



STOP DESTROYING VIDEOGAMES

As one of the European Union's key participatory democracy instruments, the European citizens' initiative (ECI) enables citizens to invite the European Commission to propose a new legal act in an area where the Commission has the power to act. Since its introduction, the ECI has strengthened citizens' direct involvement in shaping Union policies, including in such areas as fundamental rights and consumers' rights.

The Stop Destroying Videogames initiative forms part of this democratic process, reflecting citizens' concerns about the preservation of future video games and the possibility for consumers to continue playing the games they have paid for.



WHAT ARE THE INITIATIVE'S GOALS?

This initiative calls on the European Commission to propose legislation that would:

- require publishers that sell or license video games to leave games in a functional (playable) state, after commercial support ends.
- prevent **remote disabling of video games** unless a reasonable solution is provided.



ENGAGEMENT

The initiative gathered **1,294,188 verified statements of support**, exceeding the required threshold of one million signatures and making it the **14th successful European citizens' initiative**.

Signatures were collected across the EU, with national thresholds reached in **24 Member States**, demonstrating broad public support for EU-level action.

COMMISSION'S REPLY AND NEXT STEPS

Existing EU consumer law already provides for important safeguards protecting the economic interests of consumers (see next page).

In its reply to the ECI, the Commission considers that it cannot propose a legal obligation to keep video games playable after they stop being provided commercially.

However, to address players' concerns, the Commission will:

- initiate, by end 2026, **an exchange with the video game industry and consumer representatives** with the aim to draw up an industry code of conduct on managing video games' 'end of life'.
- work with consumer organisations and authorities to **raise awareness about the applicable consumers' rights**, including safeguards protecting their interests.

Active enforcement of the existing consumer rights can also incentivise the providers to offer video games with longer lifespans.



CURRENT LEGISLATION AND EU FRAMEWORK

Existing EU consumer law already provides for important safeguards protecting the economic interests of consumers.

The Consumer Rights Directive requires traders to **provide clear information** on:

- the main characteristics,
- functionality,
- contractual conditions of digital content and digital services.

This way, consumers can make informed decisions on their purchases.

The Digital Content and Digital Services Directive (Directive (EU) 2019/770), which applies from 1 January 2022, **provides consumers with remedies** when the content or service provided does not conform with the contract and what consumers could reasonably expect. Consumers may be entitled to proportionate refund of their purchases.

The Commission will present a report on the application of Directive (EU) 2019/770 by the end of 2026, covering also its application to the discontinuation of digital content and services.

At the same time, under EU copyright law, rights holders enjoy exclusive rights over their creations. In addition to copyright, other intellectual property rights may also be relevant as they may protect different visual and technological aspects of a video game.

KEY DATES

19 June 2024 Initiative registered



31 July 2024 Signature collection begins



31 July 2025 Signature collection closes



26 January 2026 Initiative submitted to the European Commission



23 February 2026 Meeting between organisers and Commission representatives



16 April 2026 Public hearing in the European Parliament



21 May 2026 Plenary debate in the European Parliament



16 June 2026 European Commission provides its reply



Follow up to Commission reply

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