

Brussels, 30 September 2026,

Joint Statement of the Consumer Protection Cooperation Network on Stronger Consumer Protection in Video Games across the EU Single Market

The Consumer Protection Cooperation (CPC) Network¹ unites national authorities who are responsible for protecting consumers in the European Union (EU) and the European Economic Area (EEA). The CPC Network enforces a range of EU consumer protection laws, including rules on deceptive and unfair business practices. In particular, under Regulation (EU) 2017/2394 (CPC Regulation)² CPC Network authorities cooperate to address cross-border infringements of EU consumer protection law, including widespread infringements and widespread infringements with a Union dimension.

The CPC Network seeks to foster a vibrant and competitive European video game market that provides a supportive environment for businesses. At the same time, the CPC Network is committed to ensuring that rights of consumers playing video games are protected, with particular attention to children³ and other vulnerable consumer groups. The gaming sector reaches millions of consumers across Europe and generates significant revenues.⁴ A broad consensus among academics⁵, consumer advocates⁶ and gamers is that some video game business models and design practices harm consumers, especially vulnerable groups such as children. These practices are associated with certain uses of virtual currencies, of loot boxes and deceptive techniques such as misleading countdown timers and unfounded scarcity claims, among others. Some video games directly exhort children to make purchases, despite an explicit prohibition in EU consumer protection law. Consumers across Europe should be able to play and interact video games without being tricked into spending more money or time on video games than they want.

Self-regulation initiatives, such as the Pan-European Game Information (PEGI)⁷, have brought some positive changes for consumers, but they often fail to address the core of harmful practices. In March 2025, the CPC Network, coordinated by the European Commission, adopted *“The Consumer Protection Cooperation Network’s Key Principles on In-game Virtual Currencies”* (the Key Principles), which

¹ [Consumer Protection Cooperation Network - European Commission](#).

² [Regulation - 2017/2394 - EN - EUR-Lex](#).

³ In line with Article 1 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 (UNCRC), “children” are defined as human being below the age of eighteen years, see [Convention on the Rights of the Child | OHCHR](#).

⁴ Video games is a strategic and successful sector for the EU economy, as it generates significant revenues engaging millions of consumers across Europe. The global video game market generated EUR 169.6 billion in revenues in 2024 and is expected to increase to EUR 190.3 billion by 2027: [The European media industry outlook - Publications Office of the EU](#). According to Video Games Europe and the European Games Developer Federation, the European video game market reached €29.7 billion in revenues in 2025: [All About Video Games – European Key Facts 2025 - VIDEOGAMES EUROPE](#). In 2024, the number of players in Europe reached 279.6 million and is expected to reach 291.7 million by 2027 ([The European media industry outlook - Publications Office of the EU](#)). According to Video Games Europe and the European Games Developer Federation, in 2025, 51% of Europeans played video games, of whom 46% were women: [All About Video Games – European Key Facts 2025 - VIDEOGAMES EUROPE](#).

⁵ See some examples of relevant literature: Dutch Expert and Research Institute for Mental Health’s 2026 report on [“Video Games and Mental Health”](#); Niccolò Toccacandi, Roberto Di Paolo and Sibilla Di Guida (2026) study on [“Virtual currencies in online gaming increase the willingness to pay for loot boxes: an experimental analysis”](#); Ofcom report on [“Persuasive design features and potential financial harms – Qualitative research June 2025”](#); The Netherlands Authority for Consumers and Market’s Position Paper on Better protection for players of video games (2025); Potel-Saville, M. & Da Rocha, M. (2023), [“From Dark Patterns to Fair Patterns? Usable Taxonomy to Contribute Solving the Issue with Countermeasures”](#); European Parliament, IMCO Committee 2020 report on [“Loot boxes in online games and their effect on consumers, in particular young consumers”](#); Forbrukerradet’s 2022 [“Report on loot boxes: Insert coin”](#); European Commission study on [“the impact of marketing through social media, online games and mobile applications on children’s behaviour”](#) (2016).

⁶ See in particular the report of the Swedish Consumer Association [“No play – so young children are tempted to play a lot of money”](#), and the report of the Norwegian Consumer Council report [“GET PLAYED : The true cost of virtual currency”](#). See also BEUC report [“Game Over : A legal assessment of premium in-game currencies from a consumer law perspective”](#).

