



GAME MAKERS

of Finland

INSIGHTS OF THE GAME INDUSTRY

NOW AND IN THE FUTURE

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WHO ARE WE



Game Makers of Finland is the world's first union for the people who work in game industry

- Founded officially in December 2017
- Covering around 20 % of the industry employees
- Labor Union with an unemployment fund
- Part of Professional Engineers in Finland / Insinööriliitto

Mission & Vision

- Develop, support and assist everyone in the game industry
- Promote the general well-being, stability and healthy growth
- Add transparency, equality and diversity to the industry

Achievements

- Created recommendations for the salaries in the industry
- Bringing up issues: working hours, discrimination, crunching, coping, mental health, non-compete agreements, diversity, employer responsibilities
- Salary survey is a yearly study since 2018 (read more www.peliala.fi)

LABOR UNIONS



Why people join unions?

- In Finland, joining a labor/trade union is common because unions protect workers' rights and negotiate working conditions with employers
- Unions help to ensure fair wages, reasonable working hours and safe working environments
- Many Finns believe that working together is more effective than acting alone (mass force)
- 80 different unions

Main tasks:

- Negotiate collective agreements with employer organizations (covering things like salary, holidays, and working hours)
- Support members in conflicts or problems at work (e.g. disputes with an employer)
- Offer training and advice on work-related matters
- Provide unemployment security through unemployment fund
- Influence legislation and policy
- Assist and train employee representatives

Three Trade Union Confederations

- Each represents different groups of employees based on their profession, level of education, and type of work
 - SAK – The Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions
 - STTK – The Finnish Confederation of Professionals
 - Akava – The Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland

HIGHLIGHTS



Collective agreements

- Labor legislation determines the basic ground rules for working life
- Legislation is complemented by collective agreements, which are more flexible than laws
- They are negotiated on an industry and personnel group-specific basis
- Strong tradition in Finland (160 universally binding = all employers in the contract sector must comply with it)

Lobbying by unions is democratic and transparent

- Influencing it's members' working terms and conditions
- Improve equality and non-discrimination in working life
- It ensures the voice of employees is heard in political and economic decisions that shape working life

It starts at school

- 48 % of employees with upper secondary education belonged to a labor union in 2023
 - 68 % of higher education or research degrees

International Experts

- Unions are also for the international workforce
- An example of a recent study conducted by unions to find out what their situation is and how they can be supported better, link: tinyurl.com/3vbc84yk

BIGGEST UNIONS



Industrial Union (Teollisuusliitto / SAK)

- Sector: Manufacturing industries, including metal, chemical, and wood sectors
- Members: Approximately 200,000
- Unionization Rate: About 63.4%

Trade Union for the Public and Welfare Sectors (JHL / SAK)

- Sector: Public services, including municipal, state, and welfare sectors
- Members: Approximately 165,000
- Unionization Rate: Around 76.7%

Service Union United (PAM / SAK)

- Sector: Private service sectors, including retail, hospitality, cleaning, and security
- Members: Approximately 180,000
- Unionization Rate: About 41.6%

Trade Union of Education in Finland (OAJ / Akava)

- Sector: Education, teachers from early childhood to higher education
- Members: Approximately 114,000
- Unionization Rate: Approximately 90%

Trade Union Pro

- Sector: Private sector professionals in finance, industry, ICT, logistics, and services — including clerical staff, specialists, and some supervisors
- Members: Approximately **110,000 members**

Academic Engineers and Architects in Finland (TEK - Tekniikan akateemiset)

- Sector: University-educated engineers, architects, and technology experts. Most members have a Master of Science (Technology) degree.
- Members: Approximately 80,000 members

Professional Engineers in Finland (Insinööriliitto / Akava)

- Sector: Engineering and technology professionals, mainly working in private sector industries such as manufacturing, IT, R&D, design, and consulting
- Members: Approximately 75,000
- *Special: Game Makers of Finland is part of it*

FINNISH GAME INDUSTRY



Around 4 100 employees and 220 companies

- 30 % are from abroad / 22 % are female
- Turnover over 3 billion euros
 - 98 % comes from the export
 - Larger than movies, tv and music industries together

