Access Partnership

Are you gaming?

The video game industry: Unlocking the next level of economic and social development in Southeast Asia



October 2026

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We like to thank all our partners in Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand for their contribution and input to this study: Asosiasi Game Indonesia (AGI), Indonesia Ministry of Creative Economy (MCE), Malaysia Esports Integrated (ESI), Malaysia Esports Federation (MESF), Philippine Esports Organization (PESO), Singapore Cybersports and Online Gaming Association (SCOGA), Singapore Games Association (SGGA), and Thai Game Software Industry Association (TGA).

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Are you gaming?

The video game industry: Unlocking the next level of economic and social development in Southeast Asia

The video game industry, spanning upstream activities such as game development and publishing, to downstream segments such as esports is a strong engine of economic growth in Southeast Asia. In 2025, the industry is estimated to have generated USD 9.1 billion in revenue in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand.

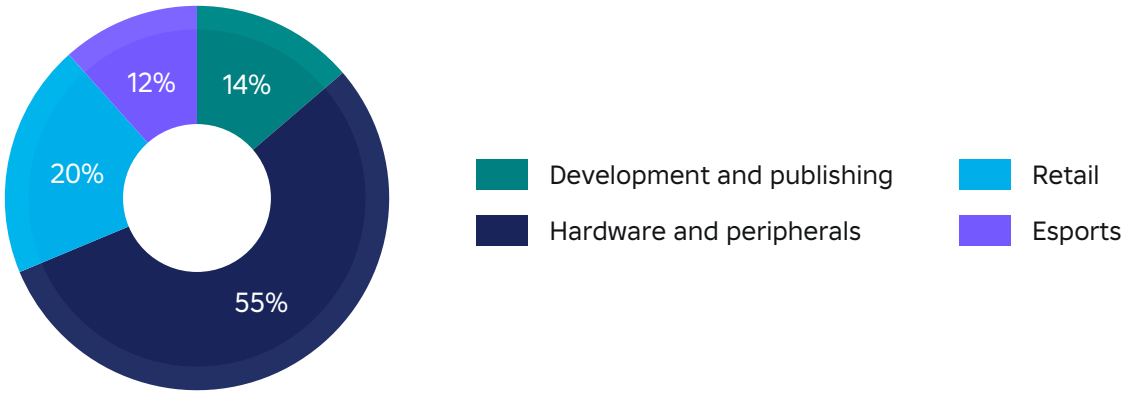
Economic impact[a]

Value added contribution
USD 8.2 billion[b]
(0.23% of 2025 combined GDP)

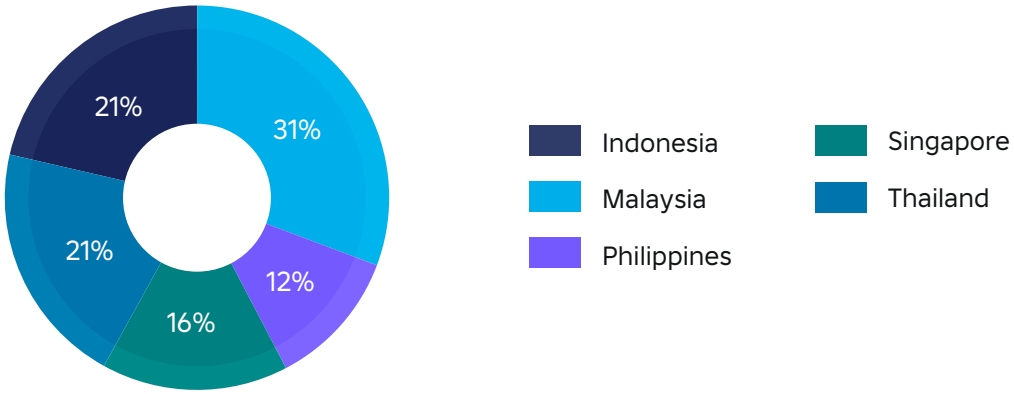
Jobs supported
646,800[b]
(0.25% of 2025 combined employment)

Exports share
48%

Value added contribution by segment, 2025



Value added contribution by country, 2025



Source: Access Partnership analysis.

Notes:

a. This report focuses on the following four segments of the video game ecosystem: development and publishing, hardware and peripherals, retail, and esports. We have also removed the indirect and induced effects of the retail segment to avoid double counting. Furthermore, we recognise that additional contributions from other segments of the industry such as tourism and meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE) events are not quantified and may increase the overall impact.

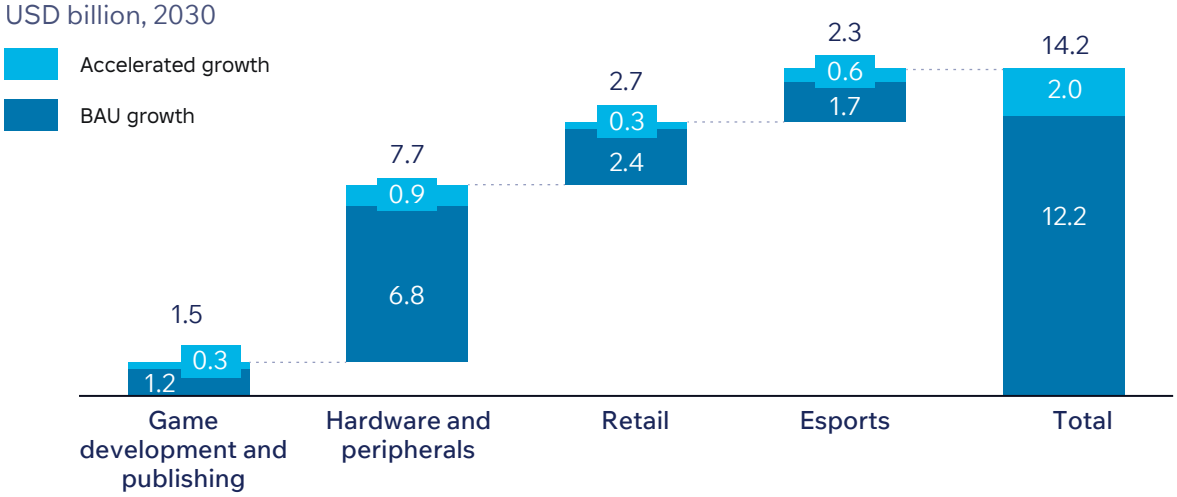
b. Of the total impact, direct impact accounted for USD 3.8 billion of value added (47%) and 321,500 of the jobs supported (50%).

c. Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

By 2030, the industry has the potential to generate up to USD 14.2 billion value added and support 1.16 million jobs

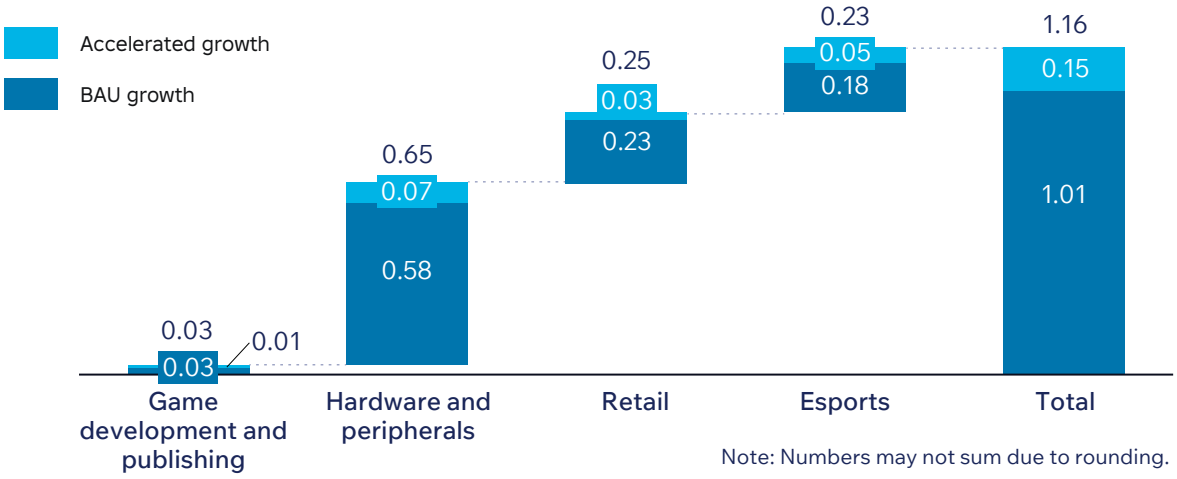
Projected value added contribution under BAU and accelerated growth scenarios[d]

USD billion, 2030



Projected job impact under BAU and accelerated growth scenarios

millions, 2030



Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Forward-looking policies can help to enable balanced growth

1. **Recognising gaming's broader economic and cultural value** through targeted roadmaps and masterplans can drive greater support for industry growth.
2. **Co-regulation and structured dialogue** between government, private sector and industry associations can help ensure regulations remain practical and grounded.
3. **Strengthening local developers and talent pipelines** through targeted financial incentives and training partnerships between training institutions and industry ensures a skilled workforce for future growth.

Source: Access Partnership analysis.

Notes:

d. The BAU scenario assumes industry growth follows existing market trends without any new policy that supports or restricts the industry, while the accelerated scenario assumes faster growth driven by supportive government policies, and is derived from third-party projections or benchmarked against high-growth markets such as the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Executive summary

Southeast Asia's video game industry is emerging as a fast-growing part of the region's digital economy, generating jobs, supporting exports, driving innovation, and creating new opportunities across a broad and interconnected value chain. This spans a range of activities, such as game development and publishing, to esports and social media content creation. However, despite this momentum, there remain significant knowledge gaps in how the industry is understood and measured. For instance, existing research tends to focus only on selected segments like mobile gaming while overlooking other parts of the value chain such as the manufacturing of gaming hardware and peripherals. As a result, the full scale of the industry's economic and social contributions is underexplored, making it difficult for policymakers to design targeted interventions or fully capture opportunities for growth, innovation, and talent development.

This report aims to bridge these knowledge gaps by assessing the economic and societal impact of the video game industry across five key Southeast Asian markets: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. It aims to identify the key segments of the video game ecosystem and quantify their contributions to revenue, gross domestic product (GDP), jobs, and exports, while examining the policy and market conditions shaping the next phase of growth to 2030.

The findings show that video games are already a meaningful economic force in the region. Backed by a large and mobile-first gamer base, rising Internet penetration, stronger digital infrastructure, and growing institutional recognition of gaming and esports, the industry has become an increasingly important contributor to the region's digital growth story. What was once seen primarily as entertainment now sits at the intersection of technology, media, talent development, and the creative economy.

Importantly, the industry's impact goes well beyond game sales. Its value chain spans video game development and publishing, gaming hardware and peripherals manufacturing, retail sale of gaming products, and esports events.[1] **Across the five markets covered in this report, the industry generated an estimated USD 9.1 billion in revenue in 2025, supporting USD 8.2 billion, equivalent to 0.23% of 2025 combined GDP, in value added (i.e., GDP impact) and approximately 646,800 jobs, or 0.25% of 2025 combined employment.**[2] It is worth noting that these estimates likely understate the industry's true contribution, especially in markets like Malaysia and Singapore, which host regional and global publishing functions for global gaming companies. Revenue from foreign developers and publishers operating through domestic entities could not be reliably attributed or isolated from parent-company figures and was therefore excluded to avoid overstating impact.[3]

The GDP contribution and employment impact estimated in this study comprise three channels of effects: direct effects capturing the production activities of firms directly involved in delivering the goods and services; indirect effects capturing the production activities of suppliers that support these directly involved firms; and induced effects capturing the wider economic activities arising from the consumption activities of workers in directly and indirectly involved firms.

The main drivers of impact differ across countries. Manufacturing-linked activity drives contributions in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand, while retail plays a larger role in the Philippines. Singapore, as a mature digital hub, is more concentrated in higher-value segments such as game development and publishing. This variation highlights that there is no single model for growth across Southeast Asia.

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[1] This study quantifies four segments of the video game industry: video game development and publishing, gaming hardware and peripherals manufacturing, retail sale of gaming products, and esports events, which are specific to video games and exclude adjacent categories, such as hardware and peripherals used for other mediums like physical board games. However, the broader video game ecosystem also generates impacts across other segments such as tourism, intellectual property (IP) development, MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions) events, and social media content creation. As such, the total economic contribution of the industry is likely to be higher than the estimates presented. The indirect and induced effects of the retail services segment have also been excluded to avoid double counting. A detailed methodology of the economic model can be found in Appendix B.

[2] Of the total impact, direct impact accounted for USD 3.8 billion of value added (47% of total) and 321,500 of the jobs supported (50% of total).

[3] A detailed explanation of why foreign companies are excluded from this study's analysis can be found in Chapter 3.2 and Appendix B.

The report also highlights that the industry creates value beyond what is captured in headline economic metrics. Video games are supporting new career pathways in design, animation, coding, live production, marketing, and content creation, while helping to build digital and creative skills across the workforce. More broadly, the industry contributes to the vibrancy of the digital economy, fostering diverse communities and shared cultural experiences, and opening up new channels for local storytelling and intellectual property (IP) development. Furthermore, the presence of global firms strengthens this ecosystem by increasing competition and diversity within the market, which in turn supports innovation and growth. This enhances the attractiveness of domestic markets for investment, facilitating capability transfer, partnerships, and stronger links to international markets.

By 2030, the industry's value added contribution is projected to reach USD 12.2 billion (0.25% of combined GDP in 2030) and support 1 million jobs (0.40% of combined employment in 2030).[4] Under an "accelerated growth" scenario with new supportive government action, this has the potential to rise to USD 14.2 billion in value added (0.29% of combined GDP) and 1.16 million jobs (0.46% of combined employment). The esports segment is expected to be the fastest-growing, while broader growth across the industry will be shaped by gamer demand, investment conditions, talent availability, and the policy environment in each country.

That policy environment will be critical. Governments across the region are increasingly focused on issues such as online safety, youth protection, and digital regulation. These are valid priorities. But the report finds that policy design matters. Overly restrictive or poorly calibrated measures risk weakening investment, slowing innovation, and limiting the development of local ecosystems. A more balanced approach, one that protects users while preserving room for growth, will be essential to unlocking the industry's full potential.

The opportunity for Southeast Asia is clear. With the right mix of enabling regulation, talent development, ecosystem support, and industry collaboration, the video game industry can become an even stronger engine of digital growth. It can create quality jobs, support local creators and businesses, strengthen the region's role in global digital value chains, and contribute to a more dynamic and competitive digital economy. In short, video games are not just shaping how people play. They are shaping how Southeast Asia creates, connects, and grows.



[4] Of the total impact, direct impact accounted for USD 5.6 billion of value added (46% of total) and 511,900 of the jobs supported (50% of total).

