"Stop Killing Videogames" Initiative discussed at the European Parliament

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A plenary debate was held in the European Parliament on 21 May 2026 with regard to the European Citizens' Initiative commonly referred to as « Stop Killing Games ». The initiative, also known as "Stop Destroying Videogames" (its official name in the EU process), is calling to require video game publishers that sell or license videogames to consumers in the European Union to leave said videogames in a playable state and prevent publishers from disabling access to them after the end of their commercial cycle. It was registered on 19 June 2024 and submitted to the European Commission on 26 January 2026, after having gathered 1,294,188 verified statements of support. The plenary debate follows a meeting between the initiative's organisers and European Commission's Executive Vice-President Henna Virkkunen and Commissioner Michael McGrath and a public hearing at the European Parliament on 16 April 2026. During the debate, several Members of the European Parliament linked the practice to planned obsolescence and hinted at the fact that the decision to shut down access to a video game appears to follow business concerns rather than a technological impossibility to leave videogames in a playable state.

The initiative came in response to growing concerns among the gaming community with regard to games becoming unplayable due to the server infrastructures they rely on being shutdown, a practice not affecting all games but a large proportion of them. While servers are key infrastructures for online games, single-player games are not entirely protected from this risk, due in part to a growing proportion of single-player games (or games including a single-player component) requiring constant internet connection for persistent online authentication, a form of digital rights management (DRM) meant to prevent copyright infringements. The shutdown of the servers of one particular game in 2024 triggered the creation of the initiative

"The Crew" was a 2014 racing game published by Ubisoft. The game relied on an always-on DRM, requiring constant internet connection to a server, even in single-player mode. Upon reaching the end of its commercial cycle, Ubisoft announced it would shut down the game's servers in 2024. Days after shutting down the servers, Ubisoft began revoking the licenses from players who had bought the game. Ubisoft's decision to revoke licenses meant that players were now unable to use the game, a situation which – while not entirely new – remains a relatively

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recent challenge, as publishers have no such power to remotely deactivate access to a game purchased physically (which remained the dominant format for years) and not requiring internet access.

The European Commission's reply is due by 27 July 2026.

Youtube - Stop Killing Games EU Parliament Full Plenary Debate

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBEn4ZjRzFg

European Citizens' Initiative - Stop Destroying Videogames

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBEn4ZjRzFg

European Commission - Daily News 26/01/2026 - Commission to examine European Citizens' Initiative called 'Stop Destroying Videogames'

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/mex_26_222

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