Industry now: Strong investment on education

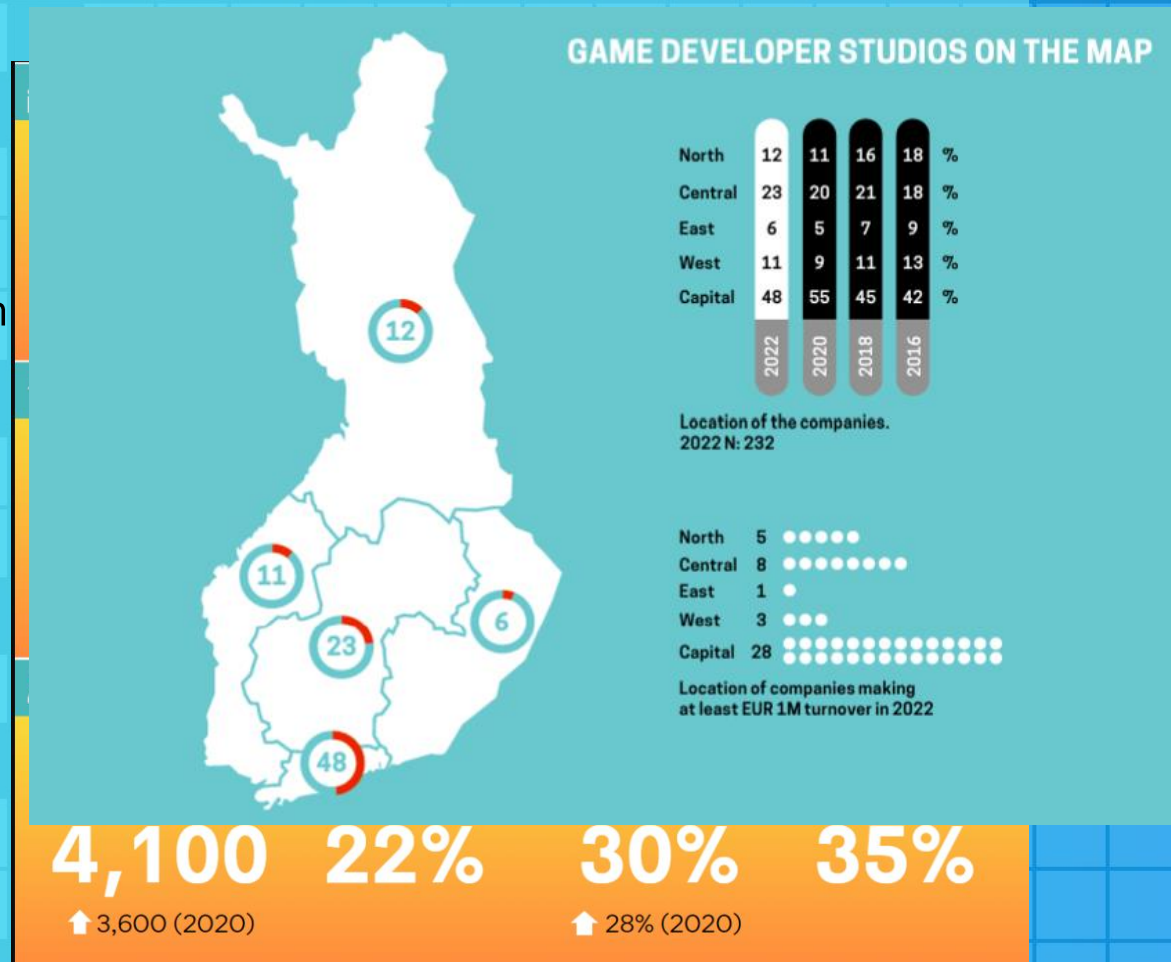
- Building an equal and fair working culture starts from school
 - Around 50 schools in Finland offering games education
- Still modern and new industry with growing problems
 - Dependent on global markets
 - Collective agreements

Challenges

- Lack of senior level employees
- Funding

Strengths

- Community
- Creativity
- Increased focus on business and monetization



SALARY SURVEY RESULTS

A TYPICAL GAME MAKER IS:

- Born in 1991
- Bachelor's degree in computer science
- Full-time job
- Works and lives in the capital area
- Programmer or artist
- Work experience in games 7,5 years
- Salary 4 300 €

Based on the GMoF Salary Survey 2024

- 197 Answers
- 47 Companies
- 62% from Finland
- 38% from abroad

Salary	Average eur/month	Median eur/month	N
All	5054 (4136)	4300 (3790)	185
Male	4995 (4420)	4400 (3900)	117
Female	5388 (3614)	4150 (3300)	54
Others	3757 (3522)	4200 (3620)	11



WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU



For students and job seeking members:

- Feedback on CV, job applications and portfolios
- Salary counselling
- Going through work contracts before signing
- Providing information on workplaces
- Helping to keep an eye out for opportunities
 - "Secret" job openings
- Networking opportunities

For employed members:

- Help in difficult work-life situations
- Peer support in the industry
- Versatile career services (trainings, courses etc.)
- Comprehensive insurances
- *All the above and more...*

www.peliala.fi/en/member



MORE INFO ON

- Work agreements
- Trial Period
- Prohibition of discrimination
- Principal terms of work
- Collective agreements
- Non-competition agreements
- Payment of salary
- Sick days
- Termination of employment contract
- Working hours
- Flexi-work
- Remuneration

- Rest periods
- Variable working time
- Zero-hours contract
- Working time bank
- Provisions
- Annual holiday
- Work certificates
- Important laws
- Financial aid for foreign students
- IPR
- Copyrights
- Recent Law changes and upcoming changes



Link for more
information!

GAMERS ARE CHANGING



Gaming habits are evolving:

- Playing on multiple devices: mobile, console, pc, cloud gaming
- The culture of viewing is growing – Twitch, YouTube, TikTok
- Sociality, community and identity are at the forefront
- Generational change: Generation Z (1997-2012) and Alpha (2013-2024) *value* different things (speed, accessibility, participation in content production)
- Consumer Behavior Change:
 - Emphasis on sustainability, diversity, and ethics
 - Short-term commitment – "drop-in, drop-out" gaming

HOW TO RESPOND

User understanding at the heart of design:

- Player-centricity is not just about surveys, but about observing players and understanding their lives

New roles & new skills:

- Live-ops, community managers, analytics, content design, marketing
- The interface between creative industries and technology – AI, narrative design, soundscapes, usability

Diversity in creators = diversity in games

- The player base is diverse – teams should be too.

Growth of entrepreneurship:

- Freelance & contractor work (panel 10:30)
- Own game projects
- Collaboration models
- Education & continuous learning



THE FUTURE



Trends:

- Integrating AI into design and testing
- Interactive media is increasingly merging with the video and music industries
- Gamification is expanding – learning, well-being, work life

Changing work life:

- More and more remote work, project-based work, collaborations, but also communal workspaces (in many cities in Finland)
- Game industry is not just about what big studios do → It's also about everything you can do here and now

Influence and make a difference:

- Build networks, show up and make an impact: gaming communities, industry events, be active in LinkedIn and other platforms

LESSONS TO LEARN

EMPLOYEE RIGHTS

The rise of workers rights - global phenomenon

- Nintendo workers go on hunger strike to stop the relocation of a factory
-> 1955

Currently ~ 100 unions / organising groups

Positives:

- + Bringing together employees in different companies and sharing their experiences and addressing challenges
- + The emergence of abuses and unfair working conditions
- + Bringing to light issues that can even influence legislation

Negatives:

- Union-busting to weaken the powers of unions



LESSONS TO LEARN

POPCULTURE

Games turn into movies and TV shows

Positives:

- + New business opportunities to studios
- + New jobs and career paths to game makers
- + Bigger audience and new players to the games
- + Cultural appreciation and credibility

Negatives:

