

2015



SEX



VIOLENCE



BAD LANGUAGE



DISCRIMINATION



DRUGS



FEAR



GAMBLING



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INTRODUCTION

Dear reader,

In 2010, PEGI S.A. brought age classification experts from all over the world together in Malta for the first PEGI Congress. The central question of the event sounded simple but was treacherously complex: how should rating boards deal with the surge of digitally delivered game content that appeared in the wake of the smartphone success? The discussions in Malta formed the seed for a cooperation that now, five years later, has led to some amazing results. I am very proud to say that we have achieved the goals we set ourselves in 2010: we joined forces with other rating boards and co-founded IARC, the International Age Rating Coalition (see page 9). In March 2015 the largest app store in the world, Google Play, implemented the IARC system, allowing publishers of apps and games to receive age ratings for Europe, North America, Brazil and Australia in one fell swoop. The system is built to be an integral part of a storefront's product submission procedure, which makes it a quick and intuitive experience, even for publishers who haven't yet worked with PEGI or other rating boards. Meanwhile, consumers are seeing age rating information from systems with proven track records, which builds trust and creates the confidence to make informed decisions. Nintendo is using IARC now for their eShop and Microsoft has already implemented it for their Windows storefront. In the future, we hope to include even more shops.

It is gratifying that after some years of talking in the hypothetical and theoretical sense – and a lot of hard work – we can finally see the results on smartphones, tablets, computers and dedicated gaming devices. Thanks to IARC, PEGI reaches more consumers than ever via more products than ever. The cooperation with other rating boards has been exemplary, and consumers everywhere in the world can benefit from a consistent use of trusted age rating information in a growing number of digital storefronts.

Meanwhile, the 'classic' PEGI procedure for games sold on carriers through retail continues to do its job. This market may have lost some share to new business models, but there is no indication that so-called boxed games are going to disappear any time soon. With a diverse portfolio of solutions and strong partnerships, PEGI is ready to deal with new developments: there has been a lot of excitement already about virtual reality technology and the first devices are now available, but it may be some time before this highly anticipated new product will reach true mass market. In any case, PEGI is following developments like this closely to ensure that we can extend our advice to new forms of video games and apps as soon as they are made available to the public.



Simon Little
Managing Director
PEGI S.A.

CHAPTER 1

The PEGI system
and how it functions

TWO LEVELS OF INFORMATION TO GUIDE CONSUMERS

An icon that represents the minimum recommended age



The PEGI age rating considers the age suitability of a game, not the level of difficulty. This means that a game rated PEGI 3 can be very complex and difficult to master, whereas games rated PEGI 18 may only require simple controls.

A series of content descriptors

These are displayed as icons on the back of a game box or as text in digital storefronts. They indicate, where required, the nature of the content. There are currently 7 icons, depending on the type of content:



Game may contain some kind of depiction of violence. In games rated 7 any violence can only be non-realistic or non-detailed violence. Games rated 12 can include violence in a fantasy environment, whereas games rated 16 or 18 can have increasingly more realistic-looking violence.



This descriptor may appear on 7-rated games with pictures or sounds that could be frightening to young children or on 12-rated games with horrific sounds or horror effects.



Game contains bad language, which may include mild swearing or offensive language in games rated 12, or blasphemy and sexual expletives in games rated 16 or 18.



Games depicting nudity or references to sexual behaviour. In games rated 12 this may include words or activities with obvious sexual innuendo. In 16-rated games depictions of erotic or sexual nudity may feature and in 18-rated games explicit images of sexual activity may be included.



Game may encourage the use of tobacco or alcohol in games rated 16 or depict illegal drugs in 18-rated titles.



This descriptor can only appear on games rated 18 containing depictions of ethnic, religious, nationalistic or other stereotypes that could encourage hatred. It is rarely used in contemporary games – and more likely appears in games with historical situations (such as Second World War re-enactments).



Used for games rated 12, 16 or 18 that may encourage or teach gambling for money normally played in casinos, gambling halls, racetracks, etc.

Content descriptors are used in conjunction with the age rating icons to indicate the main reasons why a game is given a particular age rating. The descriptors also serve a useful purpose on a Europe-wide basis where there are differing views about levels of acceptability, particularly on the use of bad language and to an extent on matters of sex and nudity.



In 2015, PEGI S.A. decided to discontinue the Online content descriptor, following the advice from the PEGI Experts Group and PEGI Management Board. Although the icon served a useful purpose in the days when online functionality was an increasingly popular feature in games, the term 'online' no longer represents sufficient information for consumers in a time when digital storefronts are dominating the markets and the current generation of game consoles has various online applications automatically implemented, regardless of which games are played.

GEOGRAPHY AND SCOPE

PEGI is a system of self-regulation to promote the responsible use of video games. It is the first ever pan-European age rating system and has been operating since April 2003. PEGI provides the public - particularly parents - with an indication of the minimum age from which the content of a game is appropriate.

The system's efficiency is based on its ability to provide the consumer, at the time of purchase, with appropriate information and advice regarding the nature of the content and its suitability. This advice is based on criteria developed and assessed by experts.

The PEGI system applies to all games software, regardless of format (carrier, download, or stream) or platform, sold or distributed in Europe by any company subscribing to the PEGI standards, and to all (non-game) apps that are available on platforms that have implemented the PEGI icons (for example Google Play). The institutions of the European Union, together with the vast majority of governments in Europe, fully support the project.



PEGI rated products are marketed in the following 38 countries:

Albania	Czech Republic	Ireland	Moldova	Serbia
Austria	Denmark	Israel	Montenegro	Slovakia
Belgium	Estonia	Italy	Malta	Slovenia
Bosnia & Herzegovina	Finland	Kosovo	Netherlands	Spain
Bulgaria	France	Latvia	Norway	Sweden
Croatia	Greece	Lithuania	Poland	Switzerland
Cyprus	Hungary	Luxembourg	Portugal	United Kingdom
	Iceland	Macedonia	Romania	

Like all self-regulated systems, the PEGI system is based on a Code of Conduct, a set of rules which every publisher contractually commits to respect when using the PEGI system (see Annex 1). The Code deals with age labelling, promotion and advertising of interactive products. It reflects the games industry's commitment and concern to provide information to the public in a responsible manner.

With more than 25,000 games rated by the end of 2015, the PEGI system displays a proven ability to rally virtually all publishers that make games available via retail in Europe. To deal with the challenge of an expanding and fragmented digital offering of games, PEGI joined forces with other rating authorities in the world to form IARC (see page 9). Ultimately, the system delivers in its prime objective to help parents make informed buying decisions: they can exercise their responsibility regarding the selection of games that suit their family with utmost confidence.

The day-to-day management and development of the PEGI system, which was created by the Interactive Software Federation of Europe (ISFE), is entrusted to PEGI s.a. The administration of the system is contracted to the Netherlands Institute for the Classification of Audiovisual Media (NICAM) which is based in the Netherlands and the Video Standards Council (VSC) in the United Kingdom.

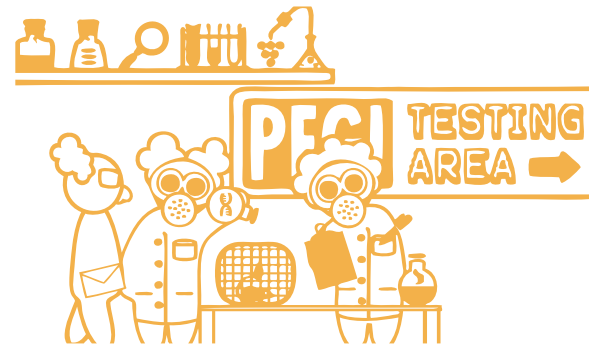


HOW GAMES AND APPS GET A RATING

Using the traditional method of pre-release verification:

Using the traditional method of pre-release verification:

- all the games (download and boxed) for Microsoft Xbox consoles
- all the games (download and boxed) for Sony PlayStation consoles and Sony PlayStation VITA
- all the boxed games for Nintendo Wii U and Nintendo 3DS
- most PC games (download and boxed)



Many PC and console games are released as a physical product and sold via retailers. In order to ensure that these games display the correct age classification on the box, a robust procedure is required:

1. Prior to release, publishers fill in a content assessment form for every version of their product (see Annex 1). This form, presented as a questionnaire, describes the content of the product, taking into account the possible presence of violence, sex, bad language and other audiovisual content that may be considered as not appropriate for all ages.
2. Based on the responses from the publisher, the online system automatically determines a provisional age rating along with content descriptors.
3. The PEGI administrator receives the product from the publisher and thoroughly reviews the provisional age rating. NICAM takes care of the games rated 3 and 7, whereas the VSC reviews the 12, 16 and 18 ratings.
4. If the content in the game matches the provisional rating, PEGI delivers a license to the publisher for the use of the age rating icon and the relevant content descriptor(s).
5. The publisher is now authorised to reproduce the appropriate age rating logo and content descriptor(s) on the packaging or at the digital point of sale in accordance with the PEGI Labelling Guidelines and the PEGI Code of Conduct.



Using IARC for digital products:



The IARC system is currently used for:

- all games and apps on Google Play
(for Android smartphones and tablets, since Spring 2015)
- all games and apps on the Microsoft Windows Store
(for all Windows PCs, smartphones and tablets, since December 2015)
- all games and apps on the Mozilla Firefox Marketplace
(since January 2014)
- all games and apps on the Nintendo eShop
(since December 2015)

Hundreds of new games and apps are released every day on digital storefronts for smartphones, tablets, PCs or consoles. IARC, a coalition of rating authorities from Europe (PEGI and USK), North America (ESRB), Brazil (ClassInd) and Australia (ACB), aims to provide a solution for this globalised market of digital games (downloads, apps as well as browser-based games).

