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MINISTER OF STATE FOR DIGITAL AFFAIRS
REPORTING TO THE MINISTER FOR THE ECONOMY, INDUSTRY AND DIGITAL AFFAIRS

Press release

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Official recognition for e-sports as part of the Digital Republic Bill

At the Digital Republic Bill's public reading before the Senate, various measures were adopted to officially recognise gaming competitions in France.

Gaming competitions, or e-sports, currently attracts more than 850,000 amateur and professional players in France, and boasts over 4 million spectators. The existing legal and regulatory frameworks, currently unsuitable for professional gaming purposes, must be adapted to provide an appropriate structure for the development of this new sector of activity.

Changes to legislation are keenly awaited within the sector by companies, federations and especially gamers.

- Professional gaming competitions have now been legalised. They had hitherto been wrongly associated with lottery schemes, and therefore covered by a general ban. They will now be given specific authorisation on condition that entrance fees for players remain relatively low compared to general organisation costs.
- Competitions will now be more closely supervised to ensure the maximum protection of minors. Parental approval will be required for any minors taking part in or watching professional gaming competitions. Any monies won by players who are minors must be deposited in a bank account held by the *Caisse des dépôts et des Consignations* to which they will gain access when they become adults.
- Professional gamers will now have a specific economic status, with a special-purpose fixed-term contract that will enable them to guarantee their place in a team while offering social protection. This will make it possible to build teams of professional gamers in France and raise the appeal of e-sports among the gaming community.

These measures follow on from the creation last Wednesday of the France e-sport federation. This private initiative aims to bring together all those involved in e-sports in France and to put forward appropriate measures that will help to promote the sector's development.

All of these measures were outlined in the interim report on the practice and development of e-sports submitted in March of this year to Axelle Lemaire by Jérôme Durain, Senator (*Sénateur*)

for Saône-et-Loire, also responsible for today's amendments, and Rudy Salles, Member of Parliament (*Député*) for Alpes-Maritimes. Their work in this area is the culmination of significant pressure by Internet users for e-sports to be officially recognised.

Their final report will be submitted in the summer. They are looking at possible new initiatives, particularly regarding the broadcasting of video game competitions, how the sector is organised, the terms for granting visas to foreign players and the organisation of international events. The Government will work closely with all stakeholders – the French Audiovisual Board (CSA), and other sector players, particularly members of the France e-sport federation – to implement all of the measures necessary to develop this sector with strong growth potential.

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