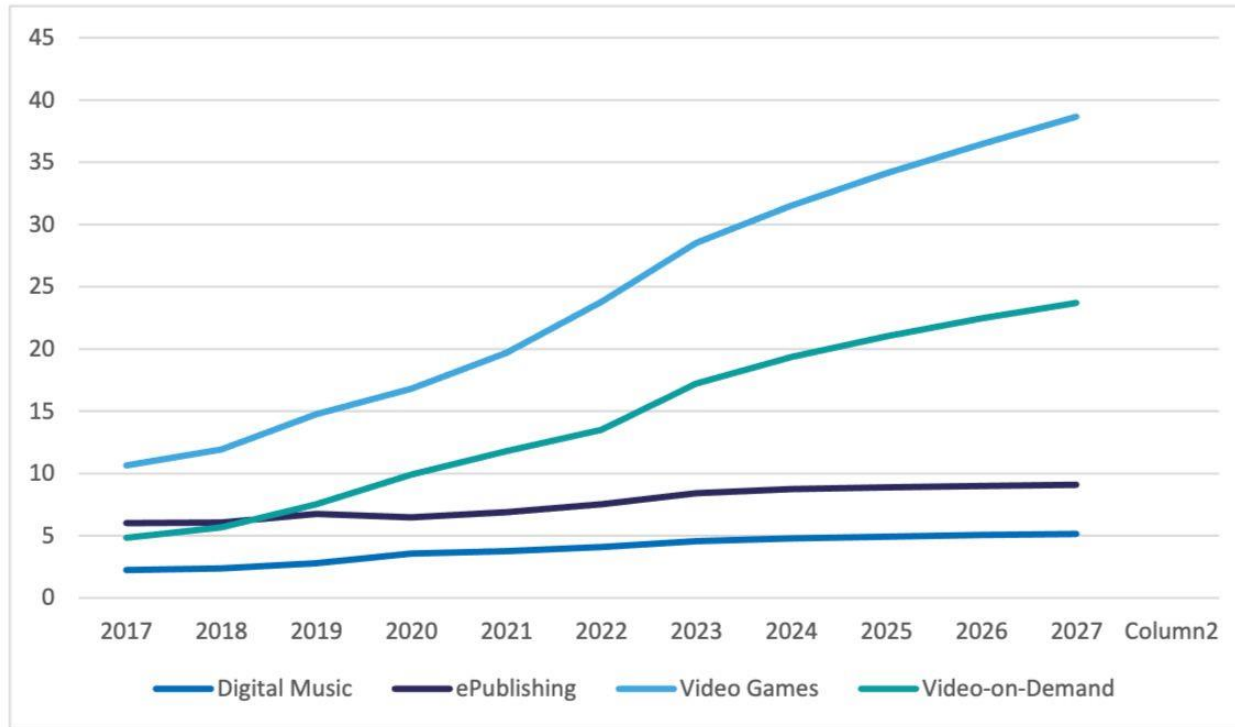
- Copyright and control challenges
- Adaptations may fail
- Interaction may be lost
- External guidance of creativity



LESSONS TO LEARN

POPCULTURE

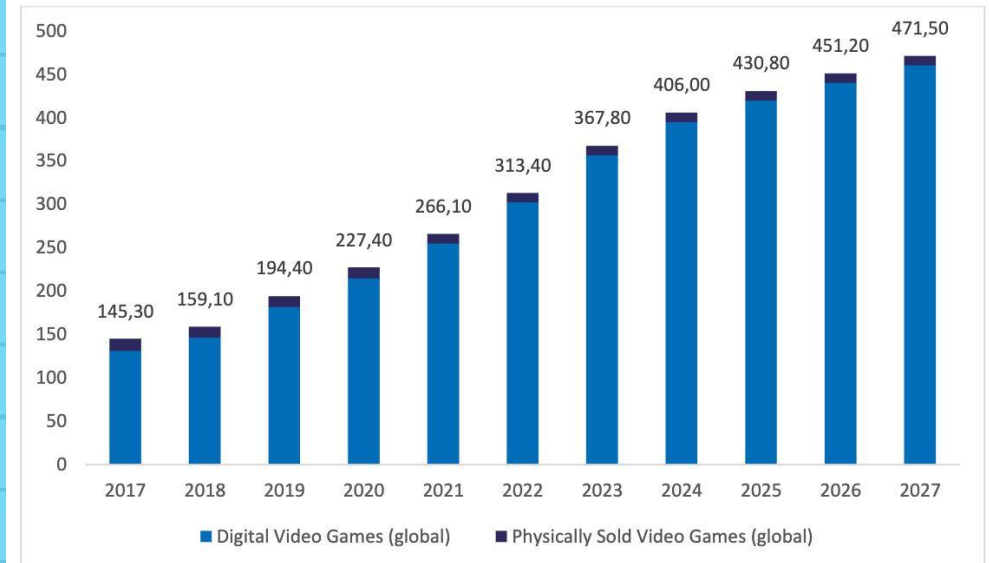
Figure 7: EU-27 digital video games revenues in EUR compared to other digital CCI's (in billion)



Source: Statista

Globally, the video game sector is forecast to have a Compound Annual Growth Rate of 12.46% between 2017-2027, with revenues equating to a total market size of EUR 471.5 billion by 2027.²⁶ Figure 2 outlines global video game revenue growth and based on this we can see a Compound Annual Growth Rate of 5.6% (2020 – 2024).²⁷ According to Statista, the global Video Games market is forecast to continue growing in revenue terms until 2027.

