultural content and highlight the value of the richness of European creation, heritage and history, as well as having a significant impact in terms of job creation and making a significant contribution to GDP;
5. While Europe has established itself as one of the world's leading markets for video games, with an estimated value of EUR 23.48 billion in 2022, and plays a key role in all stages of their development (from script to distribution), there is a lack of detailed, harmonised and sector-specific data;
6. The European video game industry consists mainly of small and micro enterprises<sup>2</sup>, which limits the international competitiveness of the sector;
7. While the European video game market is growing in absolute terms<sup>3</sup>, its share of the global market is gradually shrinking<sup>4</sup>. In the European Union, video game users are found in all age segments, but especially in the youngest<sup>5</sup>;
8. Despite the efforts made in terms of the accurate, equal and non-stereotypical representation of women in video games, there is significant inequality in all positions in the value chain<sup>6</sup>;

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9. The video game industry has a wide value chain in which intellectual property plays a fundamental role and in which creativity, innovation and technological development flourish. The creation of video games requires the application of advanced technologies that contribute to the development of new business models which will foster cultural and creative growth, as well as the development of other policy areas and virtual worlds;
10. The European Union Work Plan for Culture for the period 2023-2026 includes ‘Enhancing of the cultural and creative dimension of the video games sector in Europe’ as one of the main actions to be carried out in the context of the priority area ‘Artists and cultural professionals: empowering the cultural and creative sectors’;

INVITES MEMBER STATES TO:

11. Consider relevant support schemes reflecting the particular objectives of individual Member States concerning this sub-sector. Explore all possible options for the implementation of support frameworks aimed at promoting the creative and cultural dimension of video games and preserving them as part of Europe’s creative sector and cultural heritage;
12. Share information and good practices, in particular relating to public aid supporting the production, promotion and distribution of different types of video games, to access to finance, and to effective measures to contribute to equality and diversity, as well as to the environmentally sustainable development of the video games sector;
13. Consider supporting, in cooperation with the video games industry, initiatives aimed at the preservation of European video games as a cultural asset, taking into account existing projects and in cooperation with national video game museums and archives;

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

14. Improve information on the video game sector by standardising data and statistics, inter alia through synergy with existing institutions such as the European Audiovisual Observatory ~~the possible creation of a European Video Game Observatory~~, in collaboration with the video game industry;
15. Promote talent and initiatives aimed at providing specialised training in professions linked to the video games industry and support a more strategic dialogue with the sector to reflect the its needs, focusing on the cultural, creative, technical, legal and economic particularities of these professions as well ~~setting up the applicable~~ an appropriate intellectual property framework;
16. Promote digital and media literacy initiatives aimed at protecting users, in particular measures to increase people's ~~sensitivity~~ awareness and provide information on and support for the use of tools that can improve the protection of young people, in particular minors;

INVITES THE COMMISSION, WITHIN ITS AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

17. Explore the possibility of proposing a European video game strategy that promotes European values and cultural diversity, and contributes to the development of the economic, social, educational, cultural and innovative potential of the video game sector while consolidating its leadership in the global video game market;
18. Further promote equality in the video games sector and analyse the feasibility of developing an action plan to ensure gender balance at all stages of development of the video game industry as well as avoid creating, perpetuating or exacerbating stereotypes and objectification, in particular about gender in the storytelling and content creation;

19. Encourage cross-border co-productions of video games between Member States, as well as collaborations with other cultural industries and other sectors of the European economy, in order to exploit the opportunities and synergies offered by cooperation in terms of funding, resources and expertise, and to improve competitiveness and international standing;
20. Support and stimulate the competitiveness of European video games sector companies, in particular SMEs, through a review of the application of state aid, in particular, where appropriate, the General Block Exemption Regulation.



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## SE comments 230814

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**Draft Council conclusions on****Enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING:

1. The fundamental role that culture can play for the European Union and its citizens in enhancing the European identity, strengthening our democracies and values, triggering sustainable, diverse and inclusive development, and driving growth and employment<sup>1</sup>;
2. The heterogeneity of the set of subsectors that make up the creative and cultural industries, which share common elements, but also have their own particularities and realities;
3. The great potential that the video games sector has for growth and innovation within the framework of the digital transition adopted by the European Union;

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## TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THAT:

4. The video games sector is an integral part of the ecosystem of cultural and creative industries. It interacts with other sectors and has great potential to transmit cultural content and highlight the value of the richness of European creation, heritage and history, as well as having a significant impact in terms of job creation and making a significant contribution to GDP;
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6. The European video game industry consists mainly of small and micro enterprises<sup>2</sup>, which affects the international competitiveness of the sector;
7. While the European video game market is growing in absolute terms<sup>3</sup>, its share of the global market is gradually shrinking<sup>4</sup>. In the European Union, video game users are found in all age segments, but especially in the youngest<sup>5</sup>;
8. Despite the efforts made in terms of the accurate, equal and non-stereotypical representation of women in video games, there is significant inequality in all positions in the value chain<sup>6</sup>;

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<sup>2</sup> 80% of the 4 600 existing companies have fewer than ten employees.

<sup>3</sup> It reached EUR 179 billion in revenue in 2022, which represents an annual growth of 5.4%.

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<sup>5</sup> Although the average age of players is 31, more than 70% of young Europeans between 6 and 24 years of age are video game users.

<sup>6</sup> Of the 125 million people who use video games, women represent 47.8%, but this figure drops to around 22% when it comes to women working in the sector.

9. The video game industry has a wide value chain in which intellectual property rights and assets plays a significant role for increased competitiveness and innovation, in which creativity and technological development can flourish. The creation of video games requires the application of advanced technologies that contribute to the development of new business models which will foster cultural and creative growth, as well as the development of other policy areas and virtual worlds;
10. The European Union Work Plan for Culture for the period 2023-2026 includes ‘Enhancing of the cultural and creative dimension of the video games sector in Europe’ as one of the main actions to be carried out in the context of the priority area ‘Artists and cultural professionals: empowering the cultural and creative sectors’;

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INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

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15. Promote talent and initiatives aimed at providing specialised training in professions linked to the video games industry, focusing on the cultural, creative, technical, legal and economic particularities of these professions as well as the applicable intellectual property framework;
16. Promote initiatives aimed at protecting users, in particular measures to increase people's sensitivity and provide information on and support for the use of tools that can improve the protection of young people, in particular minors;

INVITES THE COMMISSION, WITHIN ITS AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

17. Explore the possibility of proposing a European video game strategy that promotes European values and cultural diversity, while safeguarding artistic freedom, and contributes to the development of the economic, social, educational, cultural and innovative potential of the video game sector while consolidating its leadership in the global video game market;
18. Further promote equality in the video games sector and analyse the feasibility of developing an action plan to ensure gender balance at all stages of development of the video game industry as well as avoid creating, perpetuating or exacerbating stereotypes, in particular about gender;



19. Encourage cross-border co-productions of video games between Member States, as well as collaborations with other cultural industries and other sectors of the European economy, in order to exploit the opportunities and synergies offered by cooperation in terms of funding, resources and expertise, and to improve competitiveness and international standing;
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## **CZ Comments**

The field of the video game industry is vast and multi-layered, with rapid development. The Czech game industry consists of approximately 120 game companies with highly competitive potential, the vast majority of game companies are privately owned, with minimal state influence. The conclusions of the Council are a political document that does not have a legislative character, but it is nevertheless an important factor for the future orientation of conceptual documents. The proposal of the European Video Games Observatory needs to be carefully considered and, especially in the current situation, the financial costs and impact on the European budget should be discussed. The Czech Republic has a rather negative view of this problem. One can certainly positively perceive the proposal to consider the possibility of expanding the block exemption in order to support the development of this creative segment. On the contrary, the call to support the co-production of video games between states seems unrealistic, but the rest of the point correctly aims at finding synergies in cooperation between different sectors.

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RECALLING:

1. The fundamental role that culture plays for the European Union and its citizens as a key tool in enhancing the European identity, strengthening our democracies and values, and triggering sustainable, diverse and inclusive development, and as a driver for growth and employment<sup>1</sup>;
2. The heterogeneity of the set of subsectors that make up the creative and cultural industries, which share common elements, but also have their own particularities and realities;
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## TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THAT:

4. The video games sector is an integral part of the ecosystem of cultural and creative industries. It interacts with other sectors and has great potential to transmit cultural content and highlight the value of the richness of European creation, heritage and history, as well as having a significant impact in terms of job creation and making a significant contribution to GDP;
5. While Europe has established itself as one of the world's leading markets for video games, with an estimated value of EUR 23.48 billion in 2022, and plays a key role in all stages of their development (from script to distribution), there is a lack of detailed, harmonised and sector-specific data;
6. The European video game industry consists mainly of small and micro enterprises<sup>2</sup>, which limits the international competitiveness of the sector;
7. While the European video game market is growing in absolute terms<sup>3</sup>, its share of the global market is gradually shrinking<sup>4</sup>. In the European Union, video game users are found in all age segments, but especially in the youngest<sup>5</sup>;
8. Despite the efforts made in terms of the accurate, equal and non-stereotypical representation of women in video games, there is significant inequality in all positions in the value chain<sup>6</sup>;

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<sup>2</sup> 80% of the 4 600 existing companies have fewer than ten employees.

