(English version)

Question for written answer E-000032/25
to the Commission
Catherine Griset (PfE)
(7 January 2025)

Subject: Boosting the European video game industry

In 2022, the turnover from video games in Europe was EUR 24.5 billion. There are 110 000 jobs in the sector, including around 20 000 in France ([1]).

However, the industry is in danger:

— Firstly, European video game developers are being bought out by foreign companies. For example, Quantic Dream, a French company, was acquired by the Chinese firm NetEase. Another French company, Ubisoft, might also be acquired by China's Tencent;

— Secondly, Europe has fallen behind in the development of generative artificial intelligence, which could greatly boost the creation of video games at a reduced cost.

Despite these challenges, European Union aid for our video game industry is modest (EUR 6 million for video games via the MEDIA strand of the Creative Europe programme in 2022).

1. What percentage of video games purchased on the EU market are European?

2. Will the Commission make the granting of EU aid conditional on companies maintaining studios in Europe?

3. Does the Commission intend to create a European database to train generative artificial intelligence for video games?

Submitted: 7.1.2025

Answer given by Executive Vice-President Virkkunen on behalf of the European Commission
(26 February 2025)

The video games market is global, where most commercially released video games (with few exceptions) become available to all potential customers worldwide.

Due to limited aggregated data available across geographies, it is difficult to establish the exact percentage of EU consumers' spending for the European productions as well as the revenues that an EU video games' company would generate on the EU market.

The Commission acknowledges the importance of a strong and competitive video game industry within the EU.

Funding under the Creative Europe programme's Video Games development calls for proposals is only available to companies established in a country participating fully in the MEDIA strand and owned directly or indirectly, wholly or by majority participation, by nationals from such countries ([1]).

In addition, Member States can provide support to the video games industry under EU State aid rules. The Commission has approved, under Article 107(3)(d) of the TFEU, aid schemes for video games which serve a cultural or educational purpose in several Member States (including France ([2])).

The Commission recognises the transformative potential of generative artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, including their application in the video game sector.

While there are currently no specific plans to create a dedicated European database for training generative AI models for video games, video games companies, just like other EU Small and medium-sized enterprises, can benefit from existing EU initiatives aimed at strengthening their AI capabilities ([3]).

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1 [1]https://www.robert-schuman.eu/en/european-issues/724-the-video-games-industry-in-europe-current-situation-issues-and-prospects

([1]) https://culture.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/2024-10/2025-creative-europe-annual-work-programme-C%282024%296503%2018-09-2024.pdf

([2]) See, for example, Commission Decision C(2024) 6525 final of 13 September 2024 in state aid case SA.115028 (2024/N) — France, Fonds d'aides sélectives à la création de jeux vidéo — Prolongation de l'aide d'État SA.60845 (2021/N), OJ C/2024/6002, 8.10.2024, p. 1: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/FR/TXT/HTML/?uri=OJ:C_202406002

([3]) For example, the GenAI4EU initiative, part of the AI innovation package, aims to stimulate the uptake of generative AI across the EU's fourteen strategic industrial ecosystems, including virtual worlds and digital twins, which are essential for creating immersive virtual environments like the ones used in video games.