Figure 2: Overall global video games revenues (physical and digital formats, in billion EUR)



Source: Statista

LESSONS TO LEARN

NEW WAYS OF MAKING CONTENT

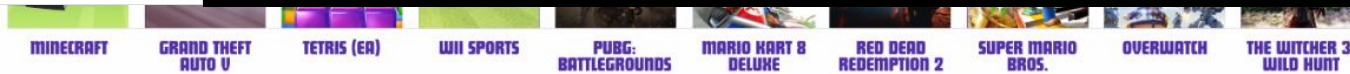
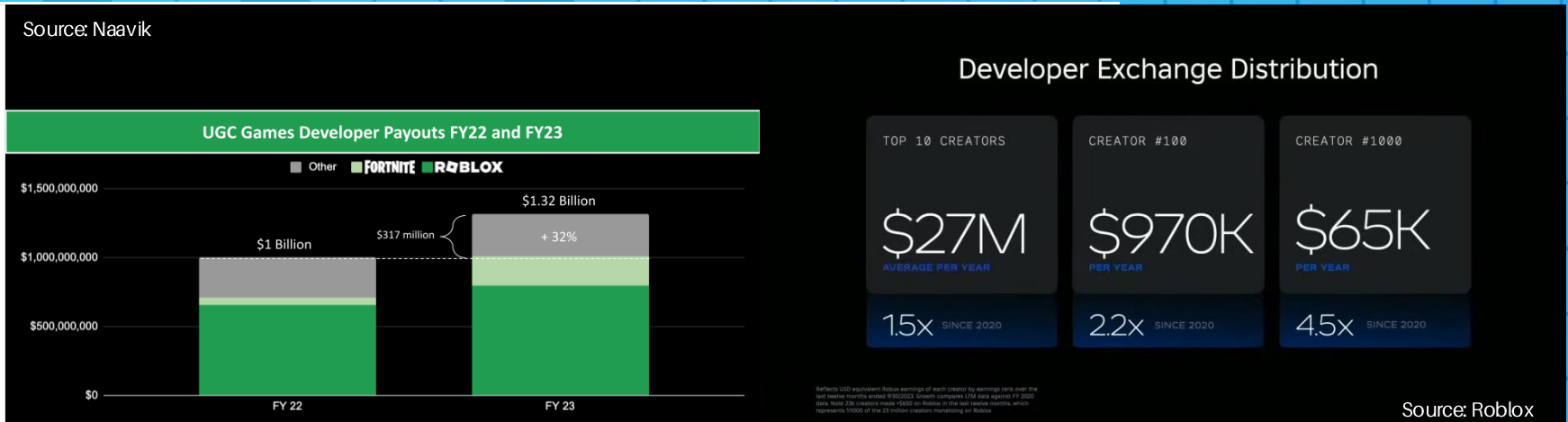
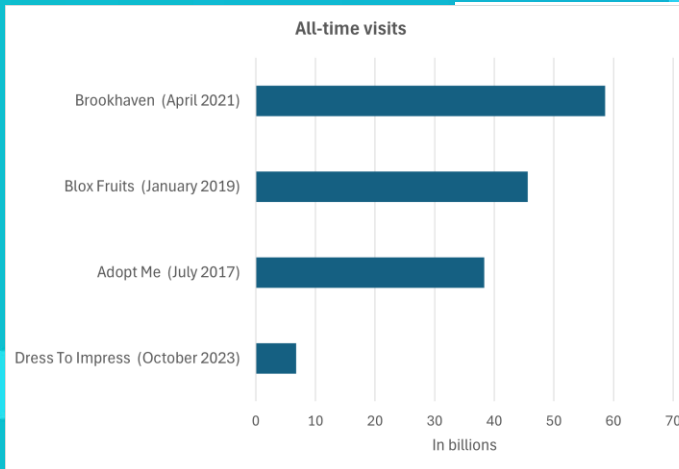
Sandbox games /UGC is here to stay

Positives:

- + S.T.E.A.M = science, technology, engineering, art and math
- + Money
- + No limits = creative opportunities

Negatives:

- Irresponsible
- Unethical
- Uncontrolled
- No limits



LESSONS TO LEARN AI

GenAI is here to stay

- Important to differentiate Generative AI (LLM = Large Language Models) from other AI