<sup>3</sup> It reached EUR 179 billion in revenue in 2022, which represents an annual growth of 5.4%.

<sup>4</sup> It is expected to account for 7.3% in 2025, compared to 8.7% in 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Although the average age of players is 31, more than 70% of young Europeans between 6 and 24 years of age are video game users.

<sup>6</sup> Of the 125 million people who use video games, women represent 47.8%, but this figure drops to around 22% when it comes to women working in the sector.

9. The video game industry has a wide value chain in which intellectual property plays a fundamental role and in which creativity, innovation and technological development flourish. The creation of video games requires the application of advanced technologies that contribute to the development of new business models which will foster cultural and creative growth, as well as the development of other policy areas and virtual worlds;
10. The European Union Work Plan for Culture for the period 2023-2026 includes ‘Enhancing of the cultural and creative dimension of the video games sector in Europe’ as one of the main actions to be carried out in the context of the priority area ‘Artists and cultural professionals: empowering the cultural and creative sectors’;

INVITES MEMBER STATES TO:

11. Explore all possible options for the implementation of support frameworks aimed at promoting the creative and cultural dimension of video games and preserving them as part of Europe’s cultural heritage;
12. Share information and good practices, in particular relating to public aid supporting the production, promotion and distribution of video games, to access to finance, and to effective measures to contribute to equality and diversity, as well as to the sustainable development of the video games sector;
13. Consider supporting, in cooperation with the video games industry, initiatives aimed at the preservation of European video games as a cultural asset, taking into account existing projects and in cooperation with national video game museums and archives;



INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

14. Improve information on the video game sector by standardising data and statistics, inter alia through the possible creation of a European Video Game Observatory, in collaboration with the video game industry;
15. Promote talent and initiatives aimed at providing specialised training in professions linked to the video games industry, focusing on the cultural, creative, technical, legal and economic particularities of these professions as well as the applicable intellectual property framework;
16. Promote initiatives aimed at protecting users, in particular measures to increase people's sensitivity and provide information on and support for the use of tools that can improve the protection of young people, in particular minors;

INVITES THE COMMISSION, WITHIN ITS AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

17. Explore the possibility of proposing a European video game strategy that promotes European values and cultural diversity, and contributes to the development of the economic, social, educational, cultural and innovative potential of the video game sector while consolidating its leadership in the global video game market;
18. Further promote equality in the video games sector and analyse the feasibility of developing an action plan to ensure gender balance at all stages of development of the video game industry as well as avoid creating, perpetuating or exacerbating stereotypes, in particular about gender;

19. Encourage cross-border co-productions of video games between Member States, as well as collaborations with other cultural industries and other sectors of the European economy, in order to exploit the opportunities and synergies offered by cooperation in terms of funding, resources and expertise, and to improve competitiveness and international standing;
20. Support and stimulate the competitiveness of European video games sector companies, in particular SMEs, through a review of the application of state aid rules, in particular, where appropriate, the General Block Exemption Regulation.

**References**

- Council Resolution on the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026 (OJ C 466, 7.12.2022, p. 1)
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  - European Parliament resolution of 10 November 2022 on e-sports and video games (2022/2027(INI))
  - European Parliament resolution of 18 January 2023 on consumer protection in online video games: a European single market approach (2022/2014 (INI))
  - European Parliament resolution of 14 December 2022 on the implementation of the New European Agenda for Culture and the EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations (2022/2047(INI))
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## PT COMMENTS

Portugal welcomes these Conclusions, which reflect the idea of valuing the cultural and creative dimension of the video games sector, which has been experiencing progressive growth and impact in Europe, including in Portugal.

Nevertheless, we believe that there is still room for improvement, which is why we present some suggestions in the text.

**Draft Council conclusions on****Enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING:

1. The fundamental role that culture plays for the European Union and its citizens as a key tool in enhancing the European identity, strengthening our democracies and values, and triggering sustainable, diverse and inclusive development, and as a driver for growth and employment<sup>1</sup>;
2. The heterogeneity of the set of subsectors that make up the creative and cultural industries, which share common elements, but also have their own particularities and realities;
3. The great potential that the video games sector has for growth and innovation within the framework of the digital transition adopted by the European Union;

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<sup>1</sup> The ICC sector represents an economic weight of 3.95% of the EU value added (EUR 477 billion), employs 8.02 million people and involves 1.2 million businesses, according to 'Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard. Thematic analysis. Cultural and Creative Industries. April 2022' [https://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic\\_analysis/scoreboard\\_thematic\\_analysis\\_culture.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic_analysis/scoreboard_thematic_analysis_culture.pdf)

## TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THAT:

4. The video games sector is an integral part of the ecosystem of cultural and creative industries **and shows a growing potential in fields such as cultural heritage, education, entertainment, tourism, social inclusion and well-being**. It interacts with other sectors and has great potential to transmit cultural content and **values** and highlight the the richness of European creation, heritage and history, as well as having a significant impact in terms of job creation and making a significant contribution to GDP;
5. While Europe has established itself as one of the world's leading markets for video games, with an estimated value of EUR 23.48 billion in 2022, and plays a key role in all stages of their development (from script to distribution), there is a lack of detailed, harmonised and sector-specific data;
6. The European video game industry consists mainly of small and micro enterprises<sup>2</sup>, which limits the international competitiveness of the sector;
7. While the European video game market is growing in absolute terms<sup>3</sup>, its share of the global market is gradually shrinking<sup>4</sup>. In the European Union, video game users are found in all age segments, but especially in the youngest<sup>5</sup>;
8. Despite the efforts made in terms of the accurate, equal and non-stereotypical representation of women in video games, there is significant inequality in all positions in the value chain<sup>6</sup>;

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<sup>2</sup> 80% of the 4 600 existing companies have fewer than ten employees.

<sup>3</sup> It reached EUR 179 billion in revenue in 2022, which represents an annual growth of 5.4%.

<sup>4</sup> It is expected to account for 7.3% in 2025, compared to 8.7% in 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Although the average age of players is 31, more than 70% of young Europeans between 6 and 24 years of age are video game users.

<sup>6</sup> Of the 125 million people who use video games, women represent 47.8%, but this figure drops to around 22% when it comes to women working in the sector.

9. The video game industry has a wide value chain in which intellectual property plays a fundamental role and in which creativity, innovation and technological development flourish. The creation of video games requires **both a multidisciplinary approach encompassing technical, artistic and legal aspects and** the application of advanced technologies that contribute to the development of new business models which will foster cultural and creative growth, as well as the development of other policy areas and virtual worlds, **and where the development of STEAM skills and competences plays a central role;**
10. The European Union Work Plan for Culture for the period 2023-2026 includes ‘Enhancing of the cultural and creative dimension of the video games sector in Europe’ as one of the main actions to be carried out in the context of the priority area ‘Artists and cultural professionals: empowering the cultural and creative sectors’;

INVITES MEMBER STATES TO:

11. Explore all possible options for the implementation of support frameworks aimed at promoting the creative and cultural dimension of video games and preserving them as part of Europe’s cultural heritage;
12. Share **and disseminate** information and good practices, in particular relating to public aid supporting the production, promotion and distribution of video games, to access to **funding opportunities, including for research and development and innovation, and for start-ups, to the development of STEAM skills and competences that meet the needs of the sector,** and to effective measures to contribute to equality and diversity, as well as to the sustainable development of the **whole** video games sector, **and paying particular attention to small and micro enterprises;**
13. Consider supporting, in cooperation with the video games industry **and associations,** initiatives aimed at the preservation of European video games as a cultural asset, taking into account existing projects and in cooperation with national video game museums and archives;



INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

14. Improve information on the video game sector by standardising data and statistics, inter alia through the possible creation of a European Video Game Observatory, in collaboration with the video game industry **and associations**;
15. Promote, **in close cooperation and dialogue with the sector**, talent and initiatives aimed at providing specialised **education and** training in professions linked to the video games industry, focusing on the cultural, creative, technical, legal and economic particularities of these professions as well as the applicable intellectual property framework;
16. Promote initiatives aimed at protecting users, in particular measures to increase people's sensitivity **in relation to responsible gaming** and provide information on and support for the use of tools that can improve the protection of young people, in particular minors, **and women**;

INVITES THE COMMISSION, WITHIN ITS AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

17. Explore the possibility of proposing a European video game strategy that promotes European values and cultural diversity, and contributes to the development of the economic, social, educational, cultural and innovative potential of the video game sector while **reaching** its leadership in the global video game market, **starting by mapping the sector in Europe, identifying its challenges and opportunities**;
18. Further promote equality **and diversity** in the video games sector and analyse the feasibility of developing an action plan to **protect all users and** ensure gender balance at all stages of development of the video game industry as well as avoid creating, perpetuating or exacerbating stereotypes, in particular about gender;

19. Encourage cross-border co-productions of video games between Member States, as well as collaborations **within the sector and** with other cultural industries and other sectors of the European economy, in order to exploit the opportunities and synergies offered by cooperation in terms of funding, resources, **visibility** and expertise, and to improve competitiveness and international standing;
20. Support and stimulate the competitiveness of European video games sector companies, in particular SMEs, through a review of the application of state aid rules, in particular, where appropriate, the General Block Exemption Regulation.

**References**

- Council Resolution on the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026 (OJ C 466, 7.12.2022, p. 1)
- Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (OJ L 187, 26.6.2014, p. 1) and successive amendments ('General Block Exemption Regulation' or 'GBER')
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- Council conclusions on cultural and creative crossovers to stimulate innovation, economic sustainability and social inclusion (2015/C 172/04)
- European Council conclusions of 21 July 2020 on the recovery plan and the multiannual financial framework for 2021-2027
- Conclusions on Europe's Media in the Digital Decade: An Action Plan to Support Recovery and Transformation (2021/C 210/01)
- **Regulation (EU) 2022/2065 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 19 October 2022 on a Single Market For Digital Services and amending Directive 2000/31/EC (Digital Services Act) (Text with EEA relevance) (PE/30/2022/REV/1) [<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A32022R2065&qid=1666857835014>]**

- **Directive (EU) 2019/790 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 April 2019 on copyright and related rights in the Digital Single Market and amending Directives 96/9/EC and 2001/29/EC (Text with EEA relevance.) (PE/51/2019/REV/1) [<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2019/790/oj>]**

PUBLIC

- Council conclusions of 30 November 2021 on increasing the availability and competitiveness of European audiovisual and media content
  - Regulation (EU) 2021/818 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2021 to 2027) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013
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  - European Parliament resolution of 14 December 2022 on the implementation of the New European Agenda for Culture and the EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations (2022/2047(INI))
-

**Draft Council conclusions on**

**Enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING:

1. The fundamental role that culture plays for the European Union and its citizens as a key tool in enhancing the European identity, strengthening our democracies and values, and triggering sustainable, diverse and inclusive development, and as a driver for growth and employment<sup>1</sup>;
2. The heterogeneity of the set of subsectors that make up the creative and cultural industries, which share common elements, but also have their own particularities and realities;
3. The great potential that the video games sector has for growth and innovation within the framework of the digital transition adopted by the European Union;

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<sup>1</sup> The ICC sector represents an economic weight of 3.95% of the EU value added (EUR 477 billion), employs 8.02 million people and involves 1.2 million businesses, according to 'Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard. Thematic analysis. Cultural and Creative Industries. April 2022' [https://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic\\_analysis/scoreboard\\_thematic\\_analysis\\_culture.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic_analysis/scoreboard_thematic_analysis_culture.pdf)

## TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THAT:

4. The video games sector is an integral part of the ecosystem of cultural and creative industries. It interacts with other sectors and has great potential to transmit cultural content and highlight the value of the richness of European creation, heritage and history, as well as having a significant impact in terms of job creation and making a significant contribution to GDP;
5. While Europe has established itself as one of the world's leading markets for video games, with an estimated value of EUR 23.48 billion in 2022, and plays a key role in all stages of their development (from script to distribution), there is a lack of detailed, harmonised and sector-specific data;
6. The European video game industry consists mainly of small and micro enterprises<sup>2</sup>, which limits the international competitiveness of the sector;
7. While the European video game market is growing in absolute terms<sup>3</sup>, its share of the global market is gradually shrinking<sup>4</sup>. In the European Union, video game users are found in all age segments, but especially in the youngest<sup>5</sup>;
8. Despite the efforts made in terms of the accurate, equal and non-stereotypical representation of women in video games, there is significant inequality in all positions in the value chain<sup>6</sup>;

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<sup>2</sup> 80% of the 4 600 existing companies have fewer than ten employees.

<sup>3</sup> It reached EUR 179 billion in revenue in 2022, which represents an annual growth of 5.4%.

<sup>4</sup> It is expected to account for 7.3% in 2025, compared to 8.7% in 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Although the average age of players is 31, more than 70% of young Europeans between 6 and 24 years of age are video game users.

<sup>6</sup> Of the 125 million people who use video games, women represent 47.8%, but this figure drops to around 22% when it comes to women working in the sector.

9. The video game industry has a wide value chain in which intellectual property plays a fundamental role and in which creativity, innovation and technological development flourish. The creation of video games requires the application of advanced technologies that contribute to the development of new business models which will foster cultural and creative growth, as well as the development of other policy areas and virtual worlds;
10. The European Union Work Plan for Culture for the period 2023-2026 includes ‘Enhancing of the cultural and creative dimension of the video games sector in Europe’ as one of the main actions to be carried out in the context of the priority area ‘Artists and cultural professionals: empowering the cultural and creative sectors’;

INVITES MEMBER STATES TO:

11. Explore all possible options for the implementation of support frameworks aimed at promoting the creative and cultural dimension of video games and preserving them as part of Europe’s cultural heritage;
12. Share information and good practices, in particular relating to public aid supporting the production, promotion and distribution of video games, to access to finance, and to effective measures to contribute to equality and diversity, as well as to the sustainable development of the video games sector;
13. Consider supporting, in cooperation with the video games industry, initiatives aimed at the preservation of European video games as a cultural asset, taking into account existing projects and in cooperation with national video game museums and archives;



INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

14. Improve information on the video game sector by standardising data and statistics, inter alia through the possible creation of a European Video Game Observatory, in collaboration with the video game industry;
15. Promote talent and initiatives aimed at providing specialised training in professions linked to the video games industry, focusing on the cultural, creative, technical, legal and economic particularities of these professions as well as the applicable intellectual property framework;
16. Promote initiatives aimed at protecting users, in particular measures to increase people's sensitivity and provide information on and support for the use of tools that can improve the protection of young people, in particular minors;

INVITES THE COMMISSION, WITHIN ITS AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

17. Explore the possibility of proposing a European video game strategy that promotes European values and cultural diversity, and contributes to the development of the economic, social, educational, cultural and innovative potential of the video game sector while consolidating its leadership in the global video game market;
18. Further promote equality in the video games sector and analyse the feasibility of developing an action plan to ensure gender balance at all stages of development of the video game industry as well as avoid creating, perpetuating or exacerbating stereotypes, in particular about gender;

19. Encourage cross-border co-productions of video games between Member States, as well as collaborations with other cultural industries and other sectors of the European economy, in order to exploit the opportunities and synergies offered by cooperation in terms of funding, resources and expertise, and to improve competitiveness and international standing;
20. Support and stimulate the competitiveness of European video games sector companies, in particular SMEs, through a review of the application of state aid rules, in particular, where appropriate, the General Block Exemption Regulation.

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Council of the  
European Union

Brussels, 14 July 2023  
(OR. en)

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LIMITE

CULT 87  
AUDIO 70  
SOC 535  
EMPL 378  
RECH 354  
DIGIT 141  
IND 391  
PI 115  
JEUN 204  
GENDER 166

#### NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Draft Council conclusions on enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector - <i>Presidency text</i>

#### DK Preliminary Comments

DK warmly thanks the PCY for having prepared a fruitful first draft on an important subject, while keeping the text admirably short. While DK has not yet finalised its national consultations and position, we have a positive view on most parts of the draft. We have however, a few suggestions for further improvement of the text as well as some questions for clarification.

With a view to the Cultural Affairs Committee (CAC) meeting on 24 July 2023, delegations will find attached a Presidency text for draft Council conclusions on enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector.

Without prejudice to the discussion that will take place at the CAC meeting on 24 July 2023, delegations are invited to send their comments and drafting suggestions to the Presidency (eduardo.fpalomares@reper.maec.es; pilar.barrero@reper.maec.es; asistente.cultura@reper.maec.es) and the GSC (andres.tobias@consilium.europa.eu; eycs@consilium.europa.eu) **by COB on 14 August 2023**.

On that basis, the Presidency will prepare a revised text that will be circulated by 28 August with a view to the next CAC meeting on 4 September 2023.

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**Draft Council conclusions on****Enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING:

1. The intrinsic value of culture as well as the fundamental role that culture plays for the European Union and its citizens as a key tool in enhancing the European identity, strengthening our democracies and values, and triggering sustainable, diverse and inclusive development, and as a driver for growth and employment<sup>1</sup>;
2. The heterogeneity of the set of subsectors that make up the creative and cultural industries, which share common elements, but also have their own particularities and realities;
3. The great potential that the video games sector has for growth and innovation within the framework of the digital transition adopted by the European Union;

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<sup>1</sup> The ICC sector represents an economic weight of 3.95% of the EU value added (EUR 477 billion), employs 8.02 million people and involves 1.2 million businesses, according to 'Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard. Thematic analysis. Cultural and Creative Industries. April 2022' [https://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic\\_analysis/scoreboard\\_thematic\\_analysis\\_culture.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic_analysis/scoreboard_thematic_analysis_culture.pdf)

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THAT:

4. The video games sector is an integral part of the ecosystem of cultural and creative industries. It interacts with other sectors and has great potential to transmit cultural content and highlight the value of the richness of European creation, heritage and history, as well as having a significant impact in terms of job creation and making a significant contribution to GDP;
5. While Europe has established itself as one of the world's leading markets for video games, with an estimated value of EUR 23.48 billion in 2022, and plays a key role in all stages of their development (from script to distribution), there is a lack of detailed, harmonised and sector-specific data;
6. The European video game industry consists mainly of small and micro enterprises<sup>2</sup>, which limits the international competitiveness of the sector;
7. While the European video game market is growing in absolute terms<sup>3</sup>, its share of the global market is gradually shrinking<sup>4</sup>.

7.a In the European Union, video game users are found in all age segments, but especially in the youngest<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, the well-being of children and young people should be taken into account when addressing the video games sector;

8. Despite the efforts made in terms of the accurate, equal and non-stereotypical representation of women in video games, there is significant inequality in all positions in the value chain<sup>6</sup>;

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<sup>2</sup> 80% of the 4 600 existing companies have fewer than ten employees.

<sup>3</sup> It reached EUR 179 billion in revenue in 2022, which represents an annual growth of 5.4%.

<sup>4</sup> It is expected to account for 7.3% in 2025, compared to 8.7% in 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Although the average age of players is 31, more than 70% of young Europeans between 6 and 24 years of age are video game users.

<sup>6</sup> Of the 125 million people who use video games, women represent 47.8%, but this figure drops to around 22% when it comes to women working in the sector.



9. The video game industry has a wide value chain in which intellectual property plays a fundamental role and in which creativity, innovation and technological development flourish. The creation of video games requires the application of advanced technologies that contribute to the development of new business models which will foster cultural and creative growth, as well as the development of other policy areas and virtual worlds;
10. The European Union Work Plan for Culture for the period 2023-2026 includes ‘Enhancing of the cultural and creative dimension of the video games sector in Europe’ as one of the main actions to be carried out in the context of the priority area ‘Artists and cultural professionals: empowering the cultural and creative sectors’;

INVITES MEMBER STATES TO:

11. Explore all relevant options for the implementation of support frameworks aimed at promoting the creative and cultural dimension of video games and preserving them as part of Europe’s cultural heritage;fo
12. Share information and good practices, for instance relating to public aid supporting video games, effective measures contributing to equality and diversity, access to finance, and the sustainable development of the video games sector;
13. Consider supporting, in cooperation with the video games industry, initiatives aimed at the preservation of European video games as a cultural asset, taking into account existing projects and in cooperation with national video game museums and archives;

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

14. Improve information on the video games sector by standardising data and statistics, inter alia through a possible creation of a European Video Game Observatory, in collaboration with the video game industry;
15. Promote talent and initiatives aimed at providing specialised training in professions linked to the video games industry, focusing on the cultural, creative, technical, legal and economic particularities of these professions as well as the applicable intellectual property framework;
16. Promote initiatives aimed at protecting users, in particular measures to increase people's sensitivity, and provide information on and support for the use of tools that can improve the protection and the well-being of young people, and in particular children;

INVITES THE COMMISSION, WITHIN ITS AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

17. Explore the possibility of proposing a European video game strategy that promotes European values and cultural diversity, supports a strong focus on user protection, especially children and young people, and that contributes to the development of the economic, social, educational, cultural and innovative potential of the video games sector while consolidating its leadership in the global video game market. This could be explored in the context of the initiative on Virtual Worlds published by the Commission on the 11<sup>th</sup> of July 2023 aimed at addressing opportunities and challenges following the next technological transition;
18. Further promote equality in the video games sector and analyse the feasibility of developing an action plan to ensure gender balance at all stages of development of the video game industry as well as avoid creating, perpetuating or exacerbating stereotypes, in particular about gender;

19. Encourage cross-border co-productions of video games between Member States, as well as collaborations with other cultural industries and other sectors of the European economy, in order to exploit the opportunities and synergies offered by cooperation in terms of funding, resources and expertise, and to improve competitiveness and international standing;
20. Support and stimulate the competitiveness of European video games sector companies, including SMEs, through a review of the application of state aid rules, in particular, where appropriate, the General Block Exemption Regulation.

**References**

- Council Resolution on the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026 (OJ C 466, 7.12.2022, p. 1)
- Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (OJ L 187, 26.6.2014, p. 1) and successive amendments ('General Block Exemption Regulation' or 'GBER')
- European Media Industry Outlook – SWD (2023) 150 final (Commission Staff Working Document)
- Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard Thematic Analysis on Cultural and Creative Industries
- Council conclusions on the recovery, resilience and sustainability of the cultural and creative sectors (2021/C 209/03, 2 June 2021)
- Council conclusions on building a European Strategy for the Cultural and Creative Industries Ecosystem (2022/C 160/06)
- Council conclusions on cultural and creative crossovers to stimulate innovation, economic sustainability and social inclusion (2015/C 172/04)
- European Council conclusions of 21 July 2020 on the recovery plan and the multiannual financial framework for 2021-2027
- Conclusions on Europe's Media in the Digital Decade: An Action Plan to Support Recovery and Transformation (2021/C 210/01)

- Council conclusions of 30 November 2021 on increasing the availability and competitiveness of European audiovisual and media content
  - Regulation (EU) 2021/818 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 May 2021 establishing the Creative Europe Programme (2021 to 2027) and repealing Regulation (EU) No 1295/2013
  - European Parliament resolution of 10 November 2022 on e-sports and video games (2022/2027(INI))
  - European Parliament resolution of 18 January 2023 on consumer protection in online video games: a European single market approach (2022/2014 (INI))
  - European Parliament resolution of 14 December 2022 on the implementation of the New European Agenda for Culture and the EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations (2022/2047(INI))
-



## General comments by the Finnish delegation – Draft council conclusions on enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector

- In general Finland welcomes the draft Council Conclusions and do agree that the European video games industry has a great potential and that we need to make common efforts in order to make it even more competitive in the global market.
- With regard to game development, the European games industry has been quick to adapt their business strategies and developing new skills in particular related to **use of data**, and **restructuring their financing and distribution models**.
- The success of the gaming industry depends on **young talents**. There is a need to promote game literacy skills needed in the industry, including digital, entrepreneurial, economic and specialised skills, also through **non-formal education** and remove administrative and fiscal obstacles to talent mobility.
- It is important to ensure a safe and trustworthy online environment for video games and gamers through **reliable structures and a regulatory environment** that is predictable and reliable for the companies and safeguards the protection of consumers.
- The games industry also needs **comparable statistics and data analysis**. Currently, games industry is not included in the statistical framework across all EU member states, which hinders evidence-based policy making at European and national level.
- In spite of efforts made so far to promote **gender equality**, women are still a minority in European games industry and emerging augmented and virtual reality sectors. Special attention should be paid to promotion of diversity, inclusion as well as equal and non-stereotypical representation of women in the games.
- The importance of **protection of minors** cannot be over emphasised in the digital video games sector. Online gaming is now a major online activity of children: 73% children in the EU aged 6-10, 84% aged 11-14 and 74% of youth aged 15-24 play video games.<sup>1</sup> Children create, play and interact online from an ever younger age, encountering digital content and services that were not designed with children in mind. **Targeted measures** to protect the rights of the child, including use of age verification and parental control tools are needed. It is necessary that video games developers and vendors also ensure that games targeted to young people respect their rights, including as regards privacy, targeted advertising and manipulative practices. Finally, more attention should be paid to mitigating the risks arising from spending excessive amounts of time playing online videogames, known as “gaming disorder”<sup>2</sup>. The video game industry should initiate and create clear mechanisms to continuously carry out awareness campaigns and support on the use of protection tools, also in smaller languages.

<sup>1</sup> COM (2022) 212 final

<sup>2</sup> WHO, ‘Gaming disorder’, accessed 15 December 2022.



Council of the  
European Union

Brussels, 14 July 2023  
(OR. en)

11813/23

LIMITE

CULT 87  
AUDIO 70  
SOC 535  
EMPL 378  
RECH 354  
DIGIT 141  
IND 391  
PI 115  
JEUN 204  
GENDER 166

#### NOTE

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Delegations
Subject:	Draft Council conclusions on enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector - <i>Presidency text</i>

With a view to the Cultural Affairs Committee (CAC) meeting on 24 July 2023, delegations will find attached a Presidency text for draft Council conclusions on enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector.

Without prejudice to the discussion that will take place at the CAC meeting on 24 July 2023, delegations are invited to send their comments and drafting suggestions to the Presidency (eduardo.fpalomares@reper.maec.es; pilar.barrero@reper.maec.es; asistente.cultura@reper.maec.es) and the GSC (andres.tobias@consilium.europa.eu; eycs@consilium.europa.eu) **by COB on 14 August 2023**.

On that basis, the Presidency will prepare a revised text that will be circulated by 28 August with a view to the next CAC meeting on 4 September 2023.

**Comments of the Finnish  
delegation**

**Draft Council conclusions on****Enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING:

1. The fundamental role that culture plays for the European Union and its citizens as a key tool in enhancing the European identity, strengthening our democracies and values, and triggering sustainable, diverse and inclusive development, and as a driver for growth and employment<sup>1</sup>;
2. The heterogeneity of the set of subsectors that make up the creative and cultural industries, which share common elements, but also have their own particularities and realities;
3. The great potential that the video games sector has for growth and innovation within the framework of the digital transition adopted by the European Union;

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<sup>1</sup> The ICC sector represents an economic weight of 3.95% of the EU value added (EUR 477 billion), employs 8.02 million people and involves 1.2 million businesses, according to 'Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard. Thematic analysis. Cultural and Creative Industries. April 2022' [https://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic\\_analysis/scoreboard\\_thematic\\_analysis\\_culture.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic_analysis/scoreboard_thematic_analysis_culture.pdf)



## TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THAT:

4. The video games sector is an integral part of the ecosystem of cultural and creative industries. It interacts with other sectors and has great potential to transmit cultural content and highlight the value of the richness of European creation, heritage and history, as well as having a significant impact in terms of job creation and making a significant contribution to GDP;
5. While Europe has established itself as one of the world's leading markets for video games, with an estimated value of EUR 23.48 billion in 2022, and plays a key role in all stages of their development (from script to distribution), there is a lack of detailed, harmonised and sector-specific data;
6. The European video game industry consists mainly of small and micro enterprises<sup>2</sup>, which limits the international competitiveness of the sector;
7. While the European video game market is growing in absolute terms<sup>3</sup>, its share of the global market is gradually shrinking<sup>4</sup>. In the European Union, video game users are found in all age segments, but especially in the youngest<sup>5</sup>;
8. Despite the efforts made in terms of the accurate, equal and non-stereotypical representation of women in video games, there is significant inequality in all positions in the value chain<sup>6</sup>;
9. Children's right to freedom of expression and the right to participate in artistic and cultural life includes playing and creating games in a safe environment, however, even if the majority of parents are aware of and follow Pan-European Game Information (PEGI) age rating system, use parental control systems and are concerned about the amount of time their children spend playing video games, there is a risk of exposure to harmful content, bullying, misleading and aggressive commercial practices and potentially addictional gaming;

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<sup>2</sup> 80% of the 4 600 existing companies have fewer than ten employees.

<sup>3</sup> It reached EUR 179 billion in revenue in 2022, which represents an annual growth of 5.4%.

<sup>4</sup> It is expected to account for 7.3% in 2025, compared to 8.7% in 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Although the average age of players is 31, more than 70% of young Europeans between 6 and 24 years of age are video game users.

<sup>6</sup> Of the 125 million people who use video games, women represent 47.8%, but this figure drops to around 22% when it comes to women working in the sector.

10. The video game industry has a wide value chain in which intellectual property plays a fundamental role and in which creativity, innovation and technological development flourish. The creation of video games requires the application of advanced technologies that contribute to the development of new business models which will foster cultural and creative growth, as well as the development of other policy areas and virtual worlds;
11. The European Union Work Plan for Culture for the period 2023-2026 includes ‘Enhancing of the cultural and creative dimension of the video games sector in Europe’ as one of the main actions to be carried out in the context of the priority area ‘Artists and cultural professionals: empowering the cultural and creative sectors’;

INVITES MEMBER STATES TO:

12. Explore all possible options for the implementation of support frameworks aimed at promoting the creative and cultural dimension of video games and preserving them as part of Europe’s cultural heritage;
13. Share information and good practices, in particular relating to public aid supporting the production, promotion and distribution of video games, to access to finance, and to effective measures to contribute to equality and diversity, as well as to the sustainable development of the video games sector;
14. Consider supporting, in cooperation with the video games industry, initiatives aimed at the preservation of European video games as a cultural asset, taking into account existing projects and in cooperation with national video game museums and archives;

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

15. Improve information on the video game sector by standardising data and statistics, [inter alia through the possible creation of a European Video Game Observatory,] in collaboration with the video game industry;
16. Promote talent **mobility, including cross-border remote work**, and initiatives aimed at providing specialised training in professions linked to the video games industry, focusing on the cultural, creative, technical, legal and economic particularities of these professions as well as the applicable intellectual property framework;
17. **Promote and support, as appropriate, initiatives that incentivise the discoverability of and access to the broadest possible range of European games on digital platforms, including emerging interactive augmented reality and virtual reality content, and content from small countries and in less-spoken languages as well as general interest content;**
18. **Ensure a safe and trustworthy online environment for video games and users with continuous stakeholder dialogue, reliable structures and a regulatory environment that is predictable and navigable for the companies, in particular micro companies and SMEs and safeguards the protection of consumers;**
19. Promote initiatives aimed at protecting users, in particular measures **by the video game industry** to increase people's sensitivity and provide information on and support for the use of **parental control and other tools, taking into account linguistic diversity**, that can improve the protection of young people, in particular minors;

INVITES THE COMMISSION, WITHIN ITS AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

20. Explore the possibility of proposing a European video game strategy that promotes European values and cultural diversity, and contributes to the development of the economic, social, educational, cultural and innovative potential of the video game sector while consolidating its leadership in the global video game market;
21. Further promote equality in the video games sector and analyse the feasibility of developing an action plan to ensure gender balance at all stages of development of the video game

industry as well as avoid creating, perpetuating or exacerbating stereotypes, in particular about gender;

22. Encourage cross-border **collaboration in video games industry**, as well as collaborations with other cultural industries and other sectors of the European economy, in order to exploit the opportunities and synergies offered by cooperation in terms of funding, resources and expertise, and to improve competitiveness and international standing;
23. **Continue implementing BIK + flagship initiatives in order to promote safe digital experiences to protect children from harmful and illegal online content, conduct, contact and consumer risks and to improve their well-being online through a safe, age-appropriate digital environment, as proposed in the BIK + Strategy<sup>7</sup>**
24. Support and stimulate the competitiveness of European video games sector companies, in particular SMEs, through a review of the application of state aid rules, in particular, where appropriate, the General Block Exemption Regulation.

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<sup>7</sup> Commission communication “A digital decade for Children and youth, the new European strategy for Better Internet for Kids” COM (2022)212 final;

**References**

- Council Resolution on the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026 (OJ C 466, 7.12.2022, p. 1)
- Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (OJ L 187, 26.6.2014, p. 1) and successive amendments ('General Block Exemption Regulation' or 'GBER')
- European Media Industry Outlook – SWD (2023) 150 final (Commission Staff Working Document)
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- Council conclusions on building a European Strategy for the Cultural and Creative Industries Ecosystem (2022/C 160/06)
- Council conclusions on cultural and creative crossovers to stimulate innovation, economic sustainability and social inclusion (2015/C 172/04)
- European Council conclusions of 21 July 2020 on the recovery plan and the multiannual financial framework for 2021-2027
- Conclusions on Europe's Media in the Digital Decade: An Action Plan to Support Recovery and Transformation (2021/C 210/01)

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- European Parliament resolution of 18 January 2023 on consumer protection in online video games: a European single market approach (2022/2014 (INI))
- European Parliament resolution of 14 December 2022 on the implementation of the New European Agenda for Culture and the EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations (2022/2047(INI))

**Commission  
communication “A digital  
decade for Children and  
youth, the new European  
strategy for Better Internet  
for Kids” COM (2022)212  
final;**

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Council of the European Union  
General Secretariat

**Brussels, 18 August 2023**

**WK 10411/2023 INIT**

**LIMITE**

**CULT  
AUDIO  
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EMPL  
RECH**

**DIGIT  
IND  
PI  
JEUN  
GENDER**

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## **CONTRIBUTION**

From:	General Secretariat of the Council
To:	Cultural Affairs Committee
Subject:	Draft Council conclusions on enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector (doc.11813/23) - Comments from delegations.

Delegations will find attached comments on the above-mentioned document from CY, CZ, DK, EL, FI, FR, HR, LU, NL, PL, PT, SE, and SK delegations.

**French comments**

**Draft Council conclusions on**

**Enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING:

1. The fundamental role that culture and freedom of creation play for the European Union and its citizens as a key tool in enhancing the European identity, strengthening our democracies and values, and triggering sustainable, diverse and inclusive development, and as a driver for growth and employment<sup>1</sup>;
2. The heterogeneity of the set of subsectors that make up the creative and cultural industries, which share common elements, but also have their own particularities and realities;
3. The great potential that the video games sector has for growth and innovation within the framework of the digital transition adopted by the European Union;

---

<sup>1</sup> The ICC sector represents an economic weight of 3.95% of the EU value added (EUR 477 billion), employs 8.02 million people and involves 1.2 million businesses, according to 'Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard. Thematic analysis. Cultural and Creative Industries. April 2022' [https://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic\\_analysis/scoreboard\\_thematic\\_analysis\\_culture.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic_analysis/scoreboard_thematic_analysis_culture.pdf)



## TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THAT:

4. The video games sector is an integral part of the ecosystem of cultural and creative industries. It interacts with other sectors and has great potential to create and transmit cultural and artistic works and highlight the value of the richness of European creation, heritage and history, as well as having a significant impact in terms of job creation and making a significant contribution to GDP;
5. While Europe has established itself as one of the world's leading markets for video games, with an estimated value of EUR 23.48 billion in 2022, and plays a key role in all stages of their development (from script to distribution), there is a lack of detailed, harmonised and sector-specific data;
6. The European video game industry consists mainly of small and micro enterprises<sup>2</sup> that are facing strong international competition. To uphold European strategic autonomy it appears necessary to support and stimulate the competitiveness and independence of European video games companies and to foster the emergence of medium-sized and large enterprises.;
7. While the European video game market is growing in absolute terms<sup>3</sup>, its share of the global market is indeed gradually shrinking<sup>4</sup>. In the European Union, video game users are found in all age segments, but especially in the youngest<sup>5</sup>;
8. Many Member States and the European Union have created aid schemes to the benefit of the sector;
9. Despite the efforts made in terms of the accurate, equal and non-stereotypical representation of women in video games, there is significant underrepresentation and inequality in all positions in the value chain<sup>6</sup>;

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<sup>2</sup> 80% of the 4 600 existing companies have fewer than ten employees.

<sup>3</sup> It reached EUR 179 billion in revenue in 2022, which represents an annual growth of 5.4%.

<sup>4</sup> It is expected to account for 7.3% in 2025, compared to 8.7% in 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Although the average age of players is 31, more than 70% of young Europeans between 6 and 24 years of age are video game users.

<sup>6</sup> Of the 125 million people who use video games, women represent 47.8%, but this figure drops to around 22% when it comes to women working in the sector.

10. The video game industry has a wide value chain in which intellectual property and territoriality play a fundamental role, which should be protected, and in which creativity, innovation and technological development flourish. The creation of video games requires the application of advanced technologies that contribute to the development of new business models which will foster cultural and creative growth, as well as the development of other policy areas and virtual worlds;
11. The European Union Work Plan for Culture for the period 2023-2026 includes ‘Enhancing of the cultural and creative dimension of the video games sector in Europe’ as one of the main actions to be carried out in the context of the priority area ‘Artists and cultural professionals: empowering the cultural and creative sectors’;

INVITES MEMBER STATES TO:

12. Explore all possible options for the implementation of support frameworks aimed at both promoting the creative and cultural dimension of video games and preserving them as part of Europe’s cultural heritage, and fostering innovation, competitiveness and independence;
13. Consider supporting, in cooperation with the video games industry, initiatives aimed at the preservation of European video games as a cultural asset, taking into account existing projects and in cooperation with national video game museums and archives;

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

14. Consider supporting the video game sector's capacities for the independent creation, production, distribution and showcasing of works, as strategic European cultural assets;
15. Improve information on the video game sector by standardising data and statistics, inter alia through the possible creation of a European Video Game Observatory, in collaboration with the video game industry;
16. Promote talent and initiatives aimed at providing specialised training in professions linked to the video games industry, focusing on the cultural, creative, technical, legal and economic particularities of these professions as well as the applicable intellectual property framework, and improve their integration in the European job market ;
17. Promote initiatives aimed at protecting users, in particular measures to increase people's sensitivity and provide information on and support for the use of tools that can improve the protection of young people, in particular minors;
18. Share information and good practices, in particular relating to public aid supporting the production, promotion and distribution of video games, to access to finance, and to effective measures to contribute to equality and diversity, as well as to the sustainable development of the video games sector;
19. Further promote equality in the video games sector

**by implementing actions to raise awareness in** the video game industry **regarding equality, diversity and the fight against** creating, perpetuating or exacerbating stereotypes, in particular about gender;

INVITES THE COMMISSION, WITHIN ITS AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

20. Explore the possibility of proposing a European video game strategy that promotes European values and cultural diversity, and contributes to the development of the economic, social, educational, cultural and innovative potential of the video game sector while consolidating its leadership in the global video game market, taking into account the need to :

20. Encourage cross-border co-productions of video games between Member States, as well as collaborations with other cultural industries and other sectors of the European economy, in order to exploit the opportunities and synergies offered by cooperation in terms of funding, resources and expertise, and to improve competitiveness and international standing;
21. Support and stimulate the competitiveness and independence of European video games sector companies, in particular SMEs, through a review of the application of state aid rules, in particular, where appropriate, the General Block Exemption Regulation;
22. Strengthen support to video games through the appropriate European programmes such as Europe Creative and Horizon Europe as well as InvestEU to foster both creation, innovation, the growth of the companies in the sector and emergence of medium-sized and large enterprises;
23. Reflect on how the abovementioned supporting systems could strike a fair balance between public support and increased private investments, and on conditions allowing for the preservation of intellectual property rights by the European companies that took part in their creation, notably in order to avoid predatory takeovers;
24. Include concrete actions to foster gender balance in the video games sector, through the targeted promotion of adequate scientific and creative training at all ages, including but not limited to programmes (such as mentorship) fostering career entry and career development, plans to tackle gender-based violence, to guarantee equal pay and to promote inclusive professional environments

**References**

- Council Resolution on the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026 (OJ C 466, 7.12.2022, p. 1)
- Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (OJ L 187, 26.6.2014, p. 1) and successive amendments ('General Block Exemption Regulation' or 'GBER')
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  - European Parliament resolution of 18 January 2023 on consumer protection in online video games: a European single market approach (2022/2014 (INI))
  - European Parliament resolution of 14 December 2022 on the implementation of the New European Agenda for Culture and the EU Strategy for International Cultural Relations (2022/2047(INI))
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## **CROATIA COMMENTS**

Croatia supports the draft Council Conclusions on enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector. ES Presidency's priorities align with our commitment to this important topic, and you can count on our full support. As we move forward, we stand ready to contribute constructively to further refining the text. Therefore, we would like to offer our initial comments and suggestions for your consideration:

We would like to suggest a new point that would further emphasize the cultural and creative dimension in a new point that would state: **"Stimulate collaborations between video game developers and various cultural institutions and creative sectors, encompassing cinema, animation, museums, galleries, and libraries. This synergy will enhance the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector while preserving and promoting European cultural heritage."**

Regarding para 4, at the end of the first sentence, we would suggest adding the following **"including in particular the wider audiovisual sector."** Further, regarding the last sentence of para 4, we suggest adding the words **"and diversity"** after the word "richness."

We support para 20 as drafted, including in particular the need to take a serious look at the GBER. The exclusion of the video games sector from GBER creates a barrier to the growth of the sector, especially for smaller countries, and is not coherent with the ever more evident integration of the video games sector with the wider audiovisual sector.

Regarding para 11 we suggest adding a new sentence at the end: **"Additionally, consider potential contributions from distribution platforms to the production of video games that promote European values and cultural diversity."**

## **CY COMMENTS**

### **General comments**

Cyprus welcomes the discussions on the cultural and creative dimension of the EU video games sector. Acknowledging the share of the video games industry in ICC market, it is important to focus on the key aspects that need to be tackled in order to face the challenges, exploit the opportunities, support the industries and people involved and boost the sector.

We consider this text as a good base for discussions, which can be further enriched in certain points. For example, we consider that the role of education and training is important to be highlighted in the text. Education and training, and in particular education in STEM, have been recognized as of significant importance in helping people acquire necessary skills and competences for the video games industries. In addition, the cultural dimension of the video games should be also related to shared values, like democracy, equality, dignity and human rights. Further to that, the dimension of employment should be further emphasized in the text, since it is a key component of the sector. Video games are related to new jobs and can absorb a significant number to young people in the labour market.

In the invitations to the MS and Commission, a reference to incentives for brain gain is good to be mentioned. Investments in young talents can contribute positively in strengthening the eu video games businesses and in developing a competitive and advanced video games sector in the EU.



**Draft Council conclusions on**

**Enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING:

1. The fundamental role that culture plays for the European Union and its citizens as a key tool in enhancing the European identity, strengthening our democracies and values, and triggering sustainable, diverse and inclusive development, and as a driver for growth and employment<sup>1</sup>;
2. The heterogeneity of the set of subsectors that make up the creative and cultural industries, which share common elements, but also have their own particularities and realities;
3. The great potential that the video games sector has for growth and innovation within the framework of the digital transition adopted by the European Union;

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<sup>1</sup> The ICC sector represents an economic weight of 3.95% of the EU value added (EUR 477 billion), employs 8.02 million people and involves 1.2 million businesses, according to 'Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard. Thematic analysis. Cultural and Creative Industries. April 2022' [https://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic\\_analysis/scoreboard\\_thematic\\_analysis\\_culture.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic_analysis/scoreboard_thematic_analysis_culture.pdf)

## TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THAT:

4. The video games sector is an integral part of the ecosystem of cultural and creative industries. It interacts with other sectors and has great potential to transmit cultural content and highlight the value of the richness of European creation, heritage and history, as well as having a significant impact in terms of job creation, employment and making a significant contribution to GDP;
5. While Europe has established itself as one of the world's leading markets for video games, with an estimated value of EUR 23.48 billion in 2022, and plays a key role in all stages of their development (from script to distribution), there is a lack of detailed, harmonised and sector-specific data;
6. The European video game industry consists mainly of small and micro enterprises<sup>2</sup>, which limits the international competitiveness of the sector;
7. While the European video game market is growing in absolute terms<sup>3</sup>, its share of the global market is gradually shrinking<sup>4</sup>. In the European Union, video game users are found in all age segments, but especially in the youngest<sup>5</sup>;
8. Despite the efforts made in terms of the accurate, equal and non-stereotypical representation of women in video games, there is significant inequality in all positions in the value chain<sup>6</sup>;

---

<sup>2</sup> 80% of the 4 600 existing companies have fewer than ten employees.

<sup>3</sup> It reached EUR 179 billion in revenue in 2022, which represents an annual growth of 5.4%.

<sup>4</sup> It is expected to account for 7.3% in 2025, compared to 8.7% in 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Although the average age of players is 31, more than 70% of young Europeans between 6 and 24 years of age are video game users.

<sup>6</sup> Of the 125 million people who use video games, women represent 47.8%, but this figure drops to around 22% when it comes to women working in the sector.

9. The video game industry has a wide value chain in which intellectual property plays a fundamental role and in which talent, creativity, innovation and technological development flourish. The creation of video games requires the application of advanced technologies that contribute to the development of new business models which will foster cultural and creative growth, as well as the development of other policy areas, including education and training, and virtual worlds;
10. The European Union Work Plan for Culture for the period 2023-2026 includes ‘Enhancing of the cultural and creative dimension of the video games sector in Europe’ as one of the main actions to be carried out in the context of the priority area ‘Artists and cultural professionals: empowering the cultural and creative sectors’;

INVITES MEMBER STATES TO:

11. Explore all possible options for the implementation of support frameworks aimed at promoting the creative and cultural dimension of video games and preserving them as part of Europe’s cultural heritage;
12. Share information and good practices, in particular relating to public aid supporting the production, promotion and distribution of video games, to access to finance, and to effective measures to contribute to equality, inclusiveness and diversity, as well as to the sustainable development of the video games sector;
13. Consider supporting, in cooperation with the video games industry, initiatives aimed at the preservation of European video games as a cultural asset, taking into account existing projects and in cooperation with national video game museums and archives;

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

14. **Improve information on the video game sector by standardising data and statistics**, inter alia through the possible creation of a **European Video Game Observatory**, in collaboration with the video game industry;
15. Develop measures to attract young talents in the video games industry, by increasing awareness, creating networks and bringing video games enterprises closer to education and training.
16. **Promote talent and initiatives** aimed at providing **specialised training in professions** linked to the video games industry, focusing on the cultural, creative, technical, legal and economic particularities of these professions as well as the applicable intellectual property framework;
17. Promote initiatives aimed at **protecting users, in particular measures to increase people's awareness and sensitivity** and provide information on and support for the use of tools that can improve the protection of young people, in particular young women and minors;

INVITES THE COMMISSION, WITHIN ITS AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

18. Explore the **possibility of proposing a European video game strategy** that promotes European values and cultural diversity, and contributes to the development of the economic, social, educational, cultural and innovative potential of the video game sector while consolidating its leadership in the global video game market;
19. **Further promote equality in the video games sector** and analyse the feasibility of developing **an action plan to ensure gender balance** at all stages of development of the video game industry as well as avoid creating, perpetuating or exacerbating stereotypes, in particular about gender;

20. Encourage cross-border co-productions of video games between Member States, as well as collaborations with other cultural industries and other sectors of the European economy, in order to exploit the opportunities and synergies offered by cooperation in terms of funding, resources and expertise, and to improve competitiveness and international standing;
21. Support and stimulate the competitiveness of European video games sector companies, in particular SMEs, through a review of the application of state aid rules, in particular, where appropriate, the General Block Exemption Regulation.

**References**

- Council Resolution on the EU Work Plan for Culture 2023-2026 (OJ C 466, 7.12.2022, p. 1)
- Commission Regulation (EU) No 651/2014 of 17 June 2014 declaring certain categories of aid compatible with the internal market in application of Articles 107 and 108 of the Treaty (OJ L 187, 26.6.2014, p. 1) and successive amendments ('General Block Exemption Regulation' or 'GBER')
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  - European Parliament resolution of 18 January 2023 on consumer protection in online video games: a European single market approach (2022/2014 (INI))
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ANNEX

**Draft Council conclusions on**

**Enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector**

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

RECALLING:

1. The fundamental role that culture plays for the European Union and its citizens as a key tool in enhancing the European identity, strengthening our democracies and values, and triggering sustainable, diverse and inclusive development, and as a driver for growth and employment<sup>1</sup>;
2. The heterogeneity of the set of subsectors that make up the creative and cultural industries, which share common elements, but also have their own particularities and realities;
3. The great potential that the video games sector has for growth and innovation within the framework of the digital transition adopted by the European Union;

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<sup>1</sup> The ICC sector represents an economic weight of 3.95% of the EU value added (EUR 477 billion), employs 8.02 million people and involves 1.2 million businesses, according to 'Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard. Thematic analysis. Cultural and Creative Industries. April 2022' [https://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic\\_analysis/scoreboard\\_thematic\\_analysis\\_culture.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic_analysis/scoreboard_thematic_analysis_culture.pdf)



## TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THAT:

4. The video games sector is an integral part of the ecosystem of cultural and creative industries. It interacts with other sectors and has great potential to transmit cultural content and highlight the value of the richness of European creation, heritage and history, as well as having a significant impact in terms of job creation and making a significant contribution to GDP;
5. While Europe has established itself as one of the world's leading markets for video games, with an estimated value of EUR 23.48 billion in 2022, and plays a key role in all stages of their development (from script to distribution), there is a lack of detailed, harmonised and sector-specific data;
6. The European video game industry consists mainly of small and micro enterprises<sup>2</sup>, which limits the international competitiveness of the sector;
7. While the European video game market is growing in absolute terms<sup>3</sup>, its share of the global market is gradually shrinking<sup>4</sup>. In the European Union, video game users are found in all age segments, but especially in the youngest<sup>5</sup>;
8. Despite the efforts made in terms of the accurate, equal and non-stereotypical representation of women and other under-represented groups in video games, there is significant inequality in all positions in the value chain<sup>6</sup>;

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<sup>2</sup> 80% of the 4 600 existing companies have fewer than ten employees.

<sup>3</sup> It reached EUR 179 billion in revenue in 2022, which represents an annual growth of 5.4%.

<sup>4</sup> It is expected to account for 7.3% in 2025, compared to 8.7% in 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Although the average age of players is 31, more than 70% of young Europeans between 6 and 24 years of age are video game users.

<sup>6</sup> Of the 125 million people who use video games, women represent 47.8%, but this figure drops to around 22% when it comes to women working in the sector.

9. The video game industry has a wide value chain in which intellectual property plays a fundamental role and in which creativity, innovation and technological development flourish.
0. The creation of video games requires the application of advanced technologies that contribute to the development of new business models which will foster cultural and creative growth, as well as the development of other policy areas and virtual worlds;
10. The European Union Work Plan for Culture for the period 2023-2026 includes ‘Enhancing of the cultural and creative dimension of the video games sector in Europe’ as one of the main actions to be carried out in the context of the priority area ‘Artists and cultural professionals: empowering the cultural and creative sectors’;

INVITES MEMBER STATES TO:

11. Explore all possible options for the implementation of support frameworks aimed at promoting the creative and cultural dimension of video games, fostering IP retention and protection and preserving video games as part of Europe’s cultural heritage;
12. Share information and good practices, in particular relating to public aid supporting the development, production, promotion and distribution of video games, to access to finance, and to effective measures to contribute to equality and diversity, as well as to the sustainable development of the video games sector;
13. Consider supporting, in cooperation with the video games industry, initiatives aimed at the preservation of European video games as a cultural asset, taking into account existing projects and in cooperation with national video game museums and archives;

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

14. Improve information on the video game sector by standardising data and statistics, inter alia through the possible creation of a European Video Game Observatory, in collaboration with the video game industry and Member States;
15. Promote talent and initiatives aimed at providing specialised training in professions linked to the video games industry, focusing on the cultural, creative, technical, legal and economic particularities of these professions as well as the applicable intellectual property framework;
16. Promote initiatives aimed at protecting users, in particular measures to increase people's sensitivity and provide information on and support for the use of tools that can improve the protection of young people, in particular minors;

INVITES THE COMMISSION, WITHIN ITS AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

17. Explore the possibility of proposing a European video game strategy that promotes European values and cultural diversity, and contributes to the development of the economic, social, educational, cultural and innovative potential of the video game sector while consolidating its leadership in the global video game market;
18. Further promote equality in the video games sector and analyse the feasibility of developing an action plan to ensure gender balance and diverse representativeness at all stages of development of the video game industry as well as avoid creating, perpetuating or exacerbating stereotypes, in particular about gender;

19. Encourage cross-border co-productions of video games between Member States, as well as collaborations with other cultural industries and other sectors of the European economy, in order to exploit the opportunities and synergies offered by cooperation in terms of funding, resources and expertise, and to improve competitiveness and international standing;
20. Support and stimulate the competitiveness of independent European video games sector companies, in particular SMEs, through a review of the application of state aid rules, in particular, where appropriate, the General Block Exemption Regulation.

**References**

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**Draft Council conclusions on**

**Enhancing the cultural and creative dimension of the European video games sector**

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RECALLING:

1. The fundamental role that culture plays for the European Union and its citizens as a key tool in enhancing the European identity, strengthening our democracies and values, and triggering sustainable, diverse and inclusive development, and as a driver for growth and employment<sup>1</sup>;
2. The heterogeneity of the set of subsectors that make up the creative and cultural industries, which share common elements, but also have their own particularities and realities;
3. The great potential that the video games sector has for growth and innovation within the framework of the digital transition adopted by the European Union;

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<sup>1</sup> The ICC sector represents an economic weight of 3.95% of the EU value added (EUR 477 billion), employs 8.02 million people and involves 1.2 million businesses, according to 'Recovery and Resilience Scoreboard. Thematic analysis. Cultural and Creative Industries. April 2022' [https://ec.europa.eu/economy\\_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic\\_analysis/scoreboard\\_thematic\\_analysis\\_culture.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/economy_finance/recovery-and-resilience-scoreboard/assets/thematic_analysis/scoreboard_thematic_analysis_culture.pdf)

## TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THAT:

4. The video games sector is an integral part of the ecosystem of cultural and creative industries. It interacts with other sectors and has great potential to transmit cultural content and highlight the value of the richness of European creation, heritage and history, as well as having a significant impact in terms of job creation and making a significant contribution to GDP;
5. While Europe has established itself as one of the world's leading markets for video games, with an estimated value of EUR 23.48 billion in 2022, and plays a key role in all stages of their development (from script to distribution), there is a lack of detailed, harmonised and sector-specific data;
6. The European video game industry consists mainly of small and micro enterprises<sup>2</sup>, which limits the international competitiveness of the sector;
7. While the European video game market is growing in absolute terms<sup>3</sup>, its share of the global market is gradually shrinking<sup>4</sup>. In the European Union, video game users are found in all age segments, but especially in the youngest<sup>5</sup>;
8. Despite the efforts made in terms of the accurate, equal and non-stereotypical representation of women in video games, there is significant inequality in all positions in the value chain<sup>6</sup>;

---

<sup>2</sup> 80% of the 4 600 existing companies have fewer than ten employees.

<sup>3</sup> It reached EUR 179 billion in revenue in 2022, which represents an annual growth of 5.4%.

<sup>4</sup> It is expected to account for 7.3% in 2025, compared to 8.7% in 2017.

<sup>5</sup> Although the average age of players is 31, more than 70% of young Europeans between 6 and 24 years of age are video game users.

<sup>6</sup> Of the 125 million people who use video games, women represent 47.8%, but this figure drops to around 22% when it comes to women working in the sector.



9. The video game industry has a wide value chain in which intellectual property plays a fundamental role and in which creativity, innovation and technological development flourish. The creation of video games requires the application of advanced technologies that contribute to the development of new business models which will foster cultural and creative growth, as well as the development of other policy areas and virtual worlds;
10. The European Union Work Plan for Culture for the period 2023-2026 includes ‘Enhancing of the cultural and creative dimension of the video games sector in Europe’ as one of the main actions to be carried out in the context of the priority area ‘Artists and cultural professionals: empowering the cultural and creative sectors’;

INVITES MEMBER STATES TO:

11. Explore all possible options for the implementation of support frameworks aimed at promoting the creative and cultural dimension of video games and preserving them as part of Europe’s cultural heritage;
12. Share information and good practices, in particular relating to public aid supporting the production, promotion and distribution of video games, to access to finance, and to effective measures to contribute to equality and diversity, as well as to the sustainable development of the video games sector;
13. Consider supporting, in cooperation with the video games industry, initiatives aimed at the preservation of European video games as a cultural asset, taking into account existing projects and in cooperation with national video game museums and archives;

INVITES THE MEMBER STATES AND THE COMMISSION, WITHIN THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

14. Improve information on the video game sector by standardising data and statistics, inter alia through the possible creation of a European Video Game Observatory, in collaboration with the video game industry;
15. Facilitate the sector in promoting talent and initiatives aimed at providing specialised training in professions linked to the video games industry, focusing on the cultural, creative, technical, legal and economic particularities of these professions as well as the applicable intellectual property framework;
16. Facilitate the sector in promoting initiatives aimed at protecting users, in particular measures to increase people's sensitivity and provide information on and support for the use of tools that can improve the protection of young people, in particular minors;

INVITES THE COMMISSION, WITHIN ITS AREAS OF COMPETENCE, TO:

17. Explore the possibility of proposing a European video game strategy that promotes European values and cultural diversity, and contributes to the development of the economic, social, educational, cultural and innovative potential of the video game sector while consolidating its leadership in the global video game market;
18. Further promote equality in the video games sector and analyse the feasibility of developing an action plan to ensure gender balance at all stages of development of the video game industry as well as avoid creating, perpetuating or exacerbating stereotypes, in particular about gender;

19. Encourage cross-border co-productions of video games between Member States, as well as collaborations with other cultural industries and other sectors of the European economy, in order to exploit the opportunities and synergies offered by cooperation in terms of funding, resources and expertise, and to improve competitiveness and international standing;
20. Support and stimulate the competitiveness of European video games sector companies, in particular SMEs, through a review of the application of state aid rules, in particular, where appropriate, the General Block Exemption Regulation.

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