1. The video game industry is growing in Southeast Asia

The video game industry has become an increasingly important pillar of Southeast Asia's digital and creative economy. Over the last five years, the gaming market in the region is estimated to have grown at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 9.6%, outpacing broader GDP growth in the region. Several structural drivers underpin this rapid growth.[5]

First, expanding mobile and Internet access is driving participation in gaming. Over 70% of the population has access to a smartphone, while Internet penetration is 82%, making games more accessible to a larger share of the region's consumers.[6] This has reinforced Southeast Asia's position as a mobile-first gaming market, with smartphones serving as the primary entry point for most users. Mobile accounts for nearly 55% of all gaming hours spent in the region, making it the dominant platform over personal computer (PC) and console for gaming.[7] As participation grows, improvements in network infrastructure are also becoming more important to the gaming experience, particularly for multiplayer and competitive titles that depend on low-latency connections. The rollout of 5G is a key driver: 72% of Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand have 5G coverage, while Indonesia continues to rapidly expand its network coverage.[8] Internet service providers in the region have leveraged this connectivity to partner with game publishers to drive increased gaming in the region. For example, in Thailand, True partnered with Netboom, a cloud gaming platform, to launch True 5G Cloud Gaming, using its 5G and fibre networks to allow users to stream PC games on mobile devices.[9] Together, broader access and stronger connectivity are expanding the gamer base and deepening engagement across the ecosystem.

Second, a rising middle class is increasing consumers' ability to spend on games. Southeast Asia's middle-class population is estimated to have grown by approximately 8.2% annually over the last decade.[10] As incomes rise, consumers have greater capacity for discretionary spending, including on games. For a region with a growing gamer base, this can amplify industry growth by translating higher participation into greater spending on gaming content, hardware, esports, and related products. Spending on games is likely to continue growing as Southeast Asia's middle-class population is projected to continue growing and reach 415 million by 2030.[11]



[5] Allcorrect (2025), "The Gaming Market in Southeast Asia". Available at: https://allcorrectgames.com/insights/the-gaming-market-in-southeast-asia-2/

[6] Antom (2025), "Southeast Asia's Generative AI Boom: Trends, Challenges, and Untapped Opportunities". Available at: https://knowledge.antom.com/southeast-asias-generative-ai-boom-trends-challenges-and-untapped-opportunities

[7] Deloitte (2024), "Let's Play! 2024". Available at: https://www.deloitte.com/southeast-asia/en/services/sports-business-group/perspectives/the-southeast-asian-esports-market-lets-play-2024.html

[8] Sources include: International Telecommunication Union (2025), "Population coverage, by mobile network technology". Available at: https://datahub.itu.int/data/?i=100095&s=34236; and Telkomsel (2024), "Telkomsel Accelerates 5G Network Expansion in Indonesia, Committed to Advancing the Nation and Empowering Communities". Available at: https://www.telkomsel.com/en/about-us/news/telkomsel-accelerates-5g-network-expansion-indonesia-committed-advancing-nation-and

[9] Kearney (2024), "Mobile gaming: how SEA telcos can unlock a unique opportunity". Available at: https://www.kearney.com/industry/communications/article/mobile-gaming-how-sea-telcos-can-unlock-a-unique-opportunity

[10] Asian Development Bank (2021), "An Integrated And Smart Asean: Overcoming Adversities And Achieving Sustainable And Inclusive Growth". Available at: https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/705221/adbi-wp1267.pdf

[11] HSBC (2024), "Consumers at the heart of the ASEAN opportunity". Available at: https://www.business.hsbc.com.vn/en-gb/insights/growing-my-business/consumers-at-the-heart-of-the-asean-opportunity

Third, governments are increasingly recognising gaming and esports as structured industries rather than purely recreational activities. Across Southeast Asia, policy frameworks and formal roadmaps are being introduced to support ecosystem development, talent cultivation, industry promotion, and investment attraction. This shift matters because policy recognition can help coordinate public and private sector actions around common priorities. Table 1 summarises key national policies in the five markets covered in our study, and how they aim to develop the domestic video game industry.

Country	Key policies	Description/Outcomes achieved
Indonesia	• Presidential Regulation No. 19 of 2024 on the Acceleration of National Game Industry Development[12]	Establishes a national framework to strengthen Indonesia's domestic game industry. The regulation aims to improve inter-agency coordination, support local game developers and publishers, strengthen the local ecosystem, and increase the global competitiveness of Indonesian-made games.
Malaysia	• Strategic Plan for Esports Development 2020–2025[13] • Digital Content Ecosystem 2026-2030 roadmap (DICE)[14]	Professionalises esports and broader ecosystem development. Through Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (MDEC)-led digital creative industry initiatives, Malaysia is also strengthening support for game development, IP creation, commercialisation, funding, and export growth within the wider digital content ecosystem.
Philippines	• Republic Act No. 11904 (Philippine Creative Industries Development Act)[15] • Philippine Creative Industries Development Plan 2025–2034[16]	Establishes a formal national framework for developing the creative industries, including digital creative segments relevant to game development. The 2025–2034 plan provides the long-term roadmap for implementation, with a focus on industry coordination, capability-building, investment, market expansion, and positioning the Philippines as a leading creative hub in Asia.
Singapore	• Singapore Sports Council (Amendment) Act[17]	Brings esports within the formal definition of sport, allowing Sport Singapore to support esports in a more structured way through governance, athlete development, and sector-wide support mechanisms. This marks a stronger institutional recognition of esports within Singapore's sporting ecosystem.
Thailand	• Draft Game Industry Promotion Act[18]	The draft bill is intended to provide systematic support for industry development while also introducing clearer governance over issues such as registration and standards.

12 Akset Law (2024), "Presidential Regulation No. 19 of 2024". Available at: https://aksetlaw.com/?practicetag=presidential-regulation-no-19-of-2024

13 IGN (2019), "Malaysia's Esports Blueprint Reveals National Plans For 2020-2025, Includes Increasing Women Participation and Athlete Welfare". Available at: https://sea.ign.com/esports/155597/news/malaysias-esports-blueprint-reveals-national-plans-for-2020-2025-includes-increasing-women-participa

14 Ministry of Digital (2026), "Advancing Malaysia's Digital Creative Industry Towards AI Nation 2030". Available at: https://www.digital.gov.my/api/file/file/30012026_PRESS%20RELEASE_ADVANCING%20MALAYSIA%E2%80%99S%20DIGITAL%20CREATIVE%20INDUSTRY%20TOWARDS%20AI%20NATION%202030.pdf

15 LawPhil (2022), "REPUBLIC ACT NO. 11904". Available at: https://lawphil.net/statutes/repacts/ra2022/ra_11904_2022.html

16 Philippine Government (2025), "Philippine Creative Industries Development Plan 2025-2034". Available at: https://www.foi.gov.ph/agencies/dti/philippine-creative-industries-development-plan-2025-2034/

17 Singapore Statutes Online (2026), "Singapore Sports Council (Amendment) Act 2026". Available at: https://sso.agc.gov.sg/Acts-Supp/4-2026/Published/20260216?DocDate=20260216

18 Law.asia (2025), "Thailand's regulatory landscape for esports and gaming". Available at: https://law.asia/thailand-esports-gaming/

Understanding the ecosystem of the video game industry

While gaming is often viewed through the lens of consumer spending, the industry spans a wide range of activities that together generate economic value. In this study, the video game ecosystem is structured across eight segments (Exhibit 1).[19] These are split between five core segments, which represent the key contributors of the industry, and three cross-cutting segments, which have an indirect or supporting impact but are not considered main contributors.[20] This broader perspective is important. Focusing only on game sales or player spending risks underestimating the industry's contribution to economic activity, employment, exports, and innovation. The video game industry is better understood as an interconnected ecosystem spanning digital production, manufacturing, services, and creative industries.



Exhibit 1: Overview of the video game industry

Modelled quantitatively Modelled qualitatively

Core segments of the industry

Game development and publishing	Hardware and peripherals	Retail services	Esports[a]	Tourism
• Sale of games • In-game purchases • In-game advertising	• Manufacture and sale of gaming hardware	• Sale of physical games and gaming hardware & peripherals in local stores	• Tournaments • Media rights • Sponsorships	• Tourism receipts from foreign visitors of esports events[a]

Cross-cutting segments of the industry

Intellectual property (IP) development	• Game-related creative assets
Social media content creation	• Influencers and social media content creators
MICE events	• Gaming conventions and conferences

Notes:

a. Esports supports additional tourism benefits by inducing (i) visitors who are already in the country to stay longer due to the esports events and (ii) more inbound visitors who attend the events. Tourism impact will be qualified in the study.

Source: Access Partnership analysis.

[19] The video game ecosystem is assessed based on the current landscape and players in the video game ecosystem. As the industry evolves, new segments may form and contribute to the ecosystem.

[20] While cross-cutting segments of the industry are assessed qualitatively in this study, some of their economic activity may already be captured within the modelled segments. For example, streaming revenue earned by esports players and teams may overlap with content creation, while merchandise sale in esports, such as apparels or trading cards, may be reflected in activities linked to IP development.

Core segments of the industry:

- **Game development and publishing** refer to the creation, production, and commercialisation of video games across mobile, PC, and console platforms. This includes activities required to bring a title to market and sustain it over time.
- **Hardware and peripherals** refer to the manufacturing and sale of physical devices and accessories used to play video games. This includes consoles, gaming PCs and laptops, and gaming accessories such as controllers, headsets, keyboards, mice, monitors, and other specialised equipment that enhance gameplay and performance.
- **Retail services** refer to the channels through which video games and accessories reach consumers, spanning both digital (e.g., e-commerce) and physical sales. This includes boxed game sales through electronics retailers, specialist game stores, and general retail chains.
- **Esports** refers to organised competitive gaming and the surrounding ecosystem. This includes professional and amateur tournaments and leagues, teams and talent (players, coaches, analysts), event production and broadcasting, sponsorship and advertising, media rights, ticketing, merchandise, publisher fees, and related organiser and venue services.
- **Tourism** refers to visitor spending generated by international participants, teams, and spectators travelling for esports tournaments and gaming-related events. This includes spending on accommodation, food and beverage, transport, retail, and other tourism-related services.

Cross-cutting segments of the industry:

- **IP development** refers to the creation and monetisation of game-related creative assets. This includes revenue generated from sales of merchandise, apparel, collectables, toys, and trading cards.
- **Social media content creation** refers to income earned by influencers, and social media content creators from making gaming-related content.
- **MICE events** refer to gaming-related meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions that support industry development by showcasing games, facilitating business matching, and connecting local studios and service providers with publishers, investors, platforms, and international partners.

As part of this study, the economic contribution of four core segments is quantified: game development and publishing, hardware and peripherals, retail services, and esports. Chapter 2 presents the quantified economic contribution of the four core segments across the five markets, including revenue, value added, employment, exports, and future growth scenarios to 2030. Chapter 3 then examines the wider ecosystem value not fully captured in the quantitative model, including tourism and the cross-cutting segments of the industry, the role of foreign companies, and broader societal impacts. Chapter 4 considers the policy approaches needed to sustain growth while addressing legitimate public concerns.



2. The video game industry is a strong economic engine for the region

2.1. Economic impact of the video game industry

In 2025, the video game industry generated USD 9.1 billion in revenue in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand (equivalent to approximately 5% of the combined information and communications (ICT) industry value added in the five markets).[21] This includes revenue from the game development and publishing, hardware and peripherals manufacturing, retail sale of gaming products, and esports segments of the industry.

The revenue generated USD 8.2 billion in value added in that same year, equivalent to 0.23% of combined GDP, while supporting approximately 646,800 jobs, or 0.25% of combined employment in 2025. This economic contribution comprises three channels of effects [22]:

- **Direct effects** capture the production activities of firms directly involved in delivering the goods and services across the four segments: game development and publishing, manufacturing of gaming peripherals, retail sales of games and peripherals, and the organisation of esports events.
- **Indirect effects** capture the production activities of suppliers that support these directly involved firms, such as component providers, logistics, professional services, and other business inputs.
- **Induced effects** capture the wider economic benefits that arise from the consumption activity of workers who earn income through the production activities of directly and indirectly involved firms.

In 2025, hardware and peripherals accounted for the largest share of value added, contributing approximately 55% of the total (Exhibit 2). This highlights the continued importance of manufacturing-linked activity in the region's video game industry, particularly in countries with established electronics production capabilities.



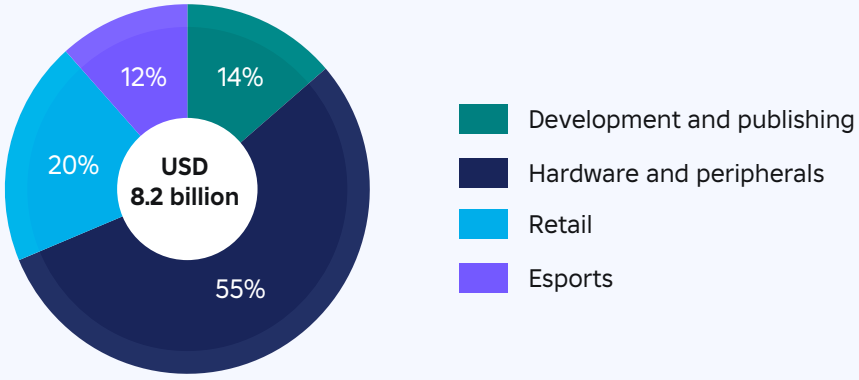
[21] Access Partnership analysis. Sources include: Badan Pusat Statistik (2026), "Produk Domestik Bruto Atas Dasar Harga Berlaku Menurut Lapangan Usaha (miliar rupiah), 2025". Available at: https://www.bps.go.id/id/statistics-table/3/UzFSTVVXUlliME5XYzBZNUwwNVFRa3h6Y1d3M1p6MDkjMw%3D%3D/produk-domestik-bruto-atas-dasar-harga-berlaku-menurut-lapangan-usaha--2015.html; Department of Statistics Malaysia (2025), "Quarterly Nominal GDP by Economic Subsector". Available at: https://data.gov.my/data-catalogue/gdp_qtr_nominal_supply_granular; Philippines Statistics Authority (2026), "Q1 2023 to Q4 2025 National Accounts of the Philippines". Available at: https://psa.gov.ph/system/files/nap/Q4%202025%20NAP%20Publication.pdf; Singapore Department of Statistics (2026), "Gross Domestic Product At Current Prices, By Industry (SSIC 2020), Annual". Available at: https://data.gov.sg/datasets/d_d0db56a7c201c9a1e42c846d4fe6da8f/view; and Office of the National Economic and Social Development Council (2026), "All tables QGDP4-2025". Available at: https://www.nesdc.go.th/en/download/all-tables-qgdp4-2025-download-excel-file/

[22] The revenue generated in each segment of the video game industry was used as inputs into a multi-year Input-Output (IO) model to estimate the value added and employment impacts across the five markets. A detailed methodology can be found in Appendix B. Of the total impact, direct impact accounted for USD 3.8 billion of value added (47% of total) and 321,500 of the jobs supported (50% of total).

The remainder of the value added was generated through retail services (20%), game development and publishing (14%), and esports (12%).[23] Together, these segments demonstrate that the video game industry extends well beyond the creation of games. It includes manufacturing, commercial distribution, event-based activities, and a range of supporting services that contribute to the wider digital economy.

Exhibit 2: Pie chart breaking down the share of value added impact in 2025 by segment

Breakdown of value added contribution by segment, 2025, percentage



Source: Access Partnership analysis.

Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

The contribution of the video game industry varies considerably across the five countries, reflecting different comparative strengths in their domestic ecosystems (Exhibit 3). In 2025, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Thailand were the three largest contributors to the industry value added. In all three countries, this was driven largely by the hardware and peripherals segment, pointing to the importance of manufacturing-linked activity within the ecosystem.