Positives:

- + Adapt, learn, control
- + It won't replace game developers, but it will change roles

Negatives:

- Whose work is the LLM using?
 - > Still very unregulated
- How are the creators of the creative work protected?
- Is ethical use possible?
- Currently used to do things like generated art and content when it should be used for menial tasks which can be automated
 - > Discourse among creatives and tech enthusiasts



LESSONS TO LEARN GAMERS

Players are everywhere

Positives:

- + Diversity of game types (don't forget education & health games and gamification)
- + Player has power but also responsibility
- + Analytics is the game maker's superpower

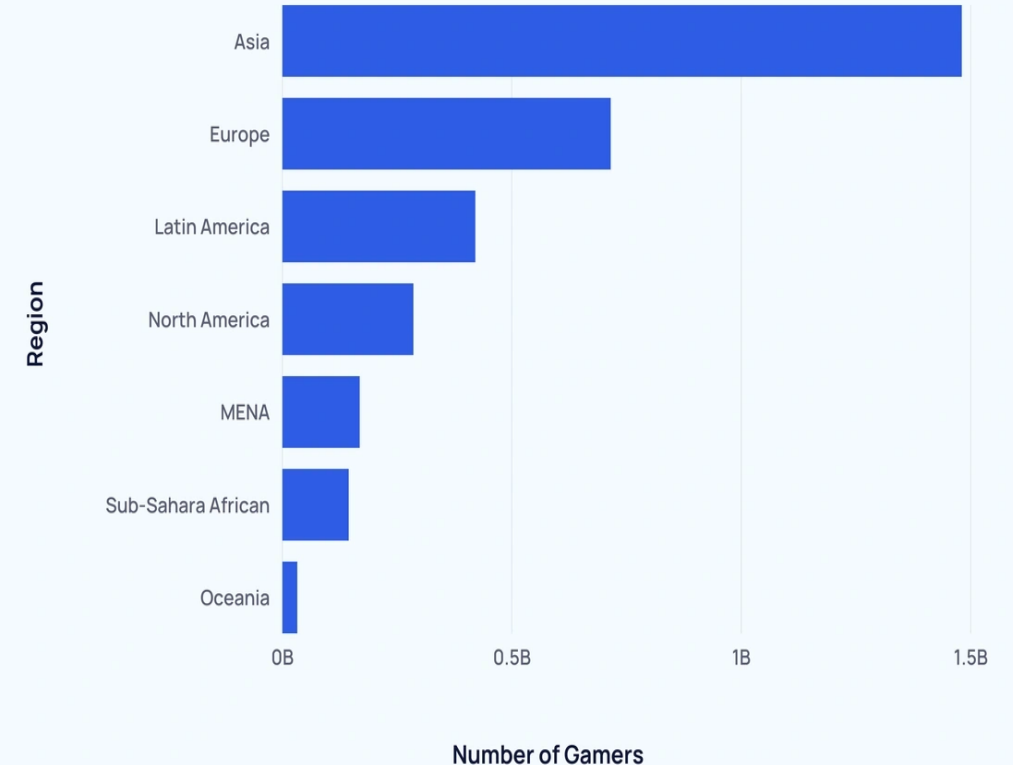
Negatives:

- Accessibility & platforms
- Toxic behaviour and harassment
- Piracy and unwillingness to pay

Same but different: eSports

2025

Gamers By Region



Source: Exploding topics

LESSONS TO LEARN GAMERS

Responsible Gameplay - raising the next generation

Positives:

- + PEGI
- + Awareness of in-game purchases
- + Support and supervise

Negatives:

- Cyber threats
- Unawareness



CONCLUSION

- The game industry is competitive but still growing – especially in the areas of mobile, hybrid growth and new technologies
- Job descriptions are changing: the transformation of work also affects the game industry, but at the same time it creates new opportunities
- Small projects can lead to big opportunities – don't underestimate your own projects
- While the world is changing rapidly, one thing remains the same: games need creators – and you can be one of them
- The future doesn't just happen to us. We build it, one game at a time

Sources:

- <https://www.videogameseurope.eu/>
- <https://naavik.co/>
- <https://www.statista.com/>
- <https://romonitorstats.com/>
- <https://kotaku.com/>
- <https://explodingtopics.com/>
- <https://www.wily.fi/en/>



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