⁷ [Pegi Public Site](#).

provide practical guidance on the application of relevant EU consumer protection rules⁸ to practices involving in-game virtual currencies.⁹ This was followed by a dialogue with video games industry organisations¹⁰ on the application of these Key Principles.¹¹ While the dialogue has allowed for an exchange with members of the industry organisations on the practices in question, the CPC Network has found indications that a high number of video game companies have not made any substantive changes to their video games as a result of the CPC Network's public guidance, nor as a result of the extensive talks between the CPC Network and the gaming industry that have taken place over the course of the past years.

Today, the CPC Network has announced the launch of eleven CPC Network coordinated actions to request Activision Blizzard UK Limited¹², Crytek GmbH¹³, InnoGames GmbH¹⁴, King.com Limited¹⁵, Mojang AB¹⁶, Plarium Europe S.à.r.l.¹⁷, PLR Worldwide Sales Limited¹⁸, Riot Games Limited¹⁹, Supercell Oy²⁰ and Ubisoft EMEA SAS²¹ to bring their commercial practices relating to in-game virtual currencies into line with EU consumer protection laws.²²

In accordance with the CPC Regulation, the CPC Network has chosen a coordinated EU/EEA-wide enforcement approach, as video games are cross-border products operating across the single European Market, and consistency of enforcement outcomes needs to be ensured.

The CPC Network will continue to take joint enforcement actions, where appropriate, to address practices that do not comply with EU consumer protection legislation. On this basis the CPC Network calls on all companies active in the video gaming sector to review their practices and address any compliance issues, in particular those raised in the existing CPC Network common positions and any subsequent one which will be disclosed in the future.²³

Particular attention is given to compliance with EU consumer protection law in relation to variable reward systems (e.g. loot boxes), especially where such systems are directed at, or made available to, children. In its coordinated actions, the CPC Network addresses harmful influencing techniques, including dark patterns, as well as aggressive commercial practices affecting vulnerable consumers, such as children, and practices involving direct exhortation to children.

The CPC Network seeks to ensure coordinated and efficient enforcement, while promoting a high level of consumer protection and greater legal certainty for both consumers and traders operating in the video game sector across the EU/EEA single market.

⁸ In particular, [Directive 2005/29/EC on Unfair Commercial Practices](#); [Directive 2011/83/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 October 2011 on consumer rights](#); [Council Directive 93/13/EEC of 5 April 1993 on unfair terms in consumer contracts](#) and [Directive \(EU\) 2019/770 on digital content and digital services](#).

⁹ [CPC Network Key Principles on In-game Virtual Currencies](#).

¹⁰ Represented by [Video Games Europe](#) and the [European Games Developer Federation](#).

¹¹ The European Commission organised two workshops [in June](#) and September 2025 to facilitate in-depth discussions between the CPC Network and the video games industry organisation representatives on the CPC Key Principles. Following these workshops, written exchanges took place to further discuss the video games industry organisation's proposals. These exchanges allowed stakeholders to provide detailed feedback, clarifications, and additional recommendations to ensure alignment of the industry's practices with the CPC Network's Key Principles and EU consumer protection laws.

¹² The games concerned by the CPC Network's coordinated action are Diablo Immortal and Call of Duty Mobile.

¹³ The game concerned by the CPC Network's coordinated action is Hunt: Showdown 1896.

¹⁴ The game concerned by the CPC Network's coordinated action is Forge of Empires.

¹⁵ The game concerned by the CPC Network's coordinated action is Candy Crush Saga.

¹⁶ The game concerned by the CPC Network's coordinated action is Minecraft.

¹⁷ The game concerned by the CPC Network's coordinated action is Mech Arena.

¹⁸ The game concerned by the CPC Network's coordinated action is Gardenscapes.

¹⁹ The game concerned by the CPC Network's coordinated action is Valorant.

²⁰ The game concerned by the CPC Network's coordinated action is Clash of Clans.

²¹ The game concerned by the CPC Network's coordinated action is For Honor.

²² These video games were selected by CPC Network authorities in the context of a wide-scale market compliance check due to broad reach, cross-device accessibility, and varied age ratings, all of which amplify the impact of the practices on consumers.

²³ This involves the Key Principles, the CPC Network's common position concerning [Star Stable Entertainment AB](#), and the subsequent common positions in relation to Activision Blizzard, Crytek GmbH, InnoGames GmbH, King.com, Mojang AB, Plarium Europe S.à r.l., PLR Worldwide Sales Limited, Riot Games Limited, Supercell Oy and Ubisoft EMEA SAS.