Malaysia possesses an established electronics manufacturing base, with the sector contributing approximately 7.4% of the country's GDP.[24] These capabilities help position Malaysia as a production location for technology hardware, including gaming. For example, in 2020, Malaysia-based Sharp was selected as an assembler for Nintendo's consoles as the gaming company sought to diversify its production sites.[25]

Thailand similarly benefits from strong electronics production capabilities. The country is a leading manufacturing base for peripherals and computer parts, such as hard disk drives and semiconductors.[26] This strong base has also enabled Thailand to benefit when brands such as Asus shifted 90% of its production from China into regional countries, including Thailand.[27]

Indonesia benefits from its expanding manufacturing capabilities across a wider range of goods. Hence, gaming peripherals, such as gaming chairs, mice, and keyboards contribute a significant share of the hardware segment. Even so, electronics manufacturing still plays an important supporting role. Indonesia's gaming computer production capacity has expanded alongside domestic manufacturing by local brands such as Axioo and Zyrex, as well as regional production diversification by global companies such as Asus.[28]

[23] The percentages may not sum due to rounding.

[24] Department of Statistics Malaysia (2025), "Gross Domestic Product 2015-2024". Available at: https://storage.dosm.gov.my/gdp/gdp_2024.pdf

[25] Bloomberg (2020), "Nintendo adds sharp as assembler of popular switch console". Available at: https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-11-25/nintendo-adds-sharp-as-assembler-of-popular-switch-game-console?embedded-checkout=true

[26] Thailand Board of Investment (n.d.), "Smart electrical and electronics industry". Available at: https://www.boi.go.th/upload/content/Smart_EnE.pdf; https://www.boi.go.th/upload/content/Brochure_EE.pdf

[27] Supply Chain Dive (2025), "Asus pivots production to Southeast Asia to ease tariffs". Available at: https://www.supplychaindive.com/news/asus-pivots-production-southeast-asia-tariffs/758806/

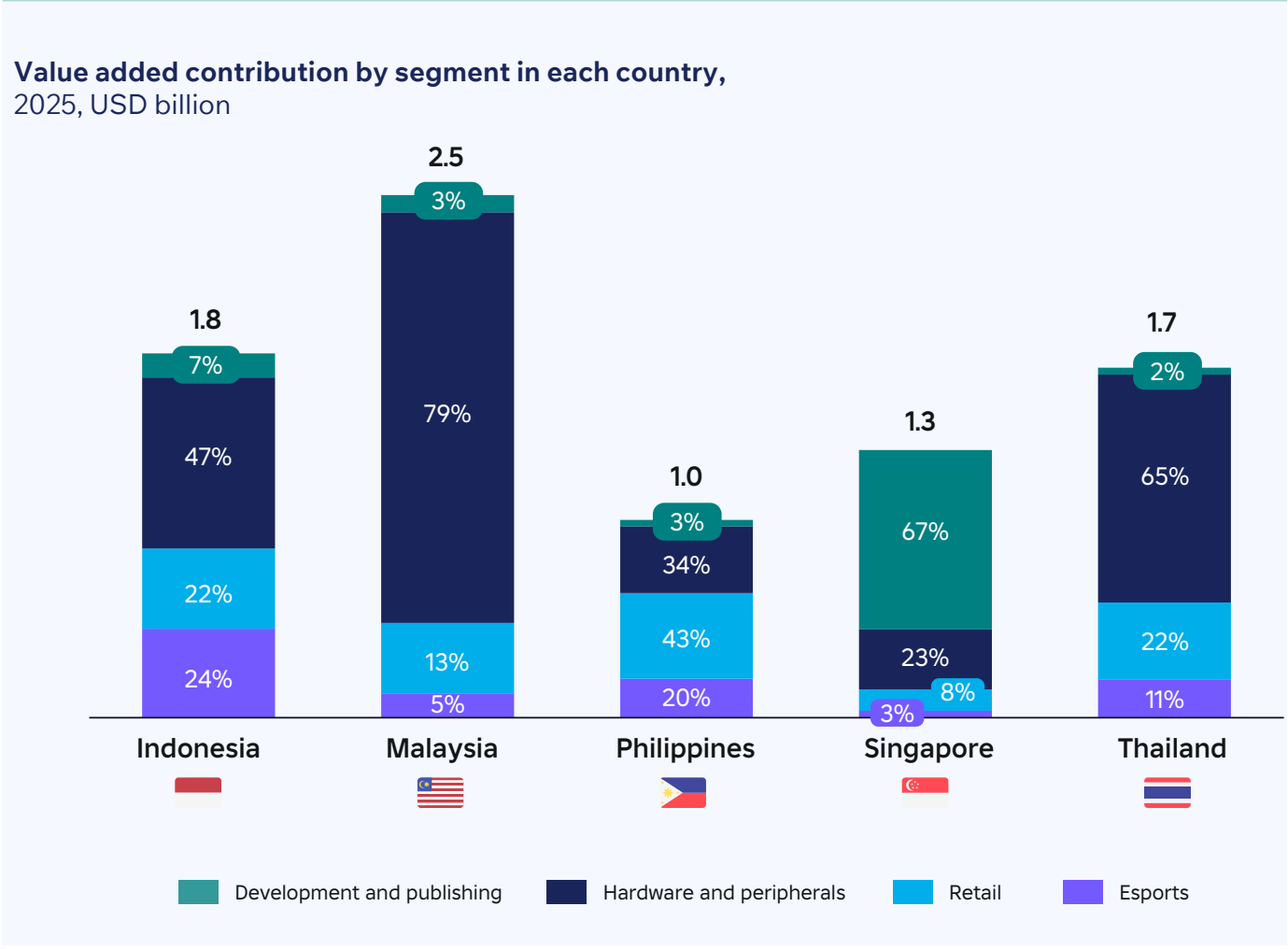
[28] Supply Chain Dive (2025), "Asus pivots production to Southeast Asia to ease tariffs". Available at: https://www.supplychaindive.com/news/asus-pivots-production-southeast-asia-tariffs/758806/

In Singapore, the game development and publishing segment contributes a significant share of the industry value added. This is consistent with Singapore's services-oriented and digitally intensive economy: services accounted for about 73% of GDP, while the digital economy contributed about 19% of GDP.[29] The industry is also supported by the success of local gaming companies like Garena.

In the Philippines, retail accounts for the largest share of the industry value added. The country is relatively less advanced in manufacturing and imports most of its gaming hardware as a result. Interviews with industry associations also revealed that local game studios are more involved in outsourced work rather than developing their own titles, which limits the impact from original game development. However, its video game industry is supported by a broad and highly engaged gaming population. Nearly 60% of the population are gamers while recent reports indicate that spending on games has increased.[30]

These patterns indicate that the video game industry does not follow a single model across Southeast Asia. Instead, its structure is shaped by each country's industrial base, consumer market, talent profile, and stage of ecosystem development.

Exhibit 3: Bar chart by country, and breakdown of value added in 2025 by segment



Source: Access Partnership analysis.
Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

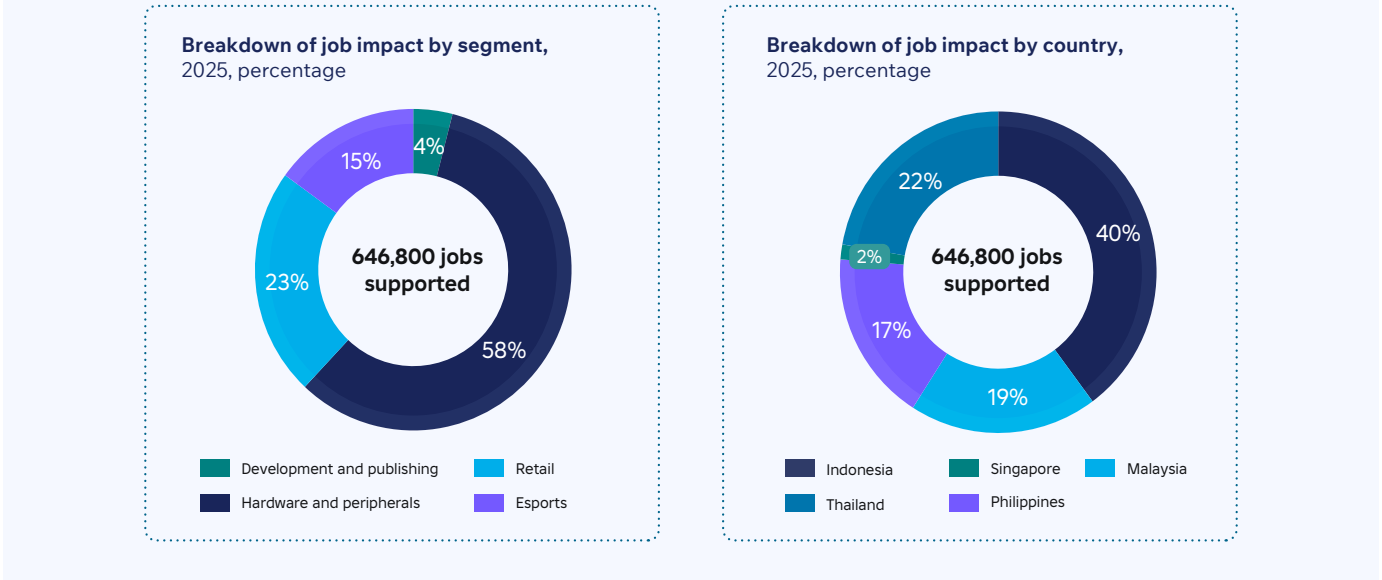
[29] Sources include: IMDA (2025), "Singapore's Digital Economy at 18.6% of GDP, up from 14.9% in 2019; Growth fuelled by accelerating digitalisation and AI adoption across sectors and firms". Available at: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NV.SRV.TOTL.ZS?locations=SG; and Infocomm Media Development Authority (2025), "Singapore's Digital Economy at 18.6% of GDP, up from 14.9% in 2019; Growth fuelled by accelerating digitalisation and AI adoption across sectors and firms". Available at: https://www.imda.gov.sg/resources/press-releases-factsheets-and-speeches/press-releases/2025/singapore-digital-economy

[30] Antom (2025), "Philippines Gaming & Payment Trends Report: Active, Value-Driven Players Power Growth as Digital Wallets Take Centre Stage". Available at: https://knowledge.antom.com/philippines-gaming-payment-trends-report-active-value-driven-players-power-growth-as-digital-wallets-take-centre-stage; Inquirer (2025), "Digital media consumption, spending among Filipinos up in 2024". Available at: https://business.inquirer.net/529807/filipinos-digital-media-consumption-spending-up-in-2024

Contribution of the video game industry to local employment

The value added generated by the video game industry supported approximately 646,800 jobs, equivalent to 0.25% of combined employment, or 31% of employment in the ICT sector, across the five markets (Exhibit 4). This includes direct jobs within the four core segments, indirect jobs supported across the supply chain, and induced jobs created through wider consumption effects, highlighting the industry's broader labour-market relevance. Beyond visible roles such as developers and esports athletes, the video game industry supports employment across manufacturing, retail, and service activities, making it relevant to both digital economy and broader workforce development strategies.

Exhibit 4: Pie chart breaking down the job impact in 2025 by segment and country



Source: Access Partnership analysis.
Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Contribution of the video game industry to exports

The video game industry is also an important contributor of export-oriented economic activity. In 2025, exports accounted for approximately 48% of the industry's total revenue across the five markets, underscoring that the video game industry is not only serving domestic consumers but also capturing global demand. Examples include *Coffee Talk, GigaBash, Until Then, Chinatown Detective Agency, and Home Sweet Home*, developed by indie studios across the five markets.[31] This suggests that local companies have the potential to export and compete overseas. Given that the global market is significantly larger than domestic markets, further strengthening export competitiveness will be critical to helping local companies scale.

2.2. Potential economic impact of the video game industry in 2030

While the video game industry is already contributing meaningfully to economic activity, there is potential to drive further growth. Creating favourable conditions through government support is one of the key enablers for future growth. Experiences from other countries with a more mature video game industry highlight that targeted policy support can accelerate industry development.

South Korea provides a case study of long-term, government-supported industry development. Formal government support for the industry began as early as 1999 through the Recorded Music, Video and Games Law.[32] This was followed by the establishment of dedicated agencies, including

[31] Sources include: Steam (2020), "Coffee Talk". Available at: https://store.steampowered.com/app/914800/Coffee_Talk/; Steam (2022), "GigaBash". Available at: https://store.steampowered.com/app/1546400/GigaBash/; Steam (2024), "Until Then". Available at: https://store.steampowered.com/app/1574820/Until_Then/; Steam (2022), "Chinatown Detective Agency". Available at: https://store.steampowered.com/app/1172190/Chinatown_Detective_Agency/; and Steam (2021), "Home Sweet Home". Available at: https://store.steampowered.com/app/1056600/Home_Sweet_Home__Survive/

[32] InterMedia (2025), "Public policies in the video games industry". Available at: https://iicintermedia.org/gaming/public-policies-in-the-video-games-industry/

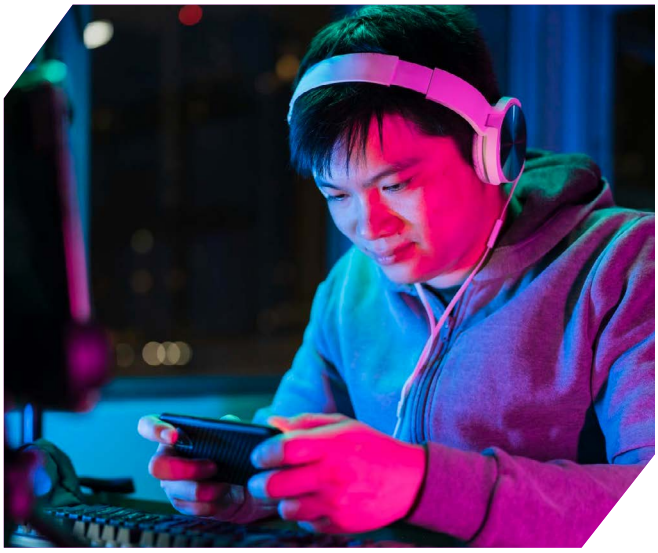
the Korea Game Industry Agency and the Korea Creative Content Agency (KOCCA), to support local studios, coordinate industry development, and promote Korean content internationally. Over the years, sustained financial support through grants, incentives, and ecosystem programmes further supported the development of a globally competitive gaming industry. As a result, in 2024, South Korea's gaming industry generated USD 17.5 billion (KRW 23.8 trillion) in revenue, contributed USD 7.5 billion (KRW 10.2 trillion) in value added, equivalent to approximately 3.4% of the country's ICT industry value added, and accounted for around 60% of total creative industries exports.[33]

Saudi Arabia illustrates a more recent model of government-led ecosystem development. Launched in 2022, the National Gaming and Esports Strategy (NGES) aims to develop the full gaming and esports value chain, with targets to create 39,000 jobs and contribute USD 13.3 billion to GDP by 2030.[34] As part of the Strategy, 86 initiatives covering eight different pillars, including support for game production, hardware development, and esports, were introduced. Since then, Saudi Arabia has scaled investment through Savvy Games Group, a national investment fund focused on gaming and esports, including major acquisitions such as Niantic's gaming division and Moonton.[35] The country has also strengthened its esports position globally by hosting the Esports World Cup in 2024 and 2025, which attracted millions of on-site visitors and global online viewers.[36]

To analyse the potential economic contribution of the industry, this study forecasts the growth of the industry between 2025 and 2030 under two scenarios. The "Business-As-Usual (BAU) growth" scenario assumes that companies in the industry continue growing in line with general market trends in the country, without new government policies that accelerate or restrict industry development. The "accelerated growth" scenario assumes that governments introduce new policies that create a more favourable environment for businesses in the industry to grow faster. This second scenario is informed by the experience of high-growth markets that have successfully scaled specific segments of their gaming ecosystem, such as the rapid development of esports in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

MENA was selected as a comparable market for two reasons. First, like the five ASEAN countries, MENA has a young, digitally connected, and growing population that is highly engaged in gaming, as well as Internet infrastructure that is similarly well developed and supports online play.[37] Second, MENA offers direct evidence that deliberate government policy can accelerate sector development. For example, Saudi Arabia's expansion of video game production, driven by targeted government support, alongside the region's rapid scaling of esports, demonstrates that enabling policy can shift a market's growth path beyond what BAU trends would predict.