Instead of having to administer their own rating systems, storefronts and platforms can now use established standards while complying with content classification requirements that are legally mandated in certain countries. Developers are relieved of having to go through multiple processes to obtain ratings for the different territories and storefronts. And consumers are presented with a consistently applied set of familiar and trusted ratings that reflect their local, distinct sensibilities about content and age appropriateness.

In terms of methodology, IARC is designed as a more flexible and tailor-made procedure that can cope with the large numbers of new apps and app updates:

1. A publisher submits a game or app to a storefront for a digital release. As an integral part of that submission procedure, the publisher has to fill in the IARC questionnaire, which is a single set of questions about a product's content and interactive elements. The questionnaire combines the classification criteria of the participating rating boards.
2. Upon completion of the questionnaire, the publisher immediately receives a license with age ratings of the participating rating boards. The classification process is cost-free. As soon as the game or app is released, the appropriate age rating is displayed in the storefront.
3. Administrators from IARC rating boards work together to check a robust cross-section of all classifications. A variety of tactics, including keyword search, top download checks, publisher and consumer requests, and others, are applied to ensure that age ratings are correctly applied. In case of an error, the incorrect age rating can be changed instantly.

A new label for apps: Parental Guidance recommended



When applying the PEGI rating system to non-game apps, it became clear that it was very difficult to assign a specific age advice to certain categories of apps. In general, these apps behave as portals for content that is sometimes user-generated: digital storefronts (like the Amazon store), commercial streaming services (like Netflix), social networking apps (like Facebook) and user-generated content portals (like YouTube) contain a broad, variable range of content. There is no way for PEGI to determine before release of the app what sort of inappropriate content may be available (and often only for a certain period of time). For these non-game apps, PEGI developed a new label, warning parents that specific guidance is recommended when downloading this app for use by children. The label is always accompanied by a text descriptor that reads 'parental guidance recommended'.

PEGI ONLINE



PEGI Online was launched in 2007 as an addition to the PEGI system with the purpose to give young people in Europe better protection against inappropriate online gaming content and to help parents understand the risks within this environment. The licence to display

the PEGI Online label is granted by the PEGI Online administrator to any online gameplay service provider that meets the requirements set out in the PEGI Code of Conduct.

Since online games often support virtual communities, players can be exposed to the risks associated with realtime interaction with unknown fellow players.

Such risks include:

- Content being created as a result of the game which could be unsuitable for young people and a mismatch with the rating given for the game.
- Some players engaging in behaviour that might not be suitable for young people. For example, inappropriate or offensive language; bullying in games that allow text, voice or video communication; unsporting conduct like cheating and tampering; or aggressiveness towards others.
- Breaches of privacy. Online players sometimes encourage children to build relationships, share personal details, or even meet unknown fellow players outside the game.
- Links to websites where content may not be suitable for young people.

To address these topics, the main provisions of the PEGI Online are:

- Only game content that has been appropriately rated by PEGI or another recognised European system can be included on a site.
- Appropriate mechanisms are in place to allow game players to report the existence of undesirable content on any related websites.
- Licence holders will use their best endeavours to ensure that online services under their control are kept free of any content which is illegal, offensive, obscene or which might permanently impair the development of young people.
- Any PEGI Online licence holder collecting personal information from subscribers will maintain an effective and coherent privacy policy in accordance with European Union and national Data Protection laws.
- Licence holders will maintain community standards to prohibit subscribers from introducing content or indulging in online behaviour which is illegal, offensive, obscene, or which might permanently impair the development of young people.
- All advertising shall be conducted demonstrating a sense of responsibility towards the public.

The PEGI Online label indicates whether a particular game or site is under the control of an operator who cares about protecting young people.

The PEGI Online website www.pegionline.eu offers all relevant information about the nature, categories and potential risks of online gaming. It contains useful tips for safer online gameplay and offers the possibility to report complaints or abuses by consumers.

PARENTAL CONTROL SYSTEMS

All gaming consoles, handheld game devices and operating systems for PC and Mac are equipped with parental control systems, enabling parents to protect their children's privacy and online safety according to various parameters. These control tools may include the possibility to:

- select which games children are allowed to play (if available, based on the PEGI age ratings)
- restrict or block making digital purchases
- limit access to an internet browser by applying a filter
- control the amount of time that children can spend playing games
- control the level of online interaction (chat) and exchange of data (text messages, user-generated content)

Google: <http://www.google.co.uk/safetycenter/families/start/#home>

Microsoft: <http://support.xbox.com/browse/xbox-one/security>

Nintendo: <http://www.nintendo.co.uk/Support/Parents/Parents-642522.html>

Sony: <https://www.playstation.com/get-help/help-library/my-account/parental-controls/>

Steam: https://support.steampowered.com/kb_article.php?ref=5149-EOPC-9918

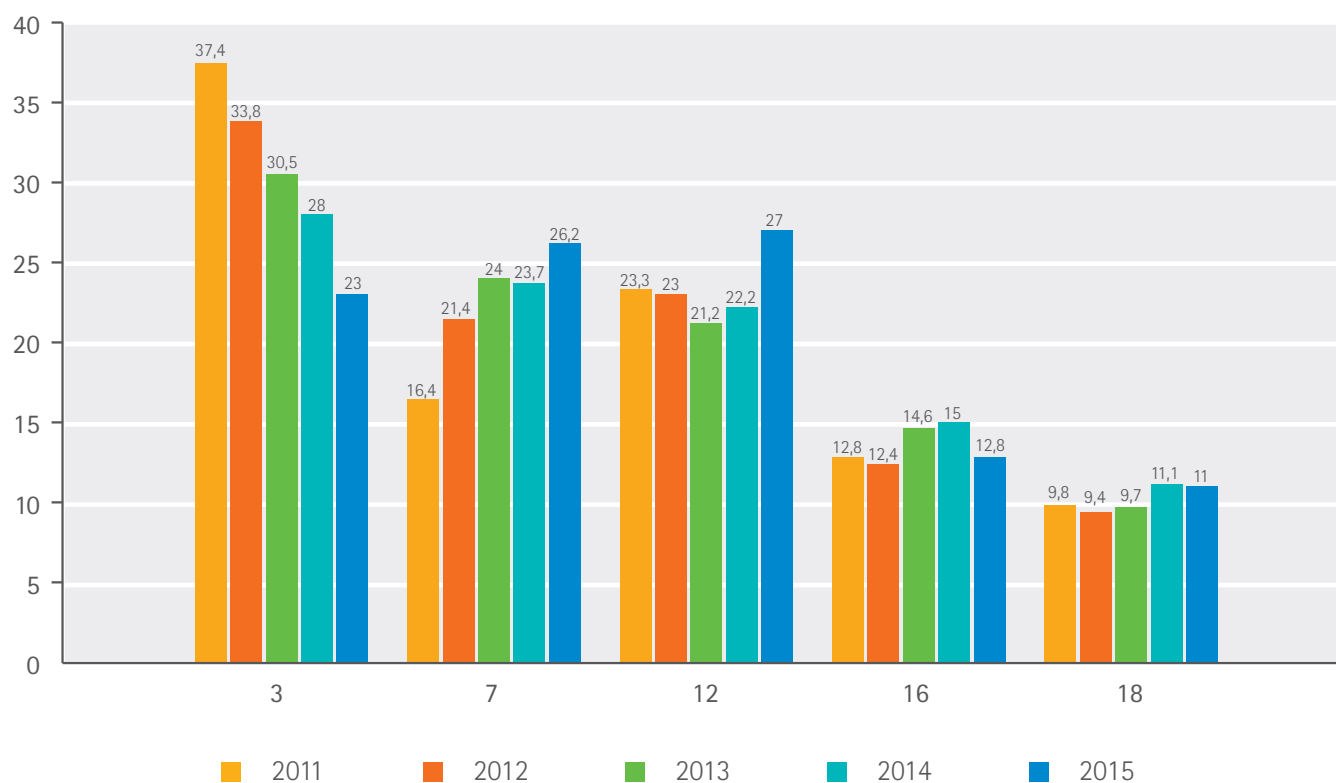
CHAPTER 2

Statistics

PEGI ratings by age until December 2015

Age class	2015	Percentage	Total since 2003	Percentage
3	427	23%	10718	42,2%
7	486	26,2%	4017	15,8%
12	501	27%	5668	22,3%
16	237	12,8%	3218	12,7%
18	204	11%	1766	7%
TOTAL	1855	100%	25387	100%

Distribution per age category in the last five years (in %)



	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Total games rated	2538	2214	1813	1542	1685	1855

Distribution of content descriptors (games rated in 2015)

Content Descriptor	3	7	12	16	18	Total	%
Violence	/	433	359	205	204	1201	64,7%
Bad Language	/	/	280	44	148	472	25,4%
Online*	89	41	112	62	37	341	18,4%
Fear/Horror	/	125	17	/	/	142	7,7%
Sex	/	/	74	11	3	88	1,4%
Gambling	/	/	15	0	11	26	1,4%
Drugs/Alcohol	/	/	/	21	2	23	1,2%
Discrimination	/	/	/	/	0	0	0%

*Content descriptor discontinued in July 2015

Distribution of the violence content descriptor across the age categories



	7	12	16	18
Count	433	359	205	204
Percentage	36%	29,9%	17,1%	17%



Queries and complaints received via the 'Online Hotline'

The PEGI Administrators receive a sizeable amount of questions and objections each month about the PEGI rating system. These queries comprise a plethora of topics, but there is a clear trend that shows that the amount of technical questions and comments on ratings is on

the decrease, while the number of general requests for information about PEGI remains high. The familiarity with the PEGI system has grown strongly over the past years, which is reflected in the numbers.

	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Complaints related to rating delivered	106	55	71	74	97	71
Complaints concerning advertising	14	0	7	4	17	8
Requests for information on PEGI	501	711	554	479	598	539
Comments on PEGI System	71	22	36	26	21	27
Questions and comments on ratings	322	193	178	132	117	145
Complaints via pegionline.eu	115	48	113	89	66	159
Other	88	109	122	155	68	92
Technical difficulties	467	413	313	192	180	192
TOTAL	1684	1551	1394	1151	1164	1238

CHAPTER 3

The PEGI Organisation

THE PEGI STRUCTURE

PEGI S.A.

The day-to-day management, supervision and development of the PEGI system is handled by PEGI S.A., an independent not-for-profit company with a social purpose established under Belgian law. Drawing on wide experience, PEGI is steered by way of a number of boards and committees as envisaged in article 12 of the PEGI Code of Conduct:

PEGI Management Board

The PEGI Management Board is at the core of the PEGI organisation. The Managing Director, responsible for running the day-to-day activities of PEGI, follows the guidance of this Management Board. The board is made up of representatives of the users of PEGI (games publishers and developers), the gatekeepers of PEGI (the game console

manufacturers) and the promoters of PEGI (national trade associations) plus representatives from the PEGI Council and the PEGI Experts Group. This board structure ensures there is proper oversight while maintaining PEGI's strength in getting things done efficiently. The importance of effective action via a coalition from within PEGI cannot be overstated.

Name	Company or trade association
Matt Wisbey	Electronic Arts
Greg Ward	Microsoft
Richard Sheridan	Nintendo
Philippe Cardon	Sony Computer Entertainment Europe
Seb Belcher	TakeTwo
Christele Jalady	Ubisoft
Guillaume de Fondaumière	European Games Developer Federation
Anne Mette Thorhauge	Chairman of the PEGI Council
Jeffrey Goldstein	Chairman of the PEGI Experts Group
Henk Hoogendoorn	NVPI/BEA (Benelux)
Emmanuel Martin	SELL (France)
Maximilian Schenk	BIU (Germany)
Thalita Malago	AESVI (Italy)
Dominika Urbańska	Spidor (Poland)
Jo Twist	UKIE (UK)

PEGI Council

With PEGI in use in more than 35 countries it is vital that the system and the Code of Conduct keeps in tune with social, political and legal developments in all of these countries. The Council is responsible for making recommendations to ensure that national as well as European developments are communicated and reflected in the PEGI system and its Code of Conduct. The Council gives the PEGI countries

a voice. Equally important is that the authorities in the PEGI countries stay abreast of and are involved in PEGI. The Council ensures this two-way flow of information: members of the Council are primarily recruited from the authorities in the PEGI countries, working as civil servants, psychologists, media specialists and legal advisers versed in the protection of minors in Europe.

Members of the PEGI Council

Name	Institution	Country
Anne Mette Thorhauge (chair)	Danish Media Council	Denmark
Herbert Rosenstingl	Ministry for Health, Family & Youth	Austria
Axenia Boneva	Bulgarian Ministry of Culture	Bulgaria
Indrek Ibrus	Ministry of Culture - Media department	Estonia
Hanna Happo	Finnish National Audiovisual Institute	Finland
Emmanuel Gabla	Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel	France
Alexandros Lamprakis	Hellenic Gaming Commission	Greece
Ger Connolly	Irish Film Censor's Office	Ireland
Chiara Fortuna	General Directorate for Cinema	Italy
Regina Jaskeleviciene	Ministry of Culture	Lithuania
Valérie Dupong	Autorité Luxembourgeoise Indépendante de l'Audiovisuel	Luxembourg
Luke Dalli	Ministry of Culture	Malta
Nol Reijnders	Ministry of Education, Culture and Science	Netherlands
Khalid Azam	Norwegian Media Authority	Norway
Dorota Zawadzka	Ombudsman for Children	Poland
Antonio Xavier	Classification Expert	Portugal
Carlos Arnaiz Ronda	Instituto Nacional del Consumo	Spain
Johan Karlsson	Swedish Media Council	Sweden
Thomas Vollmer	Bundesamt für Sozialversicherungen - Jugendschutz	Switzerland
Laurie Hall	Games Rating Authority	UK
Daniela Esposito	EU Commission, DG CONNECT	EU

The Council meets at least once a year, often in conjunction with the Management Board and/or the Experts Group.

PEGI Experts Group

While the Council's focus is on country representation, PEGI also maintains a network of technical experts that have been an important source of advice for PEGI over the years. The Experts Group involves specialists and academics in the fields of media, psychology, classification, legal matters, technology, digital environment, etc. They advise PEGI by considering technological and content-related developments as recommended by the PEGI Council, the PEGI Management Board or through circumstances brought to light by the complaints procedure.

Name	Country
Jeffrey Goldstein (chair)	Netherlands
Spyros Pappas	Greece
Richard Sheridan	UK
Aphra Kerr	Ireland
Rosemary Walker	UK
Jeroen Jansz	Netherlands
Anne Mette Thorhauge	Denmark
Chris Madgwick	UK

Complaints Board

The Complaints Board comprises a pool of independent experts from different countries appointed by the Management Board for a 2-year term. Members are recruited for their skill, experience and field of activity. These are parent/consumer bodies, child psychologists, media specialists, academics and legal advisers versed in the protection of minors in Europe.

Complaints Procedure

If a complaint is filed by a publisher or a consumer regarding a certain age rating, and no satisfactory settlement can be reached by the PEGI administrator through discussion, explanation or negotiation, the complainant may formally request the Complaints Board to mediate. The Managing Director of PEGI S.A. then selects three members from the board's pool to form an ad hoc complaint board (AHCB), according to the nature of the complaint and the skills required to resolve it. Following that, copies of the complaint and all relevant documents received from the complainant are sent to the members of the Complaints Board and the defendant. The Complaints Board may require additional information relevant to the complaint to be submitted by any of the parties concerned (i.e. the complainant, the defendant or the PEGI system administrator).

The board meets in person if necessary or, if acceptable, considers the facts individually and confers via e-mail or telephone. Decisions by the Complaints Board are passed by simple majority vote. If the board concludes that a publisher is in breach of any part of the Code of Conduct, it has the

authority to instruct the Enforcement Committee to take appropriate measures. If the board concludes an interactive software product has been inappropriately rated, it can order a re-rating. Subscribers to the PEGI system, e.g. publishers, are bound by decisions taken by the Complaints Board by virtue of the Code of Conduct. Consequently, subscribers find themselves under obligation to carry out any corrective actions required of them and, in cases of non-compliance, are subject to sanctions as laid out by the code.

Complaints Board members:

Name	Country
Jeroen Jansz (chair)	Netherlands
Olivier Gerard	France
Lars Gjerlufsen	Denmark
Ger Connolly	Ireland
Jeffrey Goldstein	Netherlands
Spyros Pappas	Greece
Rosemary Walker	UK
Antonio Xavier	Portugal
Hanna Happonen	Finland

THE FOUNDER: ISFE

The Interactive Software Federation of Europe (ISFE) was established in 1998 to represent the interests of the interactive software sector towards the EU, the countries of the European Economic Area and international institutions. Today, ISFE membership comprises 16 major publishers of interactive software and trade associations in 18 countries throughout Europe.



THE PEGI ADMINISTRATORS

NICAM



NICAM is the Netherlands Institute for the Classification of Audiovisual Media. It brings together all Dutch public service and commercial broadcasting organisations and producers and retailers of film, video and video games. Three government departments were involved in the establishment of NICAM. In addition, a large number of academics and other organisations are linked to NICAM through their membership of the advisory committee or the independent complaints and appeals boards.

NICAM is led by Director Wim Bekkers since its establishment in the year 2000, with the goal to provide an effective and uniform system of classification for all audiovisual media.

NICAM draws up classification guidelines, deals with complaints and provides consumers with information about video games, films, TV programmes and DVDs.

As an administrator for PEGI, NICAM combines various tasks in close cooperation with PEGI S.A. and the VSC. The team pre-examines all 3 and 7 ratings prior to release and manages relationships with coders (a publisher's single point of contact) and consumers (handling all consumer queries, complaints and comments that come in via the public PEGI.info website). In addition to this, they are responsible for all coder training activities, and together with the VSC they are actively involved in the technical development of the PEGI system.

VSC



The Video Standards Council examines all games applying for a 12, 16 and 18 rating under the PEGI system to ensure that such games have been correctly rated. In 2012 the VSC became the statutory body in the UK for legally classifying games using the PEGI system, operating under the name Games Rating Authority.

The VSC was established at the request of the UK Government in 1989 as a non-profit making body set up to develop and oversee a Code of Practice designed to promote high

standards within the video industry. In 1993 the Code was expanded to promote high standards within the video games industry. The VSC membership covers all sectors of the video and video games industries.

In 1994 the VSC joined forces with the Entertainment & Leisure Software Publishers Association (now UKIE) to establish the ELSPA system for the voluntary age rating of video games in the UK. In 2003, the ELSPA system was superseded by the PEGI system and since then, the VSC has worked as joint administrator of the PEGI system together with NICAM in the Netherlands.

CHAPTER 4

Decisions by PEGI



Decisions by PEGI

Decisions of the PEGI Experts Group

► Violence in a childlike setting

Following a complaint in 2014 by Disney Interactive about a PEGI 12 rating for the game *Infinity 2.0*, the PEGI Complaints Board changed the game's age rating to PEGI 7 and recommended that PEGI find a solution for video games with mild to moderate combat violence in a child-friendly (but not necessarily childlike) environment.

Violence against human-like characters occurs in certain PEGI 12 games, but it can also fit in the PEGI 7 category on the condition that it takes place in a childlike setting. The Experts Group discussed a number of solutions to slightly broaden the scope and eventually decided to align the definitions of childlike and child-friendly within the PEGI 7 category, to ensure that the decision about *Infinity 2.0* would apply to similar games in the future. A central feature of the violence in such games is not the severity of the violence, but rather the fast pace of the combat, involving lots of colorful light effects like sparks, lasers and other visual accents.

More specifically, the Experts Group decided to change the wording of question nr. 33 to include "frenetic, high-intensity" violence in a "child-friendly setting" with weapons and actions that lack a strong resemblance to reality.

► Virtual Reality

In 2015, the excitement in media about virtual reality (VR) technology reached a peak with news of the impending release of several VR devices and of the development of many game titles designed specifically for this new experience. In order to advise PEGI on the matter, the Experts Group collected existing research on the impact of VR and convened in November 2015 in London, where members of the group could experience VR themselves.

VR products are currently in the early adopter phase, with a first wave of mass-market games expected to arrive in shops in the course of 2016. Therefore, the primary concern of the Experts Group for the time being was to closely monitor all developments. After careful consideration and debate, the Group's advice to the PEGI administration was as follows:

PEGI should examine the coming wave of VR products using the current questionnaire, while reserving the right to reassess certain elements – more specifically the criteria for fear and horror – once a broader range of products hits the market in the near future.

If a game should become more interactive and immersive (an aspect typically associated with VR) without involving violent action, PEGI may need to investigate whether such a game requires a higher rating than PEGI 7 for Fear, or a higher rating than PEGI 12 for Horror.

There was broad consensus that, although experiencing VR can be quite impressive as a result of its immersive nature, this immersion does not necessarily affect the outcome of the PEGI rating process. PEGI criteria address different types of content, regardless of the technology used: violence of a certain degree will still fit in the same age category whether it is displayed in a VR environment or not. Realistic-looking violence is already in the highest age categories, and it seems unlikely that non-realistic violence (the way violence impacts a character in a non-realistic way) would merit a higher rating in VR - it would still be portrayed unrealistically. The Experts Group and the PEGI administrators are confident that PEGI's approach is sufficient for virtual reality but they will closely monitor the new VR games that will be submitted to PEGI in the coming year and revisit the debate at a later stage.

Decisions of the PEGI Complaints Board

Date	Game	Initial rating	New rating	Publisher	Complainant	Ad hoc Complainants Board
April 2013	Way of the Dogg	16	16	505 Games	505 Games	Lars Gjerlufsen (Chair) Antonio Xavier Ger Connolly
November 2013	Spellforce 2 - Demons of the Past	16	12	Nordic Games	Nordic Games	Lars Gjerlufsen (Chair) Hanna Hoppo Spyros Pappas
July 2014	Surgeon Simulator	18	18	Bossa Studio	Bossa Studio	Lars Gjerlufsen (Chair) Antonio Xavier Rosemary Walker
July 2014	Infinity 2.0	16	16	Disney Interactive	Disney Interactive	Lars Gjerlufsen (Chair) Jeffrey Goldstein Olivier Gerard

There were no complaints by publishers or consumers in 2015 that resulted in a review by the Complaints Board. This has not happened since the PEGI system was founded in 2003, but it is not entirely surprising: the number of complaints has gradually diminished over the years. Each complaint case creates a precedent that solves similar issues, and improves the efficiency and objectivity of the PEGI questionnaire, leaving almost no room for confusion or varying interpretations. Publishers and consumers still have questions and complaints about the system or the questionnaire, but these are always resolved in an earlier stage through dialogue (see page [11])

Complaint	PCB Conclusion
<p>The complainant argues that the PEGI 16 rating for Way of the Dogg based on Q11 should be lowered to PEGI 12 based on Q23, Q24 and Q26.</p>	<p>Rating awarded: 16+ based on question nr. 11. Motivation: The content is as described in Q11: depictions of realistic-looking violence towards human-like or animal-like characters. The violence is too severe to apply a PEGI 12 rating, it would have to be of a different nature, very minor like a slap or smack where the victim does not show any apparent harm or injury.</p>
<p>The complainant argues that the PEGI 16 rating for SpellForce 2 – Demons of the Past, based on Q11 and Q12, should be lowered to PEGI 12 based on Q22 and Q26.</p>	<p>Rating awarded: PEGI 12, based on Q22. Motivation: The key point is if the violence in this game is realistic or non-realistic. The game is set in a medieval fantasy world, with cartoon elements, which creates a distance to realism. The violence in attacks is repetitive, reproducing the same mechanical effects irrespective of the power that is applied, and without any visible injuries to the characters. As a result, these effects cannot be associated with human-like behavior and the violence cannot be considered realistic. Moreover, when characters are killed, they are lying on the ground without detailed depictions of injury or death.</p>
<p>The complainant asks that the PEGI 18 rating based on gross violence is changed to PEGI 12 based on Q22 and Q23.</p>	<p>Rating awarded: PEGI 18, based on Q1. Motivation: The game asks players to perform so-called operations, but with an excessive amount of blood, while sometimes the patient even seems to be awake. The patient is also hit with different instruments, which damages the body. In one scene, a patient's eyes fall out after being hit in the face, at which point the eyes are cut out of the head. The simulated surgical context of the game does not soften the level of gross violence.</p>
<p>The complainant requests that the PEGI 12 rating based on Q22 is changed to PEGI 7 based on Q29, Q31, Q32, Q33 and Q34.</p>	<p>Rating awarded: PEGI 7, based on Q29, Q31, Q32, Q33 and Q34. Motivation: This video game is a hybrid that includes characters represented by physical toys, which have an important role in the game environment. Characters taken from comic books do not lose their comic book (non-real) identities in games or other media. The game environment can be considered child-like or child-friendly in that they have the same comic book origins and themes. The Toy Box module allows the child to construct the environment, making it by definition a child-like setting. The issues raised by this game for this sort of product should be sent to the PEGI Experts Group for further consideration.</p>



ANNEXES





18TM
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ANNEX 1 - PEGI Assessment Form

Rating	No.	Question	Help	Content descriptor
		Does the game contain:		
	1	Depictions of gross violence, which includes torture, dismemberment, sadism and horrific depictions of death or injury towards human-like or animal-like characters	Gross violence will mean depictions of decapitation, dismemberment or torture and other horrific methods of bringing death, severe pain or injury to the recipient. This will usually be associated with large amounts of blood or gore. The emphasis is on the horrific nature of the violence. The violence will not be treated as gross violence if the recipients die or are injured in an unrealistic manner. If they instantly disappear in a puff of smoke or are killed/injured and then come back to life or appear uninjured this will not be treated as gross violence. The characters must look like humans or animals. If a character looks like a human it should be treated as human even if it is unrealistic (if something called a zombie or any other name looks like a human it should be treated as human).	Violence 
	2	Depictions of apparently motiveless killing or serious injury to multiple numbers of innocent human-like characters	This is where groups of human-like characters are killed or injured at random for no apparent reason and deals with themes such as the killing of pedestrians in the street, shoppers in a shopping arcade and children in a school. The characters must look like humans or animals. If a character looks like a human it should be treated as human even if it is unrealistic (if something called a zombie or any other name looks like a human it should be treated as human).	Violence 
	3	Depictions of violence towards vulnerable or defenceless human-like characters	The characters must look like humans. If a character looks like a human it should be treated as human even if it is unrealistic (if something called a zombie or any other name looks like a human it should be treated as human). Vulnerable human-like characters will include in particular women and children. Defenceless characters will include those that have no opportunity to avoid the violence (eg. by running away or hiding). It will not generally include characters who are part of the gameplay (eg. a soldier captured by the enemy and subsequently tied up and shot). No character will be considered vulnerable or defenceless if they are not intended to be part of the gameplay. However, any violence in this context should be considered on its merits.	Violence 
	4	Depictions of sexual activity with visible genital organs	Sexual activity means all aspects of human sexual intercourse, masturbation and sexual foreplay where a male or female sexual organ is visible. The depiction of 'boobs and bottoms' or pubic hair only will not be treated as visible sexual organs.	Sex 
	5	Depictions of sexual violence or threats (including rape)	This will mean acts of a sexual nature where they are inflicted against non-consenting human-like characters, including rape or the infliction (including self-infliction) of pain on genital organs.	Violence 
	6	Detailed descriptions of techniques that could be used in criminal offences	The descriptions have to show how the offences can be carried out. For example an instruction manual showing how to make a molotov cocktail or bomb would be included under this question as would details of the implements needed to break into a car and how to use them.	Violence 





Rating	No.	Question	Help	Content descriptor
 www.pegi.info	7	Glamorisation of the use of illegal drugs	The depictions will show that the user of the drugs is able to achieve success (win the game, get the girl, kill the enemy, commit the crime) after the use of illegal drugs. The drugs concerned should be real and be illegal (not fantasy or legal drugs).	Drugs 
 www.pegi.info	8	Depictions of ethnic, religious, nationalistic or other stereotypes like to encourage hatred	The emphasis here is on the words 'likely to encourage hatred'. It should be noted that any such depictions are very likely to infringe national criminal laws and cannot be included in the game in any event. It is the responsibility of each game publisher to comply with national criminal laws and use of the PEGI system does not absolve the game publisher from such responsibility or provide any legal or other defence to infringement of national criminal laws.	Discrimination 
 www.pegi.info	9	Sexual expletives or blasphemy (only answer 'yes' to this question if a 'yes' answer has been given to any of questions 1-8)	A 'yes' answer to this question 9 will ensure that a language descriptor is used on packaging. If a 'yes' answer has not been given to any of questions 1 – 8 do not answer 'yes' to this question 9. The most common sexual expletives are fuck, cunt, motherfucker and cocksucker although this list is not exhaustive. Blasphemy means irreverent depictions or words concerning sacred matters or religious beliefs (not restricted to the Christian faith). It should be noted that blasphemy is likely to be illegal under national criminal laws and may not be included in the game in any event.	Bad Language 
 www.pegi.info	10	Moving images that encourage and/or teach the use of games of chance that are played/carried out as a traditional means of gambling (only answer 'yes' to this question if a 'yes' answer has been given to any of questions 1-8)	A 'yes' answer to this question 10 will ensure that a gambling descriptor is used on packaging. If a 'yes' answer has not been given to any of questions 1 – 8 do not answer 'yes' to this question 10. This refers to types of betting or gambling for money that is normally played/carried out in casinos, gambling halls, racetracks. This does not cover games where betting or gambling is simply part of the general storyline. The game must actually teach the player how to gamble or bet and/or encourage the player to want to gamble or bet for money in real life. For example this will include games that teach the player how to play card games that are usually played for money or how to play the odds in horse racing.	Gambling 
 www.pegi.info	11	Depictions of realistic looking violence towards human-like or animal-like characters	This means violence where the character reacts as it would in real life. It is not necessary for there to be any blood or gore. The characters must look like humans or animals. If a character looks like a human it should be treated as human even if it is unrealistic (if something called a zombie or any other name looks like a human it should be treated as human). This does not include sporting action where the sporting action is depicted within the rules of the game or hunting or predation displayed between animal-like characters acting in their natural environment and behaviour.	Violence 

Rating	No.	Question	Help	Content descriptor
	12	Sustained depictions of death or injury to human-like or animal-like characters (except arcade style or sporting action)	This means that all or the majority of the gameplay relates to violence. The characters must look like humans or animals. If a character looks like a human it should be treated as human even if it is unrealistic (if something called a zombie or any other name looks like a human it should be treated as human). Arcade style action refers mostly to 2D effect depictions where the characters move left and right to attack each other. The sporting action must be depicted within the rules of the sport concerned.	Violence 
	13	Depictions of arcade style or sporting action showing violence containing blood or gore	Arcade style action refers mostly to 2D effect depictions where the characters move left and right to attack each other. If there is no blood or gore then a 'yes' answer to question 24 is probably more appropriate.	Violence 
	14	Depictions of sexual intercourse without visible genitals	This is self-explanatory although it must be fairly apparent what the characters are doing. 'Boobs and bums' do not count as genital organs and nor does the showing of pubic hair only.	Sex 
	15	Depictions of erotic or sexual nudity	This is where the depiction of nudity (including partial nudity) could result in sexual arousal or is shown as a prelude to human sexual activity. This can include still pictures particularly if they depict an erotic activity. This will not generally include straightforward pin-ups.	Sex 
	16	Sexual expletives or blasphemy	The most common sexual expletives are fuck, cunt, motherfucker and cocksucker although this list is not exhaustive. Blasphemy means irreverent depictions or words concerning sacred matters or religious beliefs (not restricted to the Christian faith). It should be noted that blasphemy is likely to be illegal under national criminal laws and may not be included in the game in any event.	Bad Language 
	17	Encouragement of the use of tobacco or alcohol	This means where the character gains advantage in the game by the use of tobacco or alcohol. It also includes prominent advertising encouraging the use of tobacco or alcohol products.	Drugs 
	18	Depictions of the use of illegal drugs	This includes the use of illegal drugs in any circumstances.	Drugs 
	19	Glamorisation of crime	This is where the depiction of criminal acts could encourage the games player to think that 'crime pays' or has no negative repercussions.	Violence 

Rating	No.	Question	Help	Content descriptor
 www.pegi.info	20	Moving images that encourage and/or teach the use of games of chance that are played/carried out as a traditional means of gambling(only answer 'yes' to this question if a 'yes' answer has been given to any of questions 11-19)	A 'yes' answer to this question 20 will ensure that a gambling descriptor is used on packaging. If a 'yes' answer has not been given to any of questions 11 – 19, do not answer 'yes' to this question 20. This refers to types of betting or gambling for money that is normally played/carried out in casinos, gambling halls, racetracks. This does not cover games where betting or gambling is simply part of the general storyline. The game must actually teach the player how to gamble or bet and/or encourage the player to want to gamble or bet for money in real life. For example this will include games that teach the player how to play card games that are usually played for money or how to play the odds in horse racing.	Gambling 
 www.pegi.info	21	Depictions of realistic looking violence towards fantasy characters	A fantasy character is a character that does not exist in real life and does not take a human appearance and includes ghosts, gremlins, dragons and other mythical creatures. In determining whether the violence is realistic it is assumed that the fantasy character does actually exist and reacts as if it were a human-like character.	Violence 
 www.pegi.info	22	Depictions of non-realistic looking violence towards human-like or animal-like characters	The characters must look like humans or animals. If a character looks like a human it should be treated as human even if it is unrealistic (if something called a zombie or any other name looks like a human it should be treated as human). The characters react in a way that is not representative of real life and although you know that the characters are being killed or injured you do not really see very much (the characters immediately disappear in a puff of smoke). This does not include hunting or predation displayed between animal-like characters acting in their natural environment and behaviour. If the violence is unrealistic and of a minor nature, or set in a child-like setting, then questions 31 or 33 may be more appropriate.	Violence 
 www.pegi.info	23	Depictions of realistic looking violence of a minor nature on a human-like or animal-like character that does not result in any obvious injury or harm	This is where the violence to the human-like or animal-like character is realistic but very minor such as a slap or smack and the victim does not show any apparent harm or injury.	Violence 
 www.pegi.info	24	Depictions of arcade style or sporting action showing violence	Arcade style action refers mostly to 2D effect depictions where the characters move left and right to attack each other. This question relates to arcade style or sporting action where there is no blood or gore. The sporting action must be depicted within the rules of the sport.	Violence 

Rating	No.	Question	Help	Content descriptor
	25	Words or activities that amount to obvious sexual innuendo or explicit sexual descriptions or images or sexual posturing	<p>This can refer to words or pictures that may be sexually explicit but do not amount to eroticism (a brief glimpse of a lady with bare boobs at a window or a brief glimpse of a naked couple (not showing genitalia) getting into bed). The sexual innuendo must be obviously relating to sexual intercourse/foreplay and can consist of words and/or activity. This would cover instances in which it is clear that sexual intercourse is taking place but the participants are out of view, under sheets etc. The importance is sexual connotation. If however, the couple can be seen, even if they are partially clothed, then question 14 'sexual intercourse without visible genitals' will be more appropriate. The test is whether the images could prompt sexual curiosity on behalf of the player.</p> <p>Sexual posturing means dancing or posing (while remaining clothed) in a manner intended to put across a sexual message or suggestion. This will include such things as pole dancing, lap dancing and even some of the more suggestive music video sequences.</p>	Sex 
	26	Mild swearing and/or offensive language	<p>Bad language that falls short of sexual expletives, including words that, although they may not be considered mild swearing, could nevertheless be considered offensive. Some words commonly used offensively, when used in a literal sense, are not offensive. An example would be the word "bloody" which more often is used in a mild swearing manner, e.g., "the bloody gun is jammed". If it is used in a literal sense, e.g., "the man had a bloody arm because he had been shot", it is not offensive. The test must be whether a parent would be comfortable with a child under 12 years old using the language they may learn from the game. If the answer is no, the word should receive a 12 rating.</p>	Bad Language 
	27	Moving images that encourage and/or teach the use of games of chance that are played/carried out as a traditional means of gambling	<p>This refers to types of betting or gambling for money that is normally played/carried out in casinos, gambling halls, racetracks. This does not cover games where betting or gambling is simply part of the general storyline. The game must actually teach the player how to gamble or bet and/or encourage the player to want to gamble or bet for money in real life. For example this will include games that teach the player how to play card games that are usually played for money or how to play the odds in horse racing.</p>	Gambling 
	28	Pictures or sounds likely to be horrifying	<p>This means horrific sounds or horror effects that may be shocking or cause revulsion in the viewer. This may include (but is not limited to) images of mutilated bodies, graphic injury details, terrified humans, intense feelings of strong threat or dread. If the setting is frightening or creepy, question 34 may be more appropriate.</p>	Horror 

Rating	No.	Question	Help	Content descriptor
 www.pegi.info	29	Depictions of non-realistic violence towards fantasy characters	A fantasy character is a character that does not exist in real life and does not take a human appearance and includes ghosts, gremlins, dragons and other mythical creatures. The characters react in a way that would not be expected of human-like characters and although you know that the characters are being killed or injured you do not really see very much (e.g. the characters immediately disappear in a puff of smoke or are otherwise so small that you really cannot see what exactly is happening).	Violence 
 www.pegi.info	30	Depictions of non-detailed and non-realistic violence towards non-detailed human-like characters	This is where the depiction gives only a basic representation of a human, including pixelated characters. Non-detailed human-like characters generally take up a small portion of the screen. Features may include (but are not limited to): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No facial expression and/or detail • Simplistic animation and/or movement. • Non-detailed clothing and/or body parts etc. 	Violence 
 www.pegi.info	31	Depictions of non-realistic violence of a minor nature towards a human-like or animal-like character	Characters must react to the violence in an unrealistic way, e.g. they flash or disappear when hit, but do not show any apparent reactions consistent with real life. The important aspect will be the minor nature of the violence. Therefore there cannot be any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on the violence in depictions or audio, e.g. close-ups, slow motion • Depictions of pain or suffering 	Violence 
 www.pegi.info	32	Depictions of implied violence to humans where the actual violence is not shown	This is where you do not actually see any violence to humans but it is obvious what is happening. It covers such matters as the bombing of a city where you know civilians are killed and injured, blowing up a tank or shooting down a plane where you know the crew are killed, smashing into cars or other vehicles where the driver/passenger must be injured. If the depictions are non-detailed, this question does not apply. It also includes depictions of violence against humans where you do not see any violent act, or the immediate reaction to this act, but you do see the cause and/or the result.	Violence 
 www.pegi.info	33	Depictions of non-realistic violence set in a child-friendly setting or context.	A child-friendly setting refers to the game's theme, characters and visual tone. Such a setting is aimed at children and is often inspired by worlds originating from other popular media like comics, television and animated series (e.g. superhero genre, cartoons). There is a lack of reality in the violence and weapons used (e.g. whimsical plastic-cap pistols/blasters, exaggerated-sized pistols, swords, etc). Human-like characters will generally have non-realistic features, for example, body shape is not in proportion (e.g. enlarged head), exaggerated features (e.g. enlarged eyes), or cartoon-like appearance. The violence or combat is potentially high in intensity or frenetic but predominantly cartoonish and non-realistic (e.g. colourful light effects, explosions, flashes, puffs of smoke, or cartoonish sound effects). This means gore or injury detail is not allowed. If the game focuses solely on hand to hand combat ('beat em up' genre), question 22 may be more appropriate (e.g. Dragon Ball Z, Street Fighter, King of Fighters, etc).	Violence 

Rating	No.	Question	Help	Content descriptor
	34	Pictures or sounds likely to be scary or frightening to young children	This is where you do not actually see or hear anything specifically violent but nevertheless because of the sounds or depictions the overall theme may be frightening to young children (haunting or aggressive music, entering a haunted house, background screams or rustling in the undergrowth).	Fear 
	35	Depictions of nudity in a non-sexual context	This is where the nudity (which includes partial nudity but no visible genitalia) has no direct or implied sexual meaning such as a lady breast feeding a baby, topless sunbathing or a nudist beach.	—
	36	Depictions of violence that is humorous and is set in a cartoon, slapstick or child-like setting.	The humorous element is essential for violence to be depicted at this level, however, it is immaterial whether the characters are realistic (Laurel and Hardy style), non-realistic (fantasy characters or characters drawn as you would expect in comic books) or cartoon characters (Bugs Bunny or Tom and Jerry style). It refers to the actual violence and not merely to the overall theme of the game. Therefore an act of violence, which in itself is not humorous, contained in a comedy would be more appropriate at the 12+ level. Nothing should be shown that might in any way disturb younger children. No blood or obvious injuries should be visible.	—
	37	Does the game allow online gameplay with or against other people? (Content descriptor discontinued in July 2015)	This applies to games where it is necessary to connect to any website, portal, gateway or other internet connection in order to play the game. It includes those games played as 'single player' as well as those played as 'multi-player'. It does not include games that are only downloaded via the internet and subsequently played on the PC or console without the requirement for an internet connection for the actual gameplay.	Online Descriptor 



ANNEX 2

PEGI Code of Conduct

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR THE EUROPEAN INTERACTIVE SOFTWARE INDUSTRY REGARDING AGE RATING LABELLING, PROMOTION AND ADVERTISING OF INTERACTIVE SOFTWARE PRODUCTS AND MAINTENANCE OF SAFE ONLINE GAMEPLAY

Article 1: SCOPE

1.1 The present Code shall apply to all interactive software Products including video products, computer products and education/reference works, distributed for retail sale by all publishers or other organisations which sign an agreement with ISFE to comply with this Code.

1.2 This Code shall also, where practicable, cover all Products distributed electronically by whatever means, such as via the Internet or mobile telephony including on-line retailing of packaged products and on-line distribution of products which, in each case, are intended for play in territories where the PEGI System applies.

1.3 The rules contained in this Code shall apply to the labelling of interactive software Products, as well as to associated advertising and promotion by any means.

1.4 The rules contained in this Code shall, where indicated, also apply to Products which offer Online Gameplay ('Online Gameplay Environments').

1.5 All capitalised terms in this Code have the meanings given to them in the standard PEGI Agreement between ISFE and Publishers unless otherwise indicated in this Code.

Article 2: PURPOSE

This Code reflects the interactive software industry's commitment and concern both to provide information to the public on the content of interactive software products in a responsible manner and also to ensure safe online gameplay for children. This industry's contribution complements existing national laws, regulations and enforcement mechanisms.

2.1 Firstly, this Code is intended to provide parents and educators with objective, intelligible and reliable information regarding the minimum age for which a given product is deemed suitable with specific reference to its content. The voluntary ratings implemented under the Code in no way relate to the difficulty of an interactive software product or the level of skill required to play it.

2.2 Secondly, this Code is intended to ensure that all advertising, marketing and promotion of interactive software products is conducted in a responsible manner.

2.3 Thirdly, this Code reflects the interactive software industry's commitment not to distribute market, advertise or promote interactive software products likely to offend human decency.

2.4 Fourthly, this Code reflects the interactive software industry's commitment to provide a safe environment where children utilise interactive software products online.

Article 3: INSTRUMENTS

In order to fulfill the objectives spelled out in Article 2, nine principal instruments are hereby outlined:

3.1 The PEGI System operated by PEGI S.A. (see 3.3 below) with the assistance of the Administrator resulting in the granting of licenses to use the Logos and the Descriptors. PEGI retains at all times the right to rescind or recall any Logo or Descriptor assigned to a product.

3.2 An Online Safety System to be known as the "PEGI Online" which shall, where practicable, apply to Products offering Online Gameplay and will result in the granting of licenses to use the PEGI Online Logo.

3.3 PEGI S.A. ("PEGI") a Belgian not for profit company with a social purpose and entrusted by ISFE with the day to day management, supervision and development of the PEGI and PEGI Online System.

3.4 A Management Board ("PMB") consisting of a chairperson, the PEGI Managing Director, representatives from industry, the chairs of the PEGI Council and the Experts Group charged with giving guidance to the PEGI Managing Director on the operation and development of the PEGI and PEGI Online System.

3.5. A Council ("PC") and Experts Group ("PEG") including representatives from chief stakeholders (parents, consumers associations, child psychology experts, academics, media experts

and the interactive software industry - see Article 12 below) These bodies will advise on the continuing adjustment of the Code to take account of social, political, legal and technological developments. The PEG shall be in charge of considering technical developments (in all fields) that may impact the PEGI and PEGI Online Systems.

3.6 A Complaints Board ("PCB") including, in the same manner as the PC, representatives from chief stakeholders, (see Article 13 below) and entrusted with the two following tasks:

- handling possible complaints about the consistency of advertising, marketing and promotional activities of any Signatory with any age rating finally attributed or likely to be attributed under the PEGI System.
- handling conflicts about the PEGI System age ratings themselves including any Signatory or consumer complaints about those ratings.

3.7. An Enforcement Committee ("PEC") including, in the same manner as the PC, representatives from chief stakeholders which is in charge of implementing the recommendations of the PMB, and, more generally, of seeing to the enforcement of the rules and sanctions included in the present Code, including decisions of the PCB (see Article 14 below).

3.8 A Legal Committee ("PLC") in charge of securing the ongoing coherence of the PEGI System with national legal frameworks.

Article 4: PEGI's COMMITMENT TO THE CODE

PEGI hereby commits to:

4.1 ensure that the PEGI and PEGI Online System is operated as efficiently as possible by an independent administrator.

4.2 ensure comprehensive, thorough awareness and understanding of the Code and its purpose by all participants in the industry, including Signatories and developers, wholesalers, retailers, internet service providers, trade media and advertising companies.

4.3 implement and maintain the appropriate structures to carry out the tasks of interpreting and updating this Code, making it public in cooperation with national trade associations, settling disputes, and conducting studies and reports about the products concerned.

4.4 initiate any additional operations necessary to support the purposes of the Code.

Article 5: OBLIGATIONS OF SIGNATORIES

Signatories shall:

5.1 abide by all decisions made by the PCB and PEC and provide all appropriate information to the PC and PEG which oversees the implementation of this Code.

5.2 assist PEGI in delivering on its own commitments as stated in Article 4 above including endorsing and publicising the Code where necessary.

5.3 when concluding new terms and conditions of sale with distributors and wholesalers of their Product, include a term providing that those distributors and wholesalers, by way of a standard clause in their respective terms and conditions of sale with retailers (example below), recommend that those retailers and their employees, when engaged in face to face transaction with customers, ensure compliance with the PEGI Retail Code (see Annex B) and, in particular, do not sell Product to those customers in contravention of the specified PEGI age rating.

Sample Standard Clause: *The Distributor (Wholesaler) recommends to the Retailer that they and their employees, when engaged in face to face transactions with customers, comply with the PEGI Retail Code and, in particular, do not sell Product to those customers in contravention of the specified PEGI age rating.'*

5.4 when concluding new terms and conditions of sale with retailers of their product recommend to those retailers, by way of a standard clause in the terms and conditions (example below), that they and their employees, when engaged in face to face transactions with customers, should comply with the PEGI Retail Code (see Annex B) and, in particular, do not sell Product to those customers in contravention of the specified PEGI age rating.

Sample Standard Clause: *'The Seller recommends to the Retailer that they and their employees, when engaged in face to face transactions with customers, comply with the PEGI Retail Code and, in particular, do not sell Product to those customers in contravention of the specified PEGI age rating.'*

Article 6: LEGAL AND REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT

Signatories shall ensure that the content, distribution by any means, promotion and advertising of the Products covered by this Code comply at all times with existing and future laws and regulations at EU and national level. It is therefore understood that

the obligation to utilise the Code applies only as far as it does not lead to any infringement of existing or future national mandatory (governmental) rating and labelling systems applicable to interactive software made available by physical or electronic means.

Article 7: PEGI SYSTEM - AGE RATING

The main features of the PEGI System are described as follows. Their implementation shall be subject to guidelines to be enacted by the PEC and to specific agreements to be entered into by the Signatories and PEGI.

7.1 Prior to product release, Signatories shall, for each product and format thereof complete an Assessment File.

7.2 The Assessment File shall generate an age rating Logo and the Descriptors indicating the reasons for classification of the Product in a specific age category.

7.3 The PEGI System age rating groups shall be divided as follows: 3, 7, 12, 16, and 18.

7.4 The Administrator shall review the Assessment File according to the following rules:

7.4.1 The Administrator shall review all products in full before deciding whether to approve the age rating by granting a licence to use the Logo and Descriptors except in the case of Products subject to the PEGI Express system where age ratings utilised can be verified by the Administrator after the Product is made available to the public.

7.4.2 In the event that the recommendation on the appropriate age rating is different from the one determined by the submitting Signatory, an explanation for the variation shall be provided by the Administrator. If the Signatory does not agree with the recommendation, it may appeal to the PCB, which will make the final decision as to the appropriate age rating recommendation.

7.4.3 In due course, the Signatory will receive a license to reproduce the Logo and Descriptors corresponding to the final recommendation on the product packaging, or equivalent place immediately visible to consumers where distribution is made via electronic means.

Article 8: PEGI ONLINE SYSTEM

The main features of the PEGI Online System are described in this, and in the following, article.

8.1 The Administrator shall evaluate the ability of the Signatory to comply with the commitments of the PEGI Online system described in Article 9 below in light of answers and material provided by the Signatory as part of the PEGI System described in Article 7 above as far as Online Gameplay Environments (defined in Article 1.4 above) are concerned.

8.2 If the Administrator so decides, the Signatory will be issued a licence to reproduce the PEGI Online Logo and to post it on its Online Gameplay Environments in accordance with guidelines enacted by the PEC.

8.3 The Administrator shall review the compliance of an Online Gameplay Environment with the Code of Conduct where a consumer complains that the said Online Gameplay Environment does not comply with the Signatory's obligations under Article 9 below.

Article 9: PEGI ONLINE - CONDITIONS FOR ONLINE GAMEPLAY ENVIRONMENTS

9.1 Rated Contents Products offering Online Gameplay Environments operated by Signatories will, where practicable, be appropriately rated under the PEGI System. This provision will not apply to game content which is posted on the Online Gameplay Environment operated by the Signatory but which is not under the Signatory's control, such as user-generated content.

9.2 Removal of Undesirable Content Signatories shall use their best endeavours to ensure that Online Gameplay Environments are kept free of content which is illegal, offensive, racist, degrading, corrupting, threatening, obscene or might permanently impair the development of minors. When Online Gameplay Environments also contain user generated content, Signatories shall use their best endeavours to immediately take down any such content which is illegal, offensive, racist, degrading, corrupting, threatening, obscene or might permanently impair the development of minors. Observance of all the foregoing should, where possible, also include removal of undesirable links or 'hyperlinks.'

9.3 Appropriate Reporting Mechanisms Consistent with the foregoing paragraph, Signatories will ensure that appropriate reporting mechanisms are in place to allow players to notify Signatories of the existence of content such as described in the previous sub-section within any Online Gameplay Environment.

9.4 Chatrooms Signatories should take reasonable precautions to ensure that Online Gameplay Environments which allow voice or video chat, protect children from access to age-inappropriate content introduced by other users.

9.5 Other Operators Signatories shall use their best endeavours to ensure that operators of Online Gameplay Environments offered by Products published by the Signatory and which are authorised by, but not under the control of, the Signatory, abide by these rules and/or subsequently become Signatories themselves.

9.6 Safety Warnings Signatories shall advise users of Online Gameplay Environments under their control of the desirability of taking occasional breaks from Online Gameplay.

9.7 Community Standards Signatories shall ensure the incorporation in their terms of business with users of Online Gameplay Environments of certain provisions usually included under the heading of so called 'community standards'. These provisions will contain prohibitions against those users introducing content or indulging in online behaviour which is illegal, offensive, racist, degrading, corrupting, threatening, obscene or might permanently impair the development of minors.

9.8 Privacy Any Signatory engaging in the online collection of personal information from subscribers will maintain an effective and coherent Privacy Policy fully in accordance with all applicable European Union and national data protection laws. The Privacy Policy will encompass the responsible collection, distribution, correction, and security of the personal details of users who shall be given full details of the Signatory's Privacy Policy before the finalisation of any subscription to an Online Gameplay Environment. Subscribers must be also be given the opportunity to comment on any perceived misuse of their personal details and therefore be fully advised as to ways, for example, of avoiding unsolicited or unwanted e-mail contact.

9.9 Protection of Minors In keeping with one of the main objectives of both the PEGI and PEGI Online Systems, Signatories shall adhere to stringent standards ensuring the protection of children from any unsuitable content and behaviour associated with any Online Gameplay Environment offered by any Product aimed at children. These standards shall include, as appropriate;

- the publication of warnings about the supply or display online of private email addresses
- promoting responsible purchasing practices within Online Gameplay Environments where minors are concerned.

9.10 Signatories who publish Products offering Online Gameplay Environments which allow voice or video chat should take reasonable safeguards to protect children from access to age-

inappropriate content introduced by other users and should also take steps to ensure that the privacy of minors is reasonably protected at all times.

Article 10: LABELLING

10.1 The PEGI Online Logo and the PEGI Logo and Descriptors shall appear on or in connection with the product in a size that permits the message to be legible and clearly visible to the consumer at the point of sale, in accordance with the templates set out in the Advertising and Labeling Guidelines as are made available by PEGI from time to time.

10.2 The same principles shall apply to the making available to the public through other means apart from sale, such as by electronic means or by rental or lending.

10.3 Signatories shall ensure that the PEGI Online and the PEGI Logo and Descriptors are used in accordance with national legal requirements and that, in particular, they are not used in countries where the product is prohibited or subject to compulsory content classification.

10.4 Signatories should use their best efforts to encourage online service providers carrying those Signatories' Products, or advertising for those Products, but not under the Signatories' control to display the ratings for those products within those online services.

10.5 The PEGI Online Logo should provide a direct hyperlink to a dedicated website where appropriate information will be given regarding the risks arising from the fact that content created in the course of gameplay may be unknown to the original publisher. Alternatively and where appropriate, POSC Signatories shall display the URL associated with the said dedicated website in a prominent position visible to users of Online Gameplay Environments.

Article 11: ADVERTISING AND PROMOTION

11.1 Advertising materials shall follow the PEGI Labeling and Advertising Guidelines and in particular show the age rating granted to the Product concerned or, should the license be pending, show the final age rating expected, taking the higher age category as a reference in case of doubt.

11.2 The design of print, broadcast and on-line advertising of Products shall comply with laws and regulations applicable to the age category concerned.

11.3 More generally, the following principles shall apply:

- i. All advertisements shall accurately reflect, to the best extent possible both the nature and content of the product publicized and the rating associated with that product. Advertisements should not mislead consumers as to the product's true character.
- ii. Advertisements shall not in any way exploit a PEGI System rating of a product as such rating is intended as a recommendation only.
- iii. All advertisements shall be created with a sense of responsibility towards the public.
- iv. All advertisements shall aim to avoid content that is likely to cause serious or widespread offence to the average consumer targeted.
- v. Signatories shall not specifically target advertising for entertainment software Products rated 16 or 18 to consumers for whom the product is not rated as appropriate.

vi. Signatories shall ensure that ancillary or separate products that are being sold or promoted in association with a core product contain content that is appropriate for the audience for which the core product is intended.

vii. Signatories shall not enter into promotion of Products rated 16 or 18 with another company's brands, products, or events, if it is reasonable to believe that such company's products, brands or events will reach consumers for whom the Product is not rated as appropriate.

viii. Signatories shall inform the public by means of a general statement of the existence of sponsorship(s) and/or the existence of 'product placement(s) associated with any Product. In this regard use of a trade mark or brand solely to provide authenticity to the Product environment shall not be held to constitute either product placement or sponsorship provided that license holders do not receive payment in exchange for such use.

11.3 The PEGI System shall be open to magazine Signatories for the age rating of compact discs and/or DVDs attached to such magazines (cover discs) when they contain excerpts from interactive software products and/or audiovisual material related to such products provided that those products are published by other Signatories.

Article 12: PEGI COUNCIL, LEGAL COMMITTEE, EXPERTS AND DEVELOPER GROUP

The PEGI Council ("PC") and PEGI Experts Group ("PEG") shall play key roles in ensuring that the Code evolves in line with all relevant social, political, legal and technological developments.

The PC comprises:

- national representatives from the countries that use the PEGI System
- representatives from PEGI and the Administrator.
- other members as deemed appropriate by agreement between the PMB and PC.

The PEG comprises:

- parents and consumer organisation representatives,
- child psychology experts,
- media experts,
- age rating experts,
- lawyers expert in European minor protection laws,
- videogame industry experts,
- academics,
- other experts in their field as considered appropriate and necessary.

Article 13: COMPLAINTS BOARD

An independent Complaints Board ("PCB") is established with regard to this Code of Conduct with the following tasks in mind:

- handling possible complaints about the consistency of advertising, marketing and promotional activities of any Signatory with the age rating finally attributed or likely to be attributed under the PEGI System;
- handling possible rating conflicts between Signatories and the PEGI System,
- processing age rating complaints by consumers.

The PCB will draw on similar expertise to the PC and PEG.

Article 14: ENFORCEMENT COMMITTEE

Compliance with this Code, the provision of advice to all companies deciding to subscribe to the Code as well as to its Administrator and the possible imposition of sanctions on Signatories infringing the Code, shall be entrusted to the PEGI Enforcement Committee ("PEC") which shall be made up an equal number of carefully selected representatives of the industry and PC members, as nominated by the PMB.



Article 15: INFRINGEMENT, CORRECTIVE ACTION, SANCTIONS AND ARBITRATION

15.1 In addition to infringements identified by third parties or the Administrator, the PEC and the PCB shall jointly identify and document any possible wrongful application and/or breaches of the Code. Reasonable, non-arbitrary discretion will be used in examining all relevant facts to enable a determination of appropriate sanctions.

15.2 The PEC and PCB may suggest corrective action commensurate to the violation, to be implemented immediately. This corrective action may include:

- re-labelling of packaging,
- revocation and removal of the Logos and Descriptors,
- recall of inaccurately labelled product,
- modification of advertisements both on and offline.

15.3 Failure to abide by the terms of this Code, including the failure to institute the corrective action referred to at 15.2. above will expose offenders to the imposition of sanctions by the PEC as set out in Annex A including, but not limited to, the following:

- temporary suspension of product from the PEGI and/or PEGI Online Systems
- mandatory modification of any associated advertisements both on and off-line,
- disqualification of product from the PEGI and/or PEGI Online Systems for a set period
- fines of up to € 500,000 per violation depending on the gravity thereof and the failure to take appropriate remedial action.

Violations warranting these sanctions include:

- presenting misleading or incomplete material to support the original application for a PEGI rating license,
- failure to submit changes, updates, or modifications that affect the ability of the Signatory to comply with its obligations under the Codes in a timely fashion,
- self-application or flawed display of the Logos and Descriptors by a Signatory,
- unlicensed or inappropriate display of the PEGI Online Logo,
- inappropriately targeted marketing,
- more generally, all steps or omissions that fail to show a sense of responsibility towards the general public. In this regard the deliberate failure by a Signatory to disclose relevant content which is discovered after Logos and Descriptors have been assigned shall be material grounds for consideration of high level sanctions by the PEC.
- those steps and omissions set out in Annex A.

15.4 The PEC shall be able to take into account on the application of a Signatory, or otherwise, any or all extenuating circumstances justifying moderation of any sanction to be applied.

15.5 Any PEC decision imposing a sanction on a Signatory can be referred by that Signatory, within thirty days of the date of the PEC decision, to final and binding arbitration by CEPANI, the Belgian Centre for Arbitration. Arbitration shall be the sole method available to challenge any decision of the PEC. Imposition of any sanction shall await the decision of CEPANI.



APPENDIX A

BREACHES OF THE CODES OF CONDUCT AND RELATED SANCTIONS

LEVEL I. VERY SERIOUS

Failure to Disclose Significant Content

This can be defined as a deliberate failure to disclose, or gross negligence* leading to a failure to disclose, significant aspects of a product which would have led to the assignment of a higher age rating to that product than the rating actually assigned to and displayed on the product under the PEGI rating process and the targeting of advertising for a product at consumers, especially children, for whom the product is not rated as appropriate.

The fact that this behaviour causes significant damage both to the integrity of the PEGI System and the public's use of or trust in the system is reflected in the sanctions set out below.

SANCTIONS

First Breach; 100,000 to 250,000 Euro Fine
 Second Breach; 250,000 to 500,000 Euro Fine
 Third Breach; 500,000 Euro Fine

Additionally, a period of disqualification from the PEGI System may also be imposed the duration of which will depend on the severity of the breach.

In all the above cases the PEC may also elect to impose sanctions including the removal of the product from the market in order to resticker all existing product in line with the appropriate age rating.

* In case of doubt 'gross negligence' will be not be held to have taken place;

(i) where a genuine mistake has been made by the person assessing the content of a product and/or

(ii) where there was a subsequent genuine attempt made by that person to correct the assessment as soon as possible after becoming aware of the mistake

LEVEL II. SERIOUS

These include the following:

- Negligence leading to a failure to disclose significant aspects of a product which would have lead to the assignment of a higher age rating to that product than the rating actually displayed on the product when sold to the public. 'Negligence' will be held to exist where the content has been assessed but, through error or omission, content significant to the rating assigned has not been taken into account.
- Failure to comply with a sanction imposed by the PEC
- Failure to respond to an inquiry by the Administrator or the PEC
- Failure to submit changes, updates, or modifications that materially concern the age rating assigned to a product and are made after the product has received that rating.
- Using PEGI logo or content descriptors which have not been assigned by the Administrator by way of licence.
- Failure to display a PEGI age rating or display of an incorrect PEGI rating
- Failure to display a PEGI content descriptor or the display of incorrect content descriptor
- Presenting deliberately misleading or incomplete material to support an original application for a PEGI Online licence
- Unlicensed display of the PEGI Online Logo
- Using advertising which is inconsistent with a PEGI rating (not 'very' serious) or which exploits a PEGI rating by, for example, drawing attention to an 18 rating as a device to encourage sales of the product concerned.
- Using advertising which is offensive or which otherwise does not reflect a sense of responsibility towards the public or to the PEGI System.

SANCTIONS

First Breach; 5,000 to 20,000 Euro Fine
 Second Breach; 20,000 to 50,000 Euro Fine
 Third Breach; 75,000 Euro Fine

In all the above cases the PEC may also elect to impose sanctions either of removal of the product from the market or restickering or relabelling of all existing product in line with the appropriate age rating.

LEVEL III ADMINISTRATIVE/OPERATIONAL

Failure to display correct PEGI rating on Demo or Trailer

Wilful failure to submit complete and accurate submission materials, when discovered before release of the product.

Negligent supply of incomplete, inaccurate or inconsistent content in submission materials leading to rating errors which are discovered before release of the product.

SANCTIONS

First Breach; up to 5,000 Euro Fine
 Second Breach; 5,000 to 7,500 Euro Fine
 Third Breach; 10,000 Euro Fine and/or a period of disqualification from the PEGI Rating System depending on the severity of the breach

ALL LEVELS - RETRAINING OF CODERS

In all levels and cases of breaches of the Code of conduct the imposition of a sanction requiring the retraining by the Administrator of all PEGI Coders employed by that company shall be at the discretion of the PEC.

ALL LEVELS – SYSTEMATIC SCREENING OF FUTURE PRODUCT

In all levels and cases of breaches of the Code of conduct the PEC may require systematic screening of product to be released in the future for a period to be determined and also the payment of any additional costs caused by this measure.

ALL LEVELS - BREACHES AND TIME LIMITS

In the case of sanctions to be applied the following Time Limits shall be held relevant in determining whether a company under sanction shall be considered by the PEC to be of past good conduct;

LEVEL I All breaches shall stay on a company's PEGI record for a period of **three** years from the date that the related sanctions were imposed

LEVEL II All breaches shall stay on a company's PEGI record for a period of **two** years from the date that the related sanctions were imposed

LEVEL III All breaches shall stay on a company's PEGI record for a period of **one** year from the date that the related sanctions were imposed

After the expiration of the appropriate time limits as set out above the PEGI record of the offending company shall be considered free of any breach of PEGI and PEGI Online Safety Codes. However the PEC when considering sanctions for a breach at any one Level shall be entitled to take into account other breaches at all other Levels and can impose any discretionary penalties available under the Code for breaches at the Level under consideration.

ALL LEVELS - PUBLICATION OF DECISIONS

The PEC reserves the right to publicise details of all and any sanctions imposed for breaches of the Code of conduct.

APPENDIX B

PEGI RETAIL CODE

The Code applies to retailers in the European Economic Area territories and in Switzerland who have signed this Code and covers computer and video products that have been rated under the Pan European Game Information (PEGI) rating system. Retailers adopting this Code must use best efforts to comply with the policies outlined below when engaged in face to face transactions with customers.

Each signatory of this Code agrees to:

1. Train all appropriate managers, clerks and/or other employees so that they are familiar with the PEGI age ratings system and the policies adopted in this Code;
2. Display in a conspicuous location where product is displayed signage describing the PEGI age rating system;
3. Treat the PEGI age recommendations as mandatory and use reasonable endeavours to ensure that computer and video games are not supplied to persons below the specified age;
4. Assess existing internal policies, practices and procedures on ratings education and policy enforcement and make improvements where necessary to maintain compliance with the Code;
5. Clearly and conspicuously display rating symbols and, where feasible, content descriptors, in all advertising, marketing and promotion of games;
6. Where practical, endeavour to keep a refusals record when sales of PEGI labelled products are refused to customers of inappropriate age;
7. Respond to customer complaints about non-compliance with the Code and keep a record of such complaints;
8. Advise customers to submit a complaint at the PEGI website (www.pegi.info) when a complaint cannot be resolved at the store level;
9. Regularly share information on best practices to further develop and improve compliance with this Code;
10. Accept that, if a Signatory has failed to fulfil the letter and spirit of the Code, PEGI may provide notice to the Signatory summarizing the deficiency and provide a period of 30 days to improve, after which time PEGI may determine that the Signatory has not made sufficient improvement and exclude him from the Code;
11. Be entitled to terminate its participation in the Code at its sole discretion by providing written notice of such termination to PEGI;



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p. 8: Project CARS - Bandai Namco Entertainment (PEGI 3)
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GAMBLING



FEAR



DRUGS



DISCRIMINATION



BAD LANGUAGE



VIOLENCE



SEX