

# Stop Killing Games: Exposing the Gaming Industry's Coordinated Campaign Against Consumer Rights

The gaming industry's opposition to the Stop Killing Games initiative reveals a coordinated campaign of misinformation built on demonstrable hypocrisy. While executives publicly champion "player-first" values and consumer rights, their trade organization, Video Games Europe, fights to maintain the right to destroy games that customers have purchased. This analysis exposes the contradictions between their public statements and actual positions, documenting failures to address the very security concerns they claim justify game destruction.

## The Stop Killing Games Movement: What It Actually Demands

The Stop Killing Games citizens' initiative has reached over 1 million signatures, triggering EU consideration of legislation requiring basic consumer protections. The movement asks for simple, reasonable guarantees: when publishers end support for online games, players should retain access to products they purchased. This means providing offline modes, server binaries, or other preservation methods—not forcing publishers to maintain servers indefinitely.

## Video Games Europe's Opposition: A Web of Industry Control

Video Games Europe (VGE), representing EA, Ubisoft, Microsoft, Sony, Nintendo, and major publishers, has mounted an aggressive opposition campaign. Their position paper claims preservation would be "prohibitively expensive" and create "security risks." However, VGE's most revealing contradiction involves their own creation: the PEGI rating system.

### The PEGI Conflict of Interest

VGE argues they cannot support game preservation because it would violate "PEGI Code of Conduct" requirements. The reality they omit: Video Games Europe founded and controls PEGI. They're essentially claiming they cannot comply with rules they themselves created and can modify at will. This circular logic exposes the bad faith nature of their opposition.

## Executive Hypocrisy: "Player-First" Rhetoric vs. Anti-Consumer Actions

### EA's Andrew Wilson: The "Player-First" Deception

#### Public Statements:

- Repeatedly claims a "player-first" strategy as core company philosophy.
- Promises to ask "Is this good for the player?" in all decisions.

#### Corporate Reality:

- Declared “live services are the foundation of our business” while claiming player focus.
- Shut down 13 games in 2025 alone, including titles with active players.
- Continues selling broken Titanfall games despite knowing they’re unplayable.
- EA’s User Agreement explicitly states players only license games, contradicting ownership marketing.

#### **Security Hypocrisy:**

- Ignored warnings from cybersecurity firms about major vulnerabilities for months, including unsecured login pages.
- Only acted after hackers stole massive amounts of data.
- Titanfall 1 has been completely unplayable since 2018 due to DDoS attacks and RCE exploits.
- Titanfall 2 suffers from multiple Remote Code Execution vulnerabilities that remain unpatched.
- Apex Legends tournaments disrupted by RCE exploits affecting major prize pools.

#### **Ubisoft’s Leadership: Openly Anti-Consumer**

##### **Philippe Tremblay (Director of Subscriptions):**

- Notorious for stating gamers need to get comfortable not owning their games.

##### **Yves Guillemot (CEO):**

- Claims Ubisoft doesn’t push “specific agendas” despite their website stating political goals.
- Promoted blockchain gaming as giving players “actual ownership” while simultaneously opposing Stop Killing Games.

#### **Legal Actions:**

- After The Crew shutdown, Ubisoft revoked users’ licenses entirely. Players who purchased the game found it deleted from their libraries. In court, Ubisoft argued players “never actually owned” the game, directly contradicting how they marketed it.

#### **Activision’s Bobby Kotick: Acknowledging Player Passion While Destroying Games**

##### **Public Recognition of Player Investment:**

- Warned that gamers would “revolt” if Call of Duty were removed from platforms, acknowledging how strongly players feel about access to purchased games.

##### **Corporate Actions:**

- Despite recognizing player attachment, Activision has shut down entire games without refunds.
- Issued cease-and-desist notices against community preservation projects.
- Most aggressive IP enforcement in the industry, preventing any fan preservation efforts.

#### **Microsoft’s Phil Spencer: Preservation Advocate Turned Industry Opponent**

##### **Public Statements on Preservation:**

- Advocated for “industry-wide game preservation” and legal emulation.

- Positioned Xbox as supporting backwards compatibility.

#### **Actions Contradicting Statements:**

- Oversaw massive studio closures and layoffs.
- Shut down successful studios.
- Microsoft Gaming is a member of Video Games Europe opposing Stop Killing Games.

## **The Security Argument Collapses Under Scrutiny**

Video Games Europe claims shutting down games protects player security. The evidence shows their own active, profitable games suffer worse security problems than community-preserved titles.

#### **Active Games With Severe Unpatched Vulnerabilities**

- **Titanfall Series:** Titanfall 1 is completely unplayable since 2018 due to DDoS attacks and RCE exploits. EA continues selling it despite knowing it's broken. Titanfall 2 has multiple RCE vulnerabilities discovered, including critical exploits allowing arbitrary code execution. Years of security issues persist while EA celebrates anniversaries and ignores fixes.
- **Apex Legends:** In 2024, hackers used an RCE exploit to inject cheats into professional players' PCs during a major tournament, forcing a postponement.
- **GTA Online:** RCE vulnerabilities allowed hackers to delete player accounts, modify statistics, and potentially execute arbitrary code. Patches were slow and lacked transparency.
- **Call of Duty:** Persistent cheating epidemic with hundreds of thousands of bans. Anti-cheat efforts described as a "never-ending war of whack-a-mole."

#### **Community Solutions Outperform Publisher Security**

- **World of Warcraft - Nostalrius:** Operated with hundreds of thousands of users and high concurrency, with zero major security incidents. Inspired Blizzard to create WoW Classic.
- **GTA V - FiveM:** Community-created multiplayer more secure than GTA Online, with better anti-cheat and moderation. Rockstar eventually acquired the team.
- **City of Heroes:** Community secretly maintained servers for years after shutdown, now officially licensed. Better maintenance and security than original servers.
- **Skyrim Unofficial Patches:** Fixed thousands of bugs and security exploits left unpatched by the publisher. Essential mod with millions of downloads.

## **The Real Motivation: Revenue Protection, Not Player Safety**

Publishers' true concerns become clear when examining their own statements. Video Games Europe worries about "competition from community-supported versions of games" and that preserved games would "jeopardize the financial investments of the video game companies." This is about forcing consumers to buy remasters instead of playing preserved original games.

#### **The Pattern of Planned Obsolescence**

There is an acceleration of game shutdowns, with EA leading the destruction. In 2025 alone, EA shut down 13 games, including titles with dedicated player bases. This

pattern represents deliberate planned obsolescence designed to force players toward newer titles and recurring revenue streams.

## Successful Industry Examples Disprove Opposition Claims

Despite VGE's claims that preservation is impossible, several publishers have successfully released server code and preserved games:

- **EA's Command & Conquer:** Released source code for multiple titles under GPL license, enabling community preservation at minimal cost.
- **Ubisoft's World in Conflict:** Released server source code after shutdown, allowing community-hosted servers.
- **NCSOFT's City of Heroes Licensing:** Granted official licensing to community servers, keeping the game alive at virtually no cost.

## Video Games Europe's Member Companies: United in Hypocrisy

The following companies, through VGE membership, officially oppose Stop Killing Games while their executives make contradictory public statements:

- Nintendo
- Microsoft
- Sony Interactive Entertainment
- EA
- Ubisoft
- Activision Blizzard
- Take-Two Interactive
- Warner Bros Games
- Riot Games
- Sega

## What Stop Killing Games Actually Requires

The movement's demands are reasonable and achievable:

1. **End-of-life planning:** Require companies to consider preservation during development.
2. **Functional offline modes:** Ensure games can function without constant server connections.
3. **Server binaries:** Provide tools for communities to host servers when official support ends.
4. **Legal clarity:** Establish that purchased games cannot be completely destroyed.

These requirements would not force indefinite server maintenance or eliminate corporate profits. They would simply prevent the deliberate destruction of purchased products.

## How You Can Support the Movement

- Sign the EU Citizens' Initiative.
- Sign the UK Parliament petition.
- Learn more at [stopkillinggames.com](https://stopkillinggames.com).
- Spread awareness by sharing documentation of industry hypocrisy.

## Conclusion: The Mask Has Slipped

The Stop Killing Games controversy has exposed the gaming industry's true priorities. Despite years of "player-first" messaging, when faced with legislation that would actually benefit players, these companies revealed their real stance: profits over preservation, control over consumer rights, and corporate interests over community needs.

Their arguments about security are undermined by their own poor track record. Their claims about costs are laughable given their massive profits and executive compensation. Their concern about PEGI compliance is circular since they control PEGI themselves.

The evidence is overwhelming: the gaming industry's opposition to Stop Killing Games is built on demonstrable lies about security concerns while their documented reality shows active games having worse security than community-preserved titles. Publishers abandon security when games stop generating revenue, while community solutions often prove more secure than official servers.

The real concern is revenue protection, not player security. The gaming industry has shown they will prioritize profits over both consumer rights and actual security. The Stop Killing Games movement represents our chance to demand accountability from an industry that sells us products designed to be destroyed while claiming it's for our own protection.

## Sources and Documentation

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