By 2030, the video game industry's GDP contribution is projected to reach USD 12.2 billion (0.25% of combined GDP in 2030) and support 1 million jobs (0.40% of combined employment in 2030). Under the "accelerated growth" scenario, this has the potential to rise to USD 14.2 billion in value added (0.29% of combined GDP) and 1.16 million jobs (0.46% of combined employment) (Exhibit 5).[38]



[33] Sources include: KMIB (2026), "게임이 수출 효자네… 콘텐츠 산업 60.4% 기여". Available at: https://www.kmib.co.kr/article/view.asp?arcid=1772438455; and Yonhap News Agency (2026), "CDMA 30년, ICT 강국 키웠다…이제 AI 고속도로로". Available at: https://www.yna.co.kr/view/AKR20260409036300017

[34] Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (2022), "National Gaming and Esports Strategy (NGES)". Available at: https://www.vision2030.gov.sa/media/svtpwvei/nges_strategy_en.pdf

[35] Sources include: Reuters (2026), "ByteDance to sell gaming unit Moonton to Saudi PIF-owned firm". Available at: https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/bytedance-sell-gaming-unit-moonton-saudi-pif-owned-firm-2026-03-20/; and Reuters (2025), "'Pokemon Go' maker Niantic to sell game division to Saudi-owned Scopely for $3.5 billion". Available at: https://www.reuters.com/markets/deals/pokemon-go-maker-niantic-sell-game-division-saudi-owned-scopely-35-billion-2025-03-12/

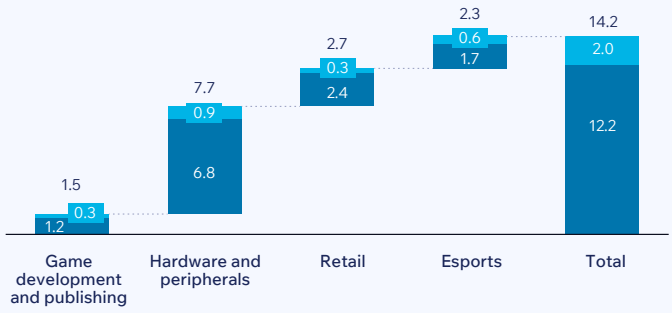
[36] Sources include: Esports World Cup (2025), "2025 Esports World Cup in Numbers". Available at: https://esportsworldcup.com/en/news/2025-ewc-in-numbers; and PR Newswire (2024), "Esports World Cup Draws More Than 500 Million Viewers, Crowns Team Falcons First Club Champion". Available at: https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/esports-world-cup-draws-more-than-500-million-viewers-crowns-team-falcons-first-club-champion-302230204.html

[37] Sources include: Niko Partners (2025), "The Future of Gaming in MENA-3: Understanding the Opportunity." Available at: https://nikopartners.com/the-future-of-gaming-in-mena-3-understanding-the-opportunity/; and Allcorrect (2023), "The Gaming Market in the Middle East". Available at: https://allcorrectgames.com/insights/middle-east-game-market-overview/#

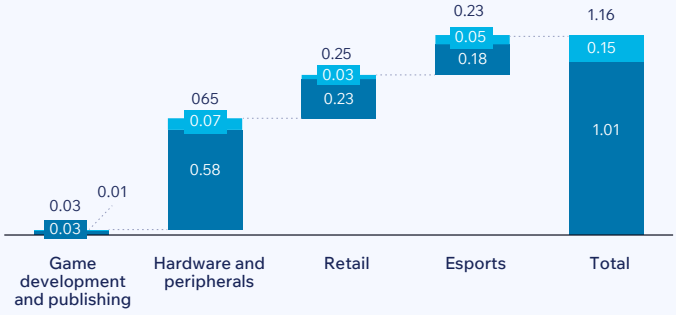
[38] The indirect and induced effects of the retail services segment have been excluded to avoid double counting. A detailed methodology of the economic model can be found in Appendix B.

Exhibit 5: Waterfall charts breaking down the value added contribution and job impact under the BAU and accelerated growth scenarios

Projected value added contribution under BAU and accelerated growth scenarios,
2030, USD billion



Projected job impact under BAU and accelerated growth scenarios,
2030, millions



Source: Access Partnership analysis.
Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

The esports segment is expected to be the fastest-growing segment of the industry over the next five years. As the gaming population expands and engagement deepens, demand for esports-related activities is likely to increase, although growth will vary across revenue streams. Insights from stakeholder interviews suggest that certain segments like tournaments, live events, and merchandise sales are likely to grow the fastest, supported by rising gamer participation and engagement. Consumer spending may also increase as today's younger gamers, who account for a significant share of the gaming population, enter the workforce and gain greater purchasing power. However, revenue streams like sponsorships and advertising may grow more gradually due to a shift in demand towards mobile-based tournaments. Because these tournaments require less gaming hardware than PC- or console-based tournaments, sponsorship growth from major gaming brands in the region may be slower. At the same time, esports is more nascent than other industry segments and is growing from a smaller base, creating more room for rapid expansion across the five markets.

Conversely, game development and publishing are expected to experience the slowest growth over the next five years. Global demand for games is expected to normalise following the post-pandemic surge, reducing the pace of expansion seen in earlier years. In addition, industry stakeholders noted that developers in the region are gradually shifting from mobile to PC games in some countries. A key reason appears to be monetisation. In mobile gaming, the large number of free-to-play titles and the importance of user acquisition mean that developers often need to invest heavily in marketing to achieve visibility, making it difficult for smaller studios to compete with larger firms that have deeper promotional budgets. By contrast, PC gamers are generally more willing to pay upfront for games, giving developers a clearer path to revenue generation and more predictable returns on investment.

Growth rates are expected to vary under the "BAU growth" scenario across countries. Indonesia and Thailand are expected to see the fastest growth, driven mainly by a rapidly expanding gamer population, and strong government support for esports and game development. The Philippines is expected to follow, driven primarily by the continued expansion of its gamer population. Malaysia's growth is expected to be more moderate, reflecting its higher Internet and gaming penetration compared to the other three countries. Singapore is expected to grow more slowly because of structural factors such as higher development costs, a smaller domestic market, and already high levels of Internet and gaming penetration. A more detailed discussion of country-level growth trends is provided in the Appendix.

3. The video game ecosystem creates wider value beyond quantified economic impacts

Chapter 2 quantified the economic contribution of four core segments of the video game industry: game development and publishing, hardware and peripherals, retail services, and esports. However, these estimates do not capture the full economic and societal value generated by the wider video game ecosystem. This chapter, therefore, complements the quantified estimates by examining three wider channels of impact. First, it considers the economic activity linked to adjacent segments of the video game ecosystem but not captured in the core model. Second, it assesses how foreign companies strengthen the domestic industry development. Third, it discusses the broader societal value of gaming, including skills development, community-building, cultural expression, and applications in other sectors.

3.1. Economic contribution from other segments of the ecosystem

Four other segments of the video game industry, while not captured in the core model in Chapter 2, are also economically relevant.

First, esports and gaming events generate tourism-related economic activity. Major tournaments, especially PC-based ones, attract international participants, teams, and spectators, creating demand for accommodation, food and beverage, transport, retail, and other tourism-related services. For example, Singapore attracted more than 10,000 attendees when it hosted the *Dota 2* tournament The International in 2022 and the *Counter-Strike 2* tournament BLAST Premier World Final in 2024.[39] Insights from stakeholder interviews indicate that foreign fans can account for 15% to 40% of participants at major international esports events. These visitors generate additional spending beyond the direct revenues captured by tournament organisers, extending the impact of esports into the wider visitor economy.

Second, IP development enables studios and companies to monetise successful games beyond gameplay. Popular titles can create additional revenue opportunities for game developers and publishers in adjacent consumer markets such as merchandise, collectables, and trading cards. Trading cards illustrate this wider opportunity: in Singapore, attendance at the 2025 Singapore Card Show increased by more than four-fold year-on-year, highlighting rising consumer interest into IP-linked products.[40] Findings from stakeholder interviews also suggest that Singapore is best positioned to benefit from IP development, given its role as a regional hub for many major video game companies, which enables the industry to generate additional IP-related revenue for the economy.



[39] Sources include: Straits Times (2025), "Top Dota 2 Teams Confirmed for BLAST Dota Slam Singapore 2025". Available at: https://www.straitstimes.com/paid-press-releases/top-dota-2-teams-confirmed-for-blast-dota-slam-singapore-2025-20251016; and Straits Times (2024), "Singapore to host Evo 2026, the 'World Cup' of fighting games". Available at: https://www.straitstimes.com/singapore/singapore-to-host-evo-2026-the-world-cup-of-fighting-games

[40] Tatler Asia (2026), "From collectible to investable: the rise of Pokémon trading cards as Asia's newest asset class". Available at: https://www.tatlerasia.com/power-purpose/wealth/pokemon-trading-cards-asia

Third, gaming-related MICE events can help local studios secure partnerships to develop and scale, while generating some tourism impact. For example, the Indonesian Game Developer Exchange (IGDX) 2025 generated USD 17.1 million in investments for Indonesian game developers and publishers.[41] These events also stimulate demand in other sectors, including venue services, logistics, accommodation, retail, and professional services. gamescom asia x Thailand 2025 reportedly attracted over 200,000 visitors, 5,500 business professionals, and nearly 300 exhibitors, generating THB 1.2 billion, or USD 38 million, for Thailand's economy from one event alone.[42]

Lastly, social media content creation has become a commercially relevant part of the gaming ecosystem. Influencers, and social media content creators earn income from gaming-related content, which supports domestic economic activity through their spending. They also play an important role in shaping consumer awareness and promoting games, esports events, and related products. For example, Niko Partners, a video game market research company, reported that one in three Southeast Asian gamers obtain information about games from influencers or key opinion leaders.[43] This segment is particularly pronounced in the Philippines, where stakeholder interviews indicate the country has the strongest social and content creation culture among the five markets, with a large share of players actively engaged in creating gaming content. This is corroborated by a study from Ampverse on Southeast Asia's video game industry, which found that Filipino players are especially active in livestreaming, content creation, and online gaming communities.[44] This suggests that social media content is not only a cultural feature of the gaming ecosystem, but also a commercially relevant channel through which publishers, esports organisers, and related businesses can reach audiences and monetise engagement.[45]

3.2. Economic contribution from foreign companies

Foreign companies play an important role in strengthening the domestic gaming ecosystem. Across the five markets, foreign companies contribute not only through local operations and investment, but also through the capabilities, networks, and market access they bring to domestic industries. However, the revenue of foreign companies is not fully captured in the quantitative model, resulting in an underestimation of the contribution of foreign studios, especially in countries that host regional or global gaming functions (Box 1).[46]



[41] Antara (2025), "Indonesia secures $17 million potential deals at Gamescom 2025". Available at: https://en.antaranews.com/news/375841/indonesia-secures-17-million-potential-deals-at-gamescom-2025

[42] ACN Newswire (2025), "depa Announces Record-Breaking Success of gamescom asia x Thailand Game Show 2025, Generating Over THB 1.2 Billion in Economic Value". Available at: https://www.acnnewswire.com/press-release/english/104117/depa-announces-record-breaking-success-of-gamescom-asia-x-thailand-game-show-2025,-generating-over-thb-1.2-billion-in-economic-value

[43] Niko Partners (2023), "gamescom asia 2023 — Under The Influence: The Role of KOLs Behind SEA's Hit Games". Available at: https://nikopartners.com/under-the-influence-role-of-kols-behind-sea-hit-games/

[44] Sources include: Ampverse (2026) "The Ampverse Playbook for unlocking the value of gaming in Southeast Asia". Available at: https://cdn.prod.website-files.com/6683baffb76948bee8821eb0/69d77a5421418a988ebe026c_The-Ampverse-Playbook_eBook.pdf; and NewsBytes (2026), "PH among SE Asia's most community-driven gaming markets — report". Available at: https://newsbytes.ph/2026/04/11/ph-among-se-asias-most-community-driven-gaming-markets-report/

[45] The social media content creation segment refers specifically to revenue that is earned by influencers and social media content creators through activities such as livestreaming, posting of videos or social media posts. This is distinct from the revenue earned by esports organisers when they stream their esports tournaments.

[46] Only the revenue of foreign companies is not captured in the game development and publishing segment of the economic model. Foreign contribution is included in the hardware and peripherals segment, as the model captures the domestic manufacturing activities of local and foreign brands in each country. Refer to Appendix B for a more detailed methodology.

Box 1: Acknowledging the impact of foreign companies on local game development and publishing

One important limitation of the current approach to estimating the impact of the game development and publishing segment in this study is that it does not fully capture revenue associated with foreign developers and publishers operating through domestic entities in Southeast Asia. This is particularly relevant for countries such as Singapore, which hosts regional or global functions for major gaming companies.

Evidence from Singapore points to the potential scale of this gap. Media platform Tech in Asia reported, based on audited filings, that the Singapore entities of Hoyoverse, Tencent, and Riot Games collectively generated approximately USD 5.8 billion in revenue in 2024.[47] Other major companies, such as Ubisoft and Bandai Namco Studios (rebranded as Nintendo Studios Singapore in December 2025), have also established significant operations in Singapore. As a result, the value added contribution from the game development and publishing segment is likely significantly larger than the current estimate captures.

There are two main reasons why these foreign contributions are not included in the model. First, this study relies in part on gaming intelligence platforms to estimate developer and publisher revenues, but titles published through international subsidiaries are typically tagged to the parent company and its home country rather than to the domestic operating entity.[48] This makes it difficult to identify and attribute revenue consistently to the country in which regional publishing or operational functions are based. Second, even when entity-level revenue information is available, translating that revenue into domestic economic contribution requires company-specific information on the location of labour, functions, and cost structures. In the absence of sufficiently granular public data, including such revenues directly would risk overstating the domestic contribution of foreign-owned publishing entities.

Aside from generating revenue through local operations, foreign companies also contribute to the development of the domestic ecosystem through three other channels.

First, foreign studios generate employment and investment. Where foreign firms establish local or regional offices in the five markets, they create jobs across functions such as game development, publishing, marketing, and other support services. Their operating expenditure and demand for supporting local business services further contribute to domestic economic activity. For example, in the Philippines, Ubisoft's local entity, Ubisoft Philippines, has employed more than 100 local professionals since entering the market in 2016.[49] In Malaysia, Tencent announced plans in 2025 to expand its local workforce five-fold to 500 employees by 2026, with highly skilled local professionals expected to account for 90% of roles.[50]

The presence of large foreign studios can also strengthen investor confidence. Interviews with industry associations and government agencies suggest that major foreign studios can act as positive signals to other investors, demonstrating that local infrastructure, talent, and policy support are sufficiently developed to sustain industry growth. This creates a positive loop in which foreign investment improves ecosystem maturity, while a stronger ecosystem attracts further investment.

Second, foreign companies facilitate capabilities transfer. Local talent working in foreign studios gains exposure to international production standards, technical workflows, and best-in-class industry practices. These experiences help strengthen the capabilities of the domestic workforce and raise the quality of local industry output. For example, employees in Ubisoft Philippines have co-developed 12 flagship AAA

[47] Tech in Asia (2025), "3 giants, 1 city: SG gaming entities rake in billions". Available at: https://www.techinasia.com/giants-city-sg-gaming-entities-rake-billions

[48] Refer to Appendix B for a more detailed methodology.

[49] Ubisoft (n.d.), "Locations". Available at: https://www.ubisoft.com/en-us/company/careers/locations/taguig

[50] Tencent (2025), "Tencent Reinforces Commitment to Malaysia with Expanded Office, Plans to Develop Local Tech Talent". Available at: https://www.tencent.com/en-us/articles/2202240.html

(triple-A) titles with Ubisoft teams overseas, giving local talent direct experience in large-scale global game production.[51] The capabilities transfer is happening across the region: Assassin's Creed Black Flag Resynced, released in July 2026, was led by local staff at Ubisoft Singapore and developed together with Ubisoft Philippines among its co-development studios, further illustrating how global publishers are integrating local talent into flagship international titles.[52]

Capabilities transfer is also important in esports. Stakeholder interviews revealed that foreign publishers helped establish the esports ecosystem from the ground up, at a time when local event organisers had limited experience hosting such events. Through early partnerships, they shared expertise, practical learnings, and delivery support for the first few tournaments. Over time, this enabled local organisers to develop the capabilities needed to host high-quality esports events that appeal to both domestic and global audiences.

In addition, foreign studios regularly organise game jams and skills development initiatives to support skills development. Box 2 illustrates examples of local initiatives from various companies.

Box 2: Examples of local companies' skill development initiatives

In Malaysia, Tencent, through its global publishing arm Level Infinite, has partnered with Claz'room College to strengthen the link between academic training and industry practice in game development.[53] As part of this partnership, Tencent will send creative professionals to provide regular guidance and coaching to students in the creation of multimedia art. They will also tap into Claz'room's talent pool to develop innovative solutions.[54] This collaboration seeks to provide students with exposure to real-world production standards, global publishing insights, and professional workflows, bridging the gap between classroom learning and studio expectations. By supporting industry-relevant skills development and improving career readiness among aspiring developers, the initiative contributes to Malaysia's broader ambitions to grow its digital creative ecosystem while ensuring local talent can participate in the gaming value chain.

In Malaysia, PUBG Mobile has partnered with Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) to create new pathways for esports and digital talent.[55] The partnership supports student development in esports-related fields, and opens up opportunities for students, including academic placements, industrial training and research initiatives. This reflects the growing trend of global publishers collaborating with local academic institutions to build a skilled domestic talent pipeline.

In Singapore, Ubisoft's Game Development Mentorship Program supports the development of emerging talent by pairing aspiring developers with experienced industry professionals.[56] Through structured guidance and exposure to professional development pipelines, participants can gain practical insights into large-scale game creation and studio collaboration, and get the opportunity to develop their own unique game projects.[57] Beyond technical skill-building,

[51] Ubisoft (2025), "Ubisoft Philippines is an up-and-coming powerhouse of AAA Game Development with Assassin's Creed Shadows". Available at: https://www.ubisoft.com/en-us/company/careers/locations/articles/ubisoft-philippines-is-an-up-and-coming-powerhouse-of-aaa-game-development-with-assassin-s-creed-shadows

[52] Sources include: Ubisoft (2026), "Filipino craftsmanship in Assassin's Creed Black Flag Resynced". Available at: https://www.ubisoft.com/en-us/company/careers/locations/articles/filipino-craftsmanship-in-assassin-s-creed-black-flag-resynced; and Ubisoft (2026), "Assassin's Creed Black Flag Resynced Out July 9: Everything You Need to Know". Available at: https://news.ubisoft.com/en-us/article/4WSO7FBW76v05UxZSqG5L8/assassins-creed-black-flag-resynced-out-july-9-everything-you-need-to-know

[53] Tencent (2025), "Tencent Reinforces Commitment to Malaysia with Expanded Office, Plans to Develop Local Tech Talent". Available at: https://www.tencent.com/en-us/articles/2202240.html

[54] NST (2023), "Global gaming brand Level Infinite partners Claz'room College to support Malaysia's talent development". Available at: https://www.nst.com.my/business/2023/03/884815/global-gaming-brand-level-infinite-partners-clazroom-college-support

[55] The Sun (2026), "PUBG MOBILE joins forces with UiTM to unlock new pathways for future esports and digital talent". Available at: https://thesun.my/sports/pubg-mobile-joins-forces-with-uitm-to-unlock-new-pathways-for-future-esports-and-digital-talent/

[56] Ubisoft (n.d.), "Develop at Ubisoft". Available at: https://www.ubisoft.com/en-us/company/careers/interns-graduates/develop-at-ubisoft

[57] Ibid.

the programme strengthens connections between global studios and the local creative community, reinforcing Singapore's position as a regional interactive media hub while contributing to the long-term sustainability of its game development ecosystem.

In Indonesia, Moonton's Scholarship Program, in collaboration with five universities in Jakarta, Bandung, and Jogjakarta, has supported over 100 students majoring in gaming and esports-related fields.[58] Additionally, the company's Moonton Cares initiative also offered mentorship and internship opportunities to over 520 students across the country in esports-related fields.[59] Participants are mentored directly by esports experts in areas like broadcasting, social media marketing, influencer management, and content strategy. Top students will also receive internship opportunities at esports partner companies.

Third, foreign studios deepen ecosystem vibrancy and market access. By increasing competition and collaboration, foreign studios can strengthen industry networks, encourage talent circulation, and raise the visibility of local markets. A global study by Cohendet et al. of leading game development cities suggests that foreign companies act as innovation "anchors" by supporting industry networks, talent circulation, and shared spaces through which ideas and capabilities move.[60] Citing Montreal as an example, the study describes how domestic start-ups and specialist service providers emerged and grew as employees moved from foreign companies to local firms, creating a positive loop that strengthened the ecosystem. Box 3 illustrates how partnerships between foreign studios and local companies can drive greater innovation in the industry.



Box 3: LIGHTSPEED STUDIOS (part of Tencent) partners with AI engineers in Singapore to build AI capabilities for gaming[61]

LIGHTSPEED STUDIOS' 2023 partnership with AI Singapore shows how foreign studios can strengthen local innovation. Through AI Singapore's 100 Experiments programme, a platform established by AI Singapore for companies to collaborate with research institutes on applied AI projects, the company's AI experts, and specialist IT teams worked with local AI engineers to develop an AI-powered text-to-speech service for Bahasa Melayu-speaking gamers in Southeast Asia. The project connected gaming, AI development, and language localisation, while supporting the training of up to six Singaporean AI engineers through AI Singapore's apprenticeship programme. It illustrates how partnerships between foreign studios and local companies can drive greater innovation for the gaming industry.

[58] Moonton (n.d.), "About Us". Available at: https://en.moonton.com/about/index.html

[59] One esports (2024), "Program regenerasi talenta esports Moonton Cares diikuti 520 mahasiswa!". Available at: https://www.oneesports.id/mobile-legends/program-regenerasi-talenta-esports-moonton-cares

[60] Journal of Economic Geography (2018), "The local, the global and the industry common: the case of the video game industry Get access Arrow". Available at: https://academic.oup.com/joeg/article-abstract/18/5/1045/5056182

[61] PR Newswire (2023), "LIGHTSPEED STUDIOS Partners with AI Singapore to Offer Advanced Text-to-Speech Service for Gamers in Southeast Asia". Available at: https://www.prnewswire.com/apac/news-releases/lightspeed-studios-partners-with-ai-singapore-to-offer-advanced-text-to-speech-service-for-gamers-in-southeast-asia-301870799.html

In addition, the presence of foreign companies can raise the visibility and credibility of local markets. By engaging local services, foreign companies connect these companies to the global value chain, creating opportunities for more global work in the future. For example, Ubisoft Singapore has reinforced Singapore's profile as a regional hub for AAA production, with local employees contributing to multiple global titles, including every Assassin's Creed game since *Assassin's Creed II*.[62]

3.3. The wider societal value of the video game ecosystem

Finally, beyond measurable economic indicators, it is important to recognise that Southeast Asia's video game industry generates value in aspects that may be less tangible. Its influence reaches into wider social and cultural domains, shaping skills development, enabling new forms of community interaction, and facilitating cross-cultural exchange. Acknowledging these broader contributions is essential to developing a balanced perspective on the role of video games within today's increasingly digital communities.

With the prevalence of gaming across the region, the industry has begun to play an increasingly visible role in shaping skills development, social interaction, and cultural exchange. These impacts are often more challenging to quantify than employment or value added, but they form an important part of the broader societal footprint of the sector. The impacts can be classified into four key components:

Skills development. Video games tend to be interactive systems that require players to make decisions quickly, adapt strategies, and respond to dynamic environments. Across different genres, gameplay can involve aspects such as planning, resource management, teamwork, and rapid problem-solving.[63] These mechanics can provide players with a platform to hone their cognitive flexibility, spatial reasoning, and systems thinking.[64] For instance, a study in the United States of nearly 2,000 children found that those who reported playing video games for over three hours daily performed better on cognitive skills tests compared to children who had never played video games.[65] Furthermore, a survey conducted with Roblox creators in Indonesia found that engagement with the platform, through play and creation, supported the development of a broader range of skills, including problem solving, teamwork, and empathy, alongside more technical digital competencies.[66] While games are not substitutes for formal education, they can complement learning by strengthening transferable skills that are increasingly relevant in digital economies, including strategic thinking, communication, and digital literacy.[67]

Community building. Video games also incorporate social interaction as a feature of play, connecting players across geographic and cultural boundaries. In the case of Southeast Asia, social features embedded in gameplay create opportunities for connection, team formation, and shared experiences. For instance, online multiplayer games such as *Mobile Legends: Bang Bang* and *PUBG Mobile* have become a shared cultural touchpoint across the region, with team structures that regularly bring together players from different countries.[68] Beyond the games themselves, this



[62] Channel News Asia (2023), "Ubisoft turns to Assassin's Creed 'Black Flag' remake, led by Singapore studio, to steady the ship". Available at: https://www.channelnewsasia.com/business/assassins-creed-ubisoft-black-flag-resynced-remake-game-6076886

[63] SAE Education (2024), "The social impact of games in modern society". Available at: https://www.sae.edu/gbr/insights/the-social-impact-of-games-in-modern-society/

[64] Gosforth Civic Theatre (2025), "The Benefits of Gaming: Building Community, Skills and Wellbeing". Available at: https://www.gosforthcivictheatre.co.uk/post/the-benefits-of-gaming

[65] National Institutes of Health (2022), "Video gaming may be associated with better cognitive performance in children". Available at: https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/video-gaming-may-be-associated-better-cognitive-performance-children

[66] Access Partnership (2025), "Beyond the Screen: The Economic Impact of Roblox in Indonesia". Available at: https://about.roblox.com/pdf/2024-indonesia-economic-report-en

[67] XCL World Academy (n.d.), "The Educational Benefits of Video Games". Available at: https://xwa.edu.sg/blog/learning/educational-benefits-of-gaming

[68] Kr Asia (2023), "Levelling Up: The Transformative Impact of Gaming Culture on Southeast Asian Society and Technology". Available at: https://kr-asia.com/leveling-up-the-transformative-impact-of-gaming-culture-on-southeast-asian-society-and-technology

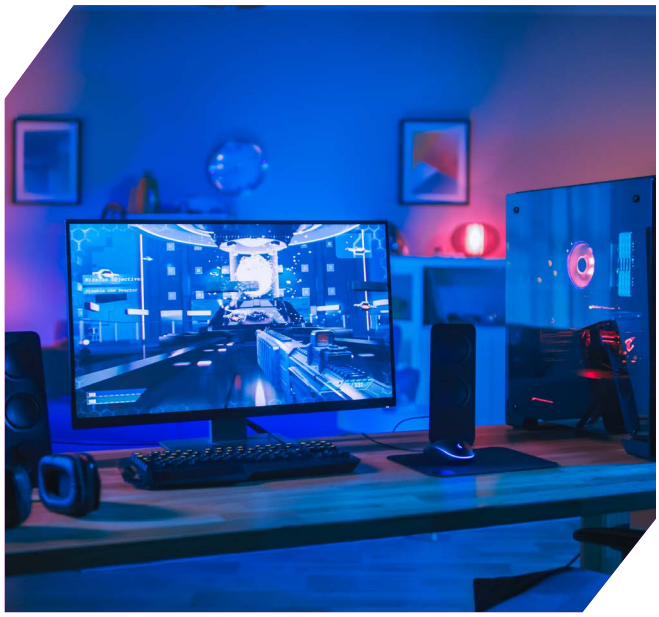
has given rise to the creation of dynamic gaming communities including esports fan clubs, Discord servers, content creator networks or forums for indie game development enthusiasts.[69]

Cultural appreciation. Video games are increasingly recognised as interactive cultural artefacts. Through elements such as narrative design, art, and music, games expose players to different histories, mythologies, and perspectives. Players may explore environments inspired by real-world cultures or engage with storylines that reflect diverse social contexts. At the same time, developers in Southeast Asia are incorporating local folklore, languages, and aesthetics into their creations, contributing to the outward projection of regional culture.[70] For instance, Honor of Kings collaborated with the National Museum of Indonesia to showcase Indonesian culture, including the release of an Indonesian cultural-themed hero skin, Anoman Wukong, events, and exclusive merchandise.[71] The game also features cultural characters inspired by legends and folklore across the region, such as Lapu-Lapu, a national hero of the Philippines, and Garuda, a sacred mythical creature rooted in Indonesian folklore.[72] By embedding culturally-specific references within a regional context, such games enable players to engage with neighbouring cultures in an accessible and interactive format. In this regard, games can contribute not only to entertainment, but also to cultural visibility and a greater appreciation of Southeast Asia's diverse heritage.

Applications to other sectors. The technologies and design principles underpinning video games also have spillover effects beyond entertainment. Gaming tools and technologies are increasingly being used in other sectors such as education, healthcare, and professional training.[73] For instance, gamification techniques can be applied to improve engagement in sectors such as education, while simulation-based systems support skills training in areas such as medicine and defence.[74]

- One example is the Singapore Institute of Technology's gamified intervention to facilitate post-stroke care. Researchers designed a holistic mobile app with stroke survivors, caregivers, and clinicians to deliver information on strokes through games and educational content.[75] The app features learning resources and daily check-ins, as well as games to improve the cognitive skills of patients and their medication adherence. The gamified elements help to ensure that the app is engaging, informative, and easy to use. Participants recorded improved scores in self-efficacy and self-management after using the app.[76]

- In China, Tencent has developed Tencent Brain Training, a gamified cognitive training tool developed with clinicians and psychologists to support early intervention in Alzheimer's disease. Clinical trials conducted with patients experiencing mild cognitive impairment (MCI) found that participants



[69] Ibid.

[70] Gaming on Phone (2021), "Why Mobile Legends is so popular in South East Asia (SEA) region". Available at: https://gamingonphone.com/editorial/why-mobile-legends-is-so-popular-in-south-east-asia-sea-region/

[71] Dunia Games (2026), "The Story Behind the Collaboration of HOK and the National Museum of Indonesia, KIS4 is the Moment!". Available at: https://duniagames.co.id/discover/article/kolaborasi-hok-x-museum-nasional-indonesia-kis4-jadi-momentum-penting/en

[72] Sources include: Enduins (2025), "Honor of Kings Introduces New Filipino Hero, Lapu-Lapu". Available at: https://www.enduins.com/news/honor-of-kings-introduces-new-filipino-hero-lapu-lapu; and Honor of Kings (2025), "BTS | Garuda Khageswara | Honor of Kings". Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=47PJeTZb22Q&t=20s

[73] Sources include: Taylor & Francis (2025), "The role of games and gamification in business and training: a systematic review". Available at: https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10494820.2025.2547270; and National Library of Medicine (2025), "Use of Gamified Digital Tools in Daily Tasks of Health Care Workers: Scoping Review". Available at: https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC12536924/

[74] Sources include: Tan et. al (2015), "Gamification to Engage Students in Higher Education". Available at: https://ink.library.smu.edu.sg/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?params=/context/lkcsb_research/article/5739/&path_info=GamificationEngageStudentsHigherEducation_RT_NS_2016Mar_WP.pdf; and Global Data (2024), "Gamification and Simulation Training in Defense – Thematic Intelligence"". Available at: https://www.globaldata.com/store/report/gamification-and-simulation-training-in-defense-theme-analysis/

[75] Singapore Institute of Technology (2025), "Facilitating Post-Stroke Care With Gamified Intervention". Available at: https://www.singaporetech.edu.sg/openhouse2025/sit-teaching-and-learning-academy/openhouse/directory/centre-professional-communication/news/facilitating-post-stroke-care-gamified-intervention

[76] Ibid.

who used the tool over a 12-week period showed significant improvement in cognitive scores, while the control group experienced a slight decline.[77] The tool has since received certification as a medical device from the Guangdong Medical Products Administration, enabling licensed physicians in China to prescribe it as an early-stage therapeutic intervention.

- In Japan, Tencent partnered with NPO Saitama Citizen's Network to integrate video gaming into the annual National Health and Welfare Festival for the Elderly, where games featured as a competitive category for the first time.[78] Research conducted alongside the initiative found that senior players recorded cognitive assessment scores comparable to individuals two decades younger, with gameplay stimulating functions such as memory, attention, and spatial awareness. Researchers and participants noted that gaming also helped address social isolation, offering older adults a low-barrier and inclusive activity through which to build connections and community.

Such cross-sector applications illustrate how capabilities developed within the gaming ecosystem can contribute more broadly to innovation and human capital development within the broader economy. These benefits extend to the silver economy as well. For instance, Tencent has developed game-based interventions to support cognitive health in older adults, including research exploring whether gameplay can help delay the onset of Alzheimer's disease, and community programmes in Japan that use games to support the mental and social wellbeing of seniors.



[77] Tencent (2025), "Can Game Therapy Help Delay Alzheimer's? A Tencent Innovation Offers Clues". Available at: https://www.tencent.com/can-game-therapy-help-delay-alzheimers-a-tencent-innovation-offers-clues/

[78] Tencent (2024), "The Power of Play: How Games Help Seniors Stay Young". Available at: https://www.tencent.com/the-power-of-play-how-games-help-seniors-stay-young/

4. Balanced policy approaches are key to sustaining industry growth

Southeast Asia's video game industry stands at an inflection point. As outlined in the earlier chapters, the industry already contributes meaningfully to economic growth, employment, exports, and skills development across Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. At the same time, governments across the region are increasingly engaging with questions of digital governance, online content regulation, and youth protection, all of which are areas that inevitably intersect with gaming.



This growing regulatory attention reflects key policy objectives, as governments are responding to concerns about online safety, youth wellbeing, and evolving digital gaming models. These concerns are valid; however, the key policy challenge here is ensuring that responses remain proportionate, evidence-based, and tailored to local conditions, to avoid suppressing the growth of the gaming industry.

4.1. Recognising the valid concerns associated with video games

As video games have become more mainstream, they have also attracted greater public scrutiny. Many of the concerns raised reflect broader anxieties about digital media and youth wellbeing. While these issues should be taken seriously, they are best understood within a wider societal and technological context. Risks arising from the social features embedded in games can be examined through four potential pathways: Content, Conduct, Contact, and Commerce, which together offer a precise basis for policy consideration.[79] Concerns about patterns of gaming engagement and well-being are addressed separately below as a distinct category.

[79] NSPCC Learning (2024), "The 4 Cs of online safety: online safety risk for children". Available at: https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/news/2023/september/4-cs-of-online-safety

Content. Games vary widely in their content, and ensuring that material is appropriate for the age groups likely to encounter it is a longstanding and legitimate policy concern. Age-inappropriate content (such as violent, sexual, or otherwise harmful material) may be present in games accessible to minors, and as games increasingly incorporate user-generated content and in-game communication features, players may also be exposed to harmful material generated by other users.[80] These concerns are distinct from those associated with dedicated social media platforms: they arise from features of play rather than from the primary purpose of the product, and are best addressed through content classification systems, age-appropriate design standards, and moderation of user-generated features where present.

Conduct. Online multiplayer gaming could expose players, particularly minors, to cyberbullying, harassment, or inappropriate communication in open online environments. For instance, a study in Australia showed that one in three young people experienced bullying-type behaviours while playing online games, highlighting the increased risks faced by young people who are actively engaged in gaming.[81] However, the gaming industry has increasingly invested in tools and systems to address these risks, including accessible reporting and moderation mechanisms, parental controls, and community conduct standards. Major platforms such as Xbox have implemented real-time voice and text moderation features, while Roblox has introduced layered safety settings designed specifically for minors.[82] As such, concerns around online safety in gaming would be best addressed through a combination of platform accountability, age-appropriate design standards, and broader digital literacy education, rather than through gaming-specific regulation alone.

Contact. Games with open communication features, including voice and text chat, messaging, and user-discovery functions, create opportunities for inappropriate or harmful contact, particularly where minors may interact with unknown adults.[83] This risk is most acute in games likely to be accessed by significant numbers of younger players, and is best mitigated through communication and privacy defaults calibrated to the age and risk profile of the audience, alongside accessible mechanisms for reporting and blocking unwanted contact.

Commerce. Across the industry, established practices already address many relevant consumer protection concerns: transparent pricing structures, purchase and parental controls, and probability disclosure for chance-based purchases have become increasingly standard.[84] In Southeast Asia, regulatory attention has focused on transparency, age-appropriateness, and responsible communication of pricing structures – an approach that supports informed consumer choice and reflects the understanding that different monetisation models have varying consumer protection implications.[85]

Gaming and well-being. Lastly, policy discussions around gaming and well-being would benefit from distinguishing between different patterns of engagement. High levels of gaming engagement may not inherently be harmful, as many players engage intensively without adverse outcomes. However, a second pattern, problematic use, describes situations where gaming may be associated with negative outcomes such as interference with sleep, academic performance, or social engagement.[86] Clinically recognised gaming disorder (which is a distinct third category), is defined by impaired control where gaming is given increased priority over other activities.[87] It is key to make such distinctions to calibrate policy responses accurately, while recognising that other factors beyond parental involvement play a role in shaping gaming behaviours – for instance, product design features such as streaks or mechanics that create social pressure to play can also influence patterns of engagement.[88] All of these should be considered along broader well-being factors, rather than taking time spent gaming alone as a proxy for harm.

[80] RSIS (2026), "Understanding Malign Influence in Video Gaming". Available at: https://rsis.edu.sg/rsis-publication/rsis/co26156/

[81] eSafety Commissioner (2024), "The risks and benefits of online gaming for children and young people". Available at: https://www.esafety.gov.au/research/the-risks-and-benefits-of-online-gaming-for-children-and-young-people

[82] Sources include: Xbox Wire (2026), "An Update to Our Shared Commitment to Safer Gaming". Available at: https://news.xbox.com/en-us/2026/01/14/online-safety-principles-xbox-nintendo-sony/; and The Conversation (2026), "Roblox is boosting safety features for young people. It's a step in the right direction". Available: https://theconversation.com/roblox-is-boosting-safety-features-for-young-people-its-a-step-in-the-right-direction-280360

[83] UNICEF (2023), "Child Sexual Exploitation in Online Gaming". Available at: https://www.unicef.org/asia-pacific/blog/child-sexual-exploitation-online-gaming

[84] Stripe (2026), "Gaming monetisation explained: Models, revenue streams and player lifetime value". Available at: https://stripe.com/en-sg/resources/more/gaming-monetization-explained

[85] SiGMA (2026), "Malaysia opens 45-day consultation on Gaming Sub Code". Available at: https://sigma.world/news/malaysia-gaming-sub-code-public-consultation-2026/

[86] Harvard Health Publishing (2020), "The health effects of too much gaming". Available at: https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/the-health-effects-of-too-much-gaming-20201222221645

[87] WHO (n.d.), "Gaming disorder". Available at: https://www.who.int/standards/classifications/frequently-asked-questions/gaming-disorder

[88] UX Magazine (2026), "Gamification or Manipulation? Understanding the Ethics of Engagement Loops". Available at: https://uxmag.medium.com/gamification-or-manipulation-understanding-the-ethics-of-engagement-loops-920f2fa2b0eb

4.2. Drawing lessons from other media industries

It is important to situate current debates within a broader historical context. Emerging media forms have frequently faced moral scrutiny, particularly regarding youth protection and alleged links to violence. For instance, film and television were criticised for allegedly contributing to youth delinquency and aggression.[89] Similarly, segments of the music industry, particularly certain genres, have previously been accused of encouraging antisocial behaviour.[90] Over time, however, extensive academic research into media effects has generally found no conclusive causal link between exposure to fictional violent content and real-world violent behaviour at a population level.[91]

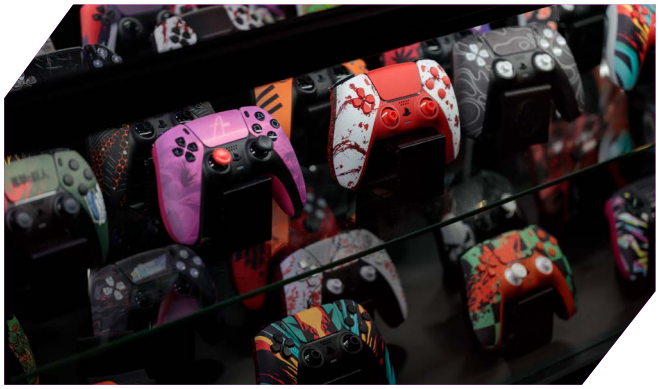
Today, a similar narrative is sometimes observed in discussions about video games. As interactive media becomes more immersive and socially integrated, concerns about violence and behavioural effects resurface. Yet, as with earlier media forms, the weight of research does not support a straightforward causal relationship between fictional game content and real-world violence, and it is important to ground policy discussions in robust evidence rather than assumptions.

4.3. Avoiding overcorrection: the importance of a healthy domestic ecosystem

While concerns around youth wellbeing and online safety warrant attention, overly restrictive approaches, including blanket gameplay caps or broad content prohibitions, can generate unintended economic and social consequences. For Southeast Asian developers, the domestic market is a critical testing ground. It enables studios to build user communities, refine gameplay mechanics, and develop live-service capabilities before competing internationally. Restrictive measures that significantly curtail local participation may weaken the pipeline of globally competitive studios.

In contrast, jurisdictions that have maintained a healthy domestic gaming ecosystem demonstrate the benefits of a more balanced approach. In the United States, a large domestic market supported the rise of globally influential publishers, esports leagues, and content creators.[92] Likewise, South Korea leveraged its strong local gaming culture to develop internationally competitive studios and a vibrant esports ecosystem. For instance, esports programmes are widely offered at schools and universities, and many institutions offer degrees related to gaming.[93] Notably, South Korea's regulatory evolution demonstrates policy recalibration. In October 2025, President Lee Jae Myung declared that "games are not addictive substances", a sharp contrast to years earlier when there was a legislative push to classify gaming as a social addiction.[94] Rather than maintaining rigid shutdown-style restrictions indefinitely, policy has shifted toward shared responsibility frameworks to empower parents with account-level controls and encourage industry-led transparency, while addressing specific concerns through targeted consumer protection measures.[95] The results in such markets have been an internationally competitive developer landscape and vibrant esports ecosystems.

For Southeast Asia, the lesson is not that regulation should be avoided, but that policy design is crucial. In order to build a healthy domestic ecosystem, countries will need to have regulatory stability, the right enabling conditions, and room for local players and developers to participate and grow.



[89] American Psychological Association (2013), "Violence in the media: Psychologists study potential harmful effects". Available at: https://www.apa.org/topics/video-games/violence-harmful-effects

[90] Springer Nature (2022), "Psychosocial risks and benefits of exposure to heavy metal music with aggressive themes: Current theory and evidence". Available at: https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12144-022-03108-9

[91] Sources include: Entertainment Software Association (n.d.), "Violence in Video Games". Available at: https://www.theesa.com/issues/in-game-violence/; and National Library of Medicine (2009), "The Impact of Electronic Media Violence: Scientific Theory and Research". Available at: https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC2704015/

[92] AZ Big Media (2024), "How the US leads the global gaming market". Available at: https://azbigmedia.com/blogs/how-the-us-leads-the-global-gaming-market/

[93] The Guardian (2025), "No pain, no game: how South Korea turned itself into a gaming powerhouse". Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/dec/25/south-korea-video-game-powerhouse

[94] Sources include: The Korea Herald (2025), "Lee touts video games as export driver, not cause of addiction". Available at: https://www.koreaherald.com/article/10594175; and The Guardian (2013), "South Korean MPs consider measures to tackle online gaming addiction". Available at: https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/dec/11/south-korea-online-gaming-addiction

[95] eLaw (2019), "Enforcement Decree of the Game Industry Promotion Act". Available at: https://elaw.klri.re.kr/eng_mobile/viewer.do?hseq=52062&key=17&type=par

4.4. Enabling balanced growth: policy recommendations

A forward-looking policy approach for Southeast Asia's gaming ecosystem can be anchored in three complementary pillars. Together, these measures would help governments safeguard users while ensuring that regulatory frameworks remain conducive for innovation, investment, and long-term industry development.

1. Recognising gaming's broader economic and cultural value

Video games extend beyond entertainment and form a key part of the digital economy and creative industries. It will be important for policies to include gaming in creative economy masterplans and ensure alignment with economic objectives.[96] Governments should recognise gaming's broader contributions and position it as a strategic asset that drives technological capability, cultural exchange, and participation in the digital economy, rather than viewing it solely through a risk-management lens.[97] For example, South Korea's KOCCA promotes games alongside K-dramas, film, and animation under a single cultural-content mandate.[98] This integration has allowed the gaming sector to draw on the same funding streams, export support, and international promotion infrastructure that has driven the broader success of Korean cultural exports — from K-pop to Korean films.

Governments can develop dedicated gaming and esports roadmaps that include clear milestones, targets, guardrails, and accountability mechanisms, going beyond simply making references to gaming within broader creative or digital economy masterplans. Enabling measures can also include funding for local game studios, support for esports events, and incentives for industry activity, which can contribute to the creation of an enabling environment for gaming to thrive. Furthermore, investment in dedicated training facilities such as national esports centres and game hubs can also provide the infrastructure needed to develop industry capability. Where appropriate, governments should also consider formally recognising esports as an official sport, which unlocks dedicated funding streams, athlete welfare protections, and national team structures that fall beyond the remit of traditional creative economy policies.

2. Co-regulation and structured dialogue

Given the rapid evolution of digital technologies, co-regulatory models (a hybrid approach where governments set objectives and industry provides operational expertise) offer flexibility and sustainability.[99] Such an approach is most effective when underpinned by active collaboration between the government, private sector, and industry associations. Australia's Interactive Games and Entertainment Association (IGEA) offers a useful example: working closely with the government, IGEA administers the national classification scheme and engages directly with policymakers to ensure that regulations remain grounded in industry realities.[100] Such structured dialogue between these stakeholders can help ensure that regulations remain practical and grounded.[101] Effective co-regulatory frameworks should operate on a tiered basis, establishing baseline expectations in areas such as age-appropriate design, privacy and communication defaults, accessible reporting and enforcement, parental controls, and transparent monetisation practices. These should apply consistently across the sector, while calibrating enhanced safeguards to services whose specific features or audience profile put them at an increased risk. Games that incorporate public communications, user-generated content, user discovery, or gifting and trading, or are likely to be accessed by significant numbers of younger players, warrant proportionately stronger protections. Mechanisms such as clear content classification, enforceable codes of conduct, and parental empowerment frameworks demonstrate how co-regulation can protect users without being overly restrictive or stifling creativity.[102]

[96] Grow with Singlife (2025), "From Pixels to Podium: E-Sports in Singapore". Available at: https://grow.singlife.com/elevate/Unbiased-Insights/thematic-report-edition-13

[97] Asian Development Bank (2024), "A Review of Digital Creative Industries in Asia". Available at: https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/1001836/review-digital-creative-industries-asia.pdf

[98] InterMedia (2025), "Public policies in the video games industry". Available at: https://iicintermedia.org/gaming/public-policies-in-the-video-games-industry/

[99] Weber (2021), "Glossary of Platform Law and Policy Terms". Available at: https://platformglossary.info/co-regulation/

[100] IGEA (2021), "A modern classification scheme for video games". Available at: https://igea.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/IGEA-Policy-Briefs-Promoting-a-safe-and-responsible-industry-1.1.pdf

[101] Chase Advisors (2022), "Co-regulatory Framework For Online Skill Gaming Platforms". Available at: https://www.chase-advisors.com/media/01henmwh/co-regulatory-framework-for-online-skill-gaming-platforms-aug-2022.pdf

[102] Infocomm Media Development Authority (n.d.), "Video Games". Available at: https://www.imda.gov.sg/regulations-and-licensing-listing/content-standards-and-classification/standards-and-classification/video-games

3. Strengthening local developers and talent pipelines

A sustainable gaming ecosystem requires both a thriving domestic industry and a skilled workforce to support it. Support can include targeted grants, co-investment mechanisms, and tax incentives for early-stage studios, alongside partnerships between universities and industry to build skills in programming, game design, and digital art.[103] Initiatives that facilitate participation in global expos, or support the hosting of esports and gaming events, can further boost exports, tourism, and employment opportunities within the sector.[104] South Korea's G-STAR, one of Asia's largest gaming expos with over 200,000 attendees, and Saudi Arabia's Esports World Cup illustrate how government-backed events can elevate a country's profile as a gaming hub while generating significant economic activity.[105] In addition, it is important that these are done alongside proportionate compliance pathways and shared implementation tools that ensure safety obligations remain accessible to studios of all sizes, including smaller ones.

To complement this, it is important to build a market-ready workforce, which will require structured pathways spanning the full range of career stages and entry points. At the foundational level, this can include partnerships between training institutions such as universities and industry to build skills in programming, game design, and digital art. Additionally, internship pipelines and industry placements can help to ensure practical, market-ready capabilities among the next generation of talent. Talent development should also extend to esports athletes and content creators to reflect the full breadth of career pathways offered by the gaming sector. Equally important is recognising the gaming industry's suitability for mid-career transitions, as professionals with experience in areas such as narrative design or other commercial roles can also bring significant value in the case of mid-career transitions. Targeted pathways to attract and support career changers should be a part of any comprehensive workforce strategy.



[103] Channel NewsAsia (2023), "Local gaming developers call for more support to ease talent and funding crunch". Available at: https://www.channelnewsasia.com/singapore/local-gaming-developers-call-more-support-ease-talent-funding-crunch-3950481

[104] PSB Academy (2025), "How the Esports and Gaming Industry is Creating A New Form of Tourism". Available at: https://www.psb-academy.edu.sg/blog/how-the-esports-and-gaming-industry-is-creating-a-new-form-of-tourism

[105] Sources include: Chosun Biz (2025), "G-Star 2025 draws about 200,000 visitors over four days". Available at: https://biz.chosun.com/en/en-it/2025/11/17/5ATISVLCEFHVNGGDRSM73XRCDA/; and Esports World Cup (n.d.), "About Esports World Cup". Available at: https://www.esportsworldcup.com/en/about

Box 4: Content classification as a foundation for online gaming safety

Effective online gaming safety governance is multi-layered, combating mechanisms that address content, conduct, contact and commercial practices. Content classification (which assess the age-appropriateness of game content and communicates it clearly to consumers) is a foundational layer of this system, and one where co-regulatory frameworks have demonstrated success.

Pan European Game Information (PEGI) provides one of the most established examples in this regard. Under this model, governments provide the legal framework and oversight, while the system itself is administered and funded by the industry. It provides age classifications for video games in 38 European countries, confirming whether game content is appropriate for players of a certain age.[106] It also provides guidance on parental control tools and other complementary features to manage playtime, content access, purchases, and privacy settings. Ratings are based on an enforceable Code of Conduct that sets standards for content assessment and labelling, and seek to provide guidance to consumers, parents in particular, to help them decide whether to buy a particular product for a child.[107] The PEGI is widely considered as a model of European harmonisation in the field of child protection, and a 2024 study found that 80% of parents with children that play video games said they use PEGI labels to make an informed decision when considering to buy a video game for their children.[108] This outlines how a transparent rating system, when combined with industry buy-in, can enhance consumer trust while supporting a thriving games market.

It is, however, important to note that content classification is simply one component of overall safety infrastructure, rather than a substitute for it. Age ratings do not directly govern in-game conduct or communication between players, highlighting the importance of a comprehensive approach to online gaming safety.



[106] Pan European Game Information (n.d.), "PEGI helps parents to make informed decisions when buying video games". Available at: https://pegi.info/

[107] Pan European Game Information (n.d.), "The PEGI Code of Conduct". Available at: https://pegi.info/pegi-code-of-conduct

[108] Pan European Game Information (n.d.), "Statistics about PEGI". Available at: https://pegi.info/page/statistics-about-pegi

5. Conclusion

Southeast Asia's video game industry has evolved into a fast-growing and increasingly important pillar of the region's digital economy. As highlighted in the chapters above, the industry extends well beyond entertainment, spanning a broad ecosystem that includes key segments such as game development and publishing, hardware manufacturing, retail services, and esports. Across Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand, it is already generating significant contributions to GDP, employment, and exports, while supporting businesses and broader economic activity.

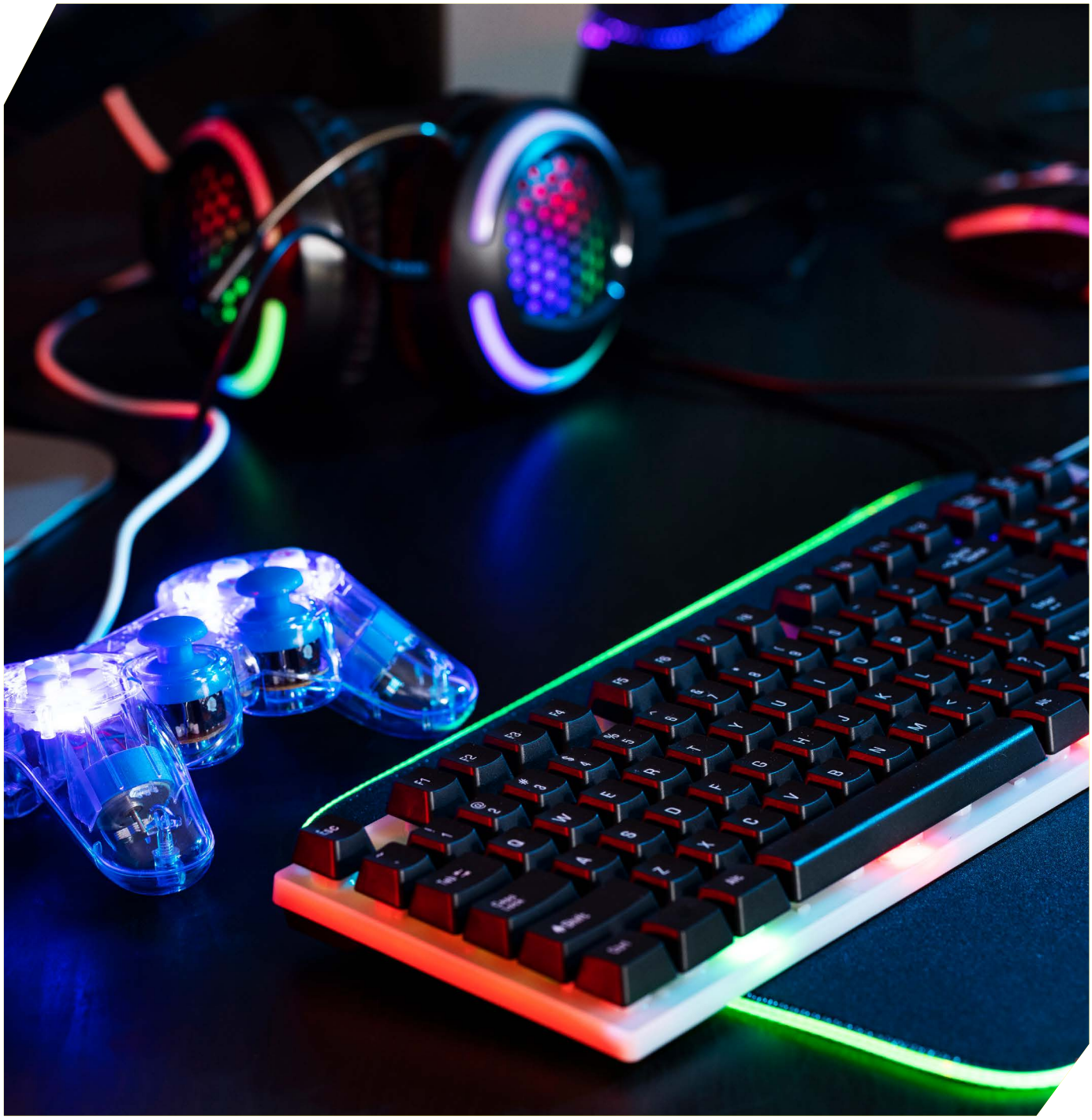
At the same time, the industry is creating value that goes beyond what is captured in traditional economic metrics. It is strengthening digital and creative skillsets, fostering communities, and providing a platform for cultural expression and regional storytelling. Its spillovers into adjacent areas, such as tourism, IP development, MICE events, and social media content creation, further reinforce its role as a catalyst for broader economic activity, with linkages that extend beyond the digital ecosystem. The presence of global firms also continues to support ecosystem development through investment, capability transfer, and stronger integration into global value chains.

The key challenge is not whether to regulate, but how to regulate effectively. A primary obstacle in the region has been the absence of robust, sector-specific data, which has at times led to policy being shaped more by perception than by evidence. This report seeks to help address that gap. Where data and analysis are lacking, the first step should be to develop a clearer picture of the industry's scale, structure, and impacts before designing regulatory responses. Overly restrictive or poorly calibrated measures could end up undermining investment, innovation, and the development of thriving domestic video game ecosystems. As such, striving for balanced approaches can safeguard users while creating the conditions needed for sustainable growth. Such policies should be anchored in recognition of gaming's broader economic and cultural value, co-regulatory models, and support for local talent.

With the right mix of enabling policies, ecosystem support, and industry collaboration, Southeast Asia has the opportunity to strengthen its position not only as a major consumer market, but as a globally competitive hub for game development, innovation, and creative output. In doing so, the video game industry can play a central role in driving the region's next phase of economic and social development.



6. Appendix A: Country deep dives



Country deep-dive: Indonesia

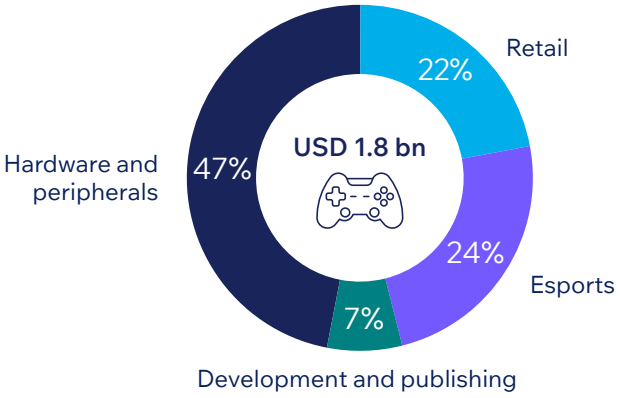
2025 economic footprint of the video game industry

USD 1.3 bn
industry revenue

USD 1.8 bn
value added[a]
0.12% of 2025 GDP

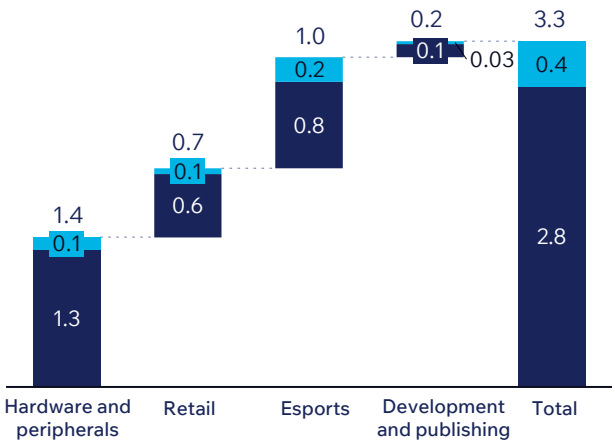
257,400
jobs supported[a]
0.18% of 2025 employment

Value added contribution by segment[b]

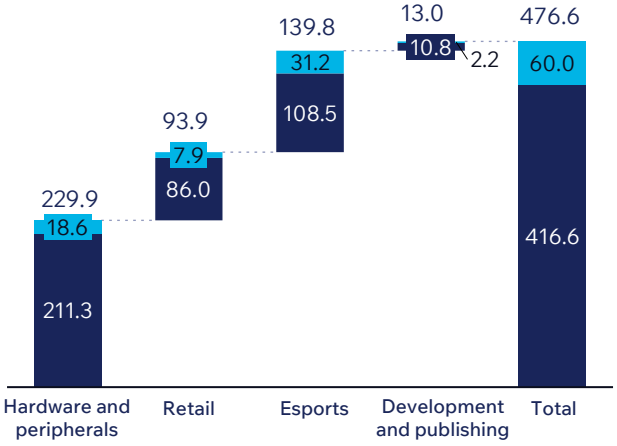


By 2030, the industry has the potential to generate up to USD 3.3 billion and support 476,600 jobs.

Projected value added (USD bn)[c]



Projected jobs supported (000s)[c]



Accelerated growth BAU growth

Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Unlocking growth through policy action in Indonesia

1 **Introduce dedicated financing tools** (such as prototype grants, matching funds, and concessional loans) to help local studios fund development and scale, addressing persistent capital constraints in bringing Indonesian-made games to market.

2 **Strengthen IP frameworks** by simplifying registration, valuation, and financing of game-related IP, enabling studios to retain more value, expand successful titles, and build sustainable publishing businesses.

3 **Expand industry-aligned talent and export pathways** through specialised curricula, industry placements, and business matching, building on platforms like Indonesia Game Developer Exchange (IGDX) to help studios access international markets.

Existing and upcoming regulations that may affect the video game industry

- [Existing] Indonesia's Government Regulation No. 17 of 2025 (PP Tunas) that restricts minors' access to online platforms
- [Upcoming] Indonesia Game Rating System (IGRS), a content classification system for video games

Notes:

a. Of the total impact, direct impact accounted for USD 798 million of value added and 132,800 of the jobs supported. Note that job estimates have been rounded to the nearest 100 for ease of reporting.
b. This report focuses on the following four segments of the video game ecosystem: development and publishing, hardware and peripherals, retail, and esports. We have also removed the indirect and induced effects of the retail segment to avoid double counting. Furthermore, we recognise that additional contributions from other segments of the industry such as tourism and MICE are not quantified and may increase the overall impact.
c. The BAU scenario assumes industry growth follows existing market trends without any new policy that supports or restricts the industry, while the accelerated scenario assumes faster growth driven by supportive government policies, and is derived from third-party projections or benchmarked against high-growth markets such as the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Source: Access Partnership analysis.

Country deep-dive: Malaysia

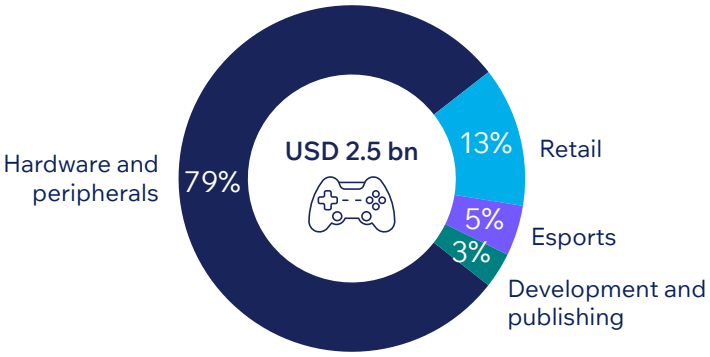
2025 economic footprint of the video game industry

USD 2.4 bn
industry revenue

USD 2.5 bn
value added[a]
0.53% of 2025 GDP

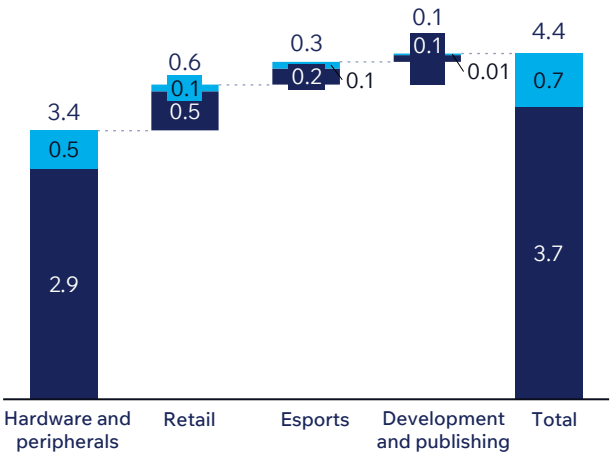
124,400
jobs supported[a]
0.76% of 2025 employment

Value added contribution by segment[b]

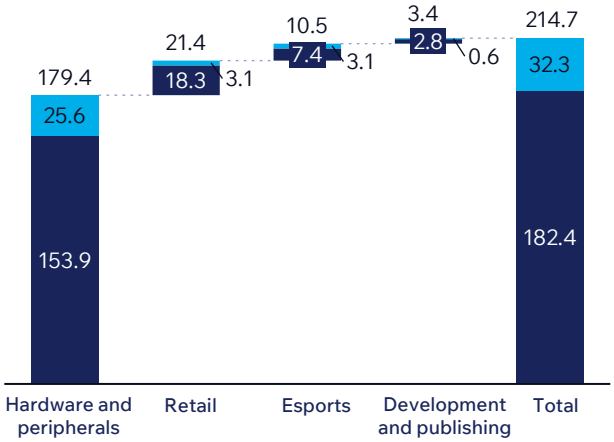


By 2030, the industry has the potential to generate up to USD 4.4 billion and support 214,700 jobs.

Projected value added (USD bn)[c]



Projected jobs supported (000s)[c]



Accelerated growth
BAU growth

Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Unlocking growth through policy action in Malaysia

1. **Strengthen participation in industry-led consultations** to provide structured feedback, ensuring policies balance innovation and consumer protection while reflecting practical industry needs.

2. **Clearly differentiate gaming from gambling and social media,** recognising unique features like in-game purchases to avoid regulatory ambiguity and reduce the risk of overregulation.

3. **Recognise shared responsibility for minor safety** under the Online Safety Act, emphasising roles for both platforms and parents in fostering a safe and healthy gaming environment.

Existing and upcoming regulations that may affect the video game industry

- [Existing] Online Safety Act 2025 that aims to protect online platform users
- [Existing] KBS 2026-2030 to strengthen e-sports
- [Upcoming] Proposed revisions to regulatory guidelines for esports

Notes:

a. Of the total impact, direct impact accounted for USD 894 million of value added and 52,000 of the jobs supported. Note that job estimates have been rounded to the nearest 100 for ease of reporting.
b. This report focuses on the following four segments of the video game ecosystem: development and publishing, hardware and peripherals, retail, and esports. We have also removed the indirect and induced effects of the retail segment to avoid double counting. Furthermore, we recognise that additional contributions from other segments of the industry such as tourism and MICE are not quantified and may increase the overall impact.
c. The BAU scenario assumes industry growth follows existing market trends without any new policy that supports or restricts the industry, while the accelerated scenario assumes faster growth driven by supportive government policies, and is derived from

Source: Access Partnership analysis.

Country deep-dive: Philippines

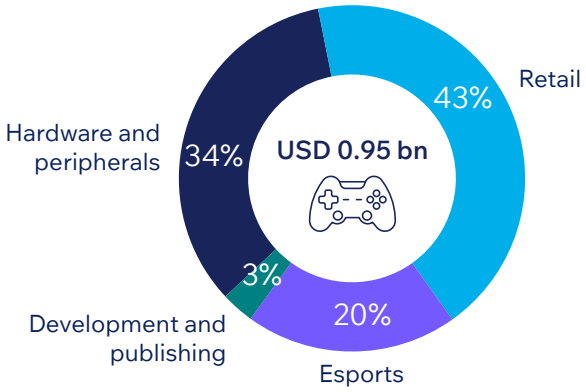
2025 economic footprint of the video game industry

USD 1.0 bn
industry revenue

USD 0.95 bn
value added[a]
0.19% of 2025 GDP

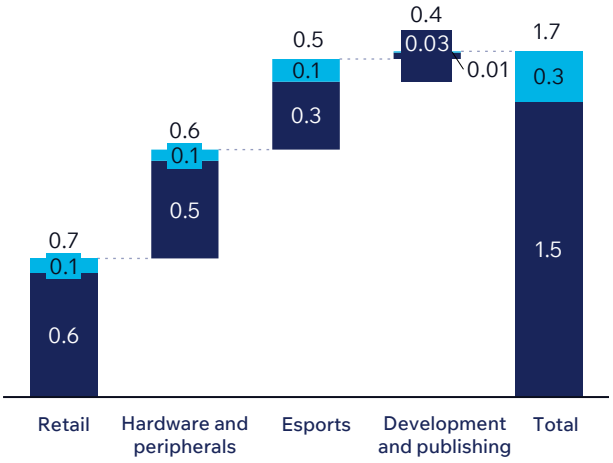
111,300
jobs supported[a]
0.23% of 2025 employment

Value added contribution by segment[b]

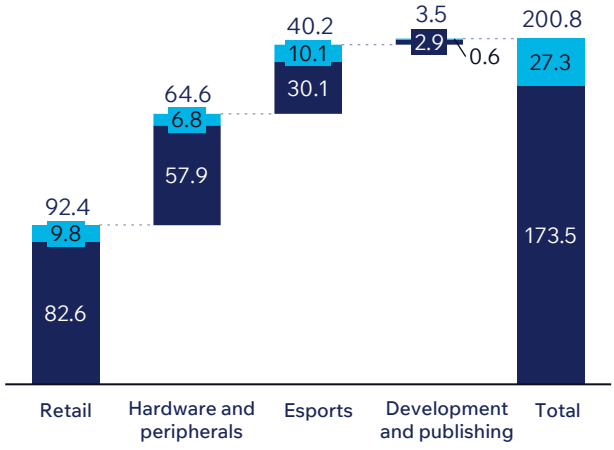


By 2030, the industry has the potential to generate up to USD 1.7 billion and support 200,800 jobs.

Projected value added (USD bn)[c]



Projected jobs supported (000s)[c]



Accelerated growth
BAU growth

Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Unlocking growth through policy action in Philippines

1 **Strengthen targeted incentives and talent pipelines** through government agencies and industry-academic partnerships, for instance by integrating esports into local curriculums. This can grow local game development and capture more value beyond a consumption-driven market.

2 **Improve inter-agency coordination and establish dedicated economic zones.** By clarifying guidance under existing laws, compliance overlaps can be reduced and gaming platforms will have more predictable standards on safety, data governance, and enforcement.

3 **Review and relax mandatory drug testing for esports athletes** to remove barriers to international tournaments and align with global norms, improving the Philippines' competitiveness as an esports event destination.

Existing and upcoming regulations that may affect the video game industry

- [Upcoming] Revisions to iGaming regulations (PAGCOR) which could mean tighter gaming controls

Notes:

a. Of the total impact, direct impact accounted for USD 599 million of value added and 72,700 of the jobs supported. Note that job estimates have been rounded to the nearest 100 for ease of reporting.
b. This report focuses on the following four segments of the video game ecosystem: development and publishing, hardware and peripherals, retail, and esports. We have also removed the indirect and induced effects of the retail segment to avoid double counting. Furthermore, we recognise that additional contributions from other segments of the industry such as tourism and MICE are not quantified and may increase the overall impact.
c. The BAU scenario assumes industry growth follows existing market trends without any new policy that supports or restricts the industry, while the accelerated scenario assumes faster growth driven by supportive government policies, and is derived from third-party projections or benchmarked against high-growth markets such as the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Source: Access Partnership analysis.

Country deep-dive: Singapore

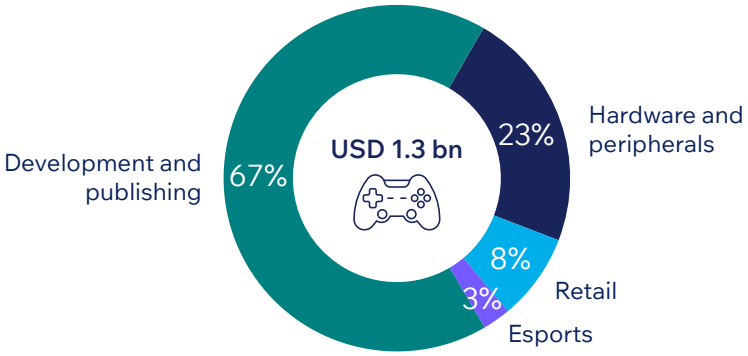
2025 economic footprint of the video game industry

USD 2.4 bn
industry revenue

USD 1.3 bn
value added[a]
0.22% of 2025 GDP

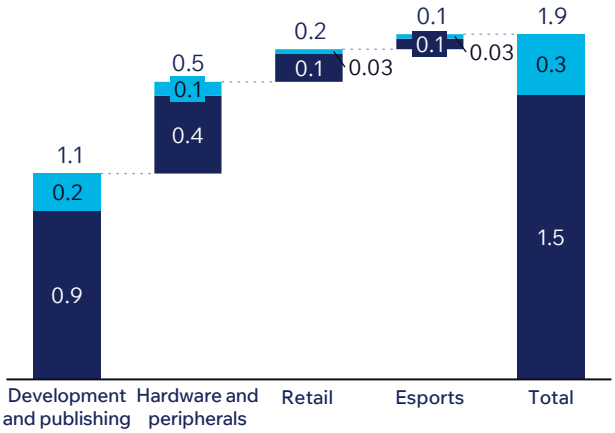
9,800
jobs supported[a]
0.24% of 2025 employment

Value added contribution by segment[b]

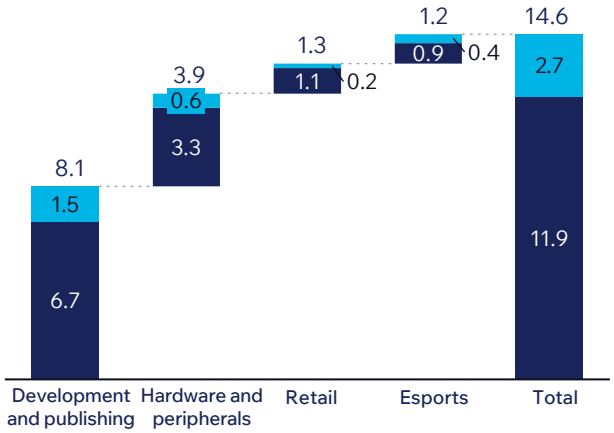


By 2030, the industry has the potential to generate up to USD 1.9 billion and support 14,600 jobs.

Projected value added (USD bn)[c]



Projected jobs supported (000s)[c]



Accelerated growth
BAU growth

Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Unlocking growth through policy action in Singapore

1. **Develop a clear skills roadmap** for priority gaming roles, supported by apprenticeships and work-study pathways, alongside expanded funding across the value chain—from development to publishing, live operations, and IP commercialisation.

2. **Establish a formal government–industry platform** to align agencies and players, co-develop standards (e.g. safety, monetisation), and provide structured feedback on talent needs and curriculum gaps.

3. **Embed gaming within Singapore's digital and creative economy strategy,** recognising its role in high-value jobs, digital infrastructure, IP creation, and esports tourism linked to the MICE and hospitality sectors as the country moves to play within the premium space for esports.

Existing and upcoming regulations that may affect the video game industry

- [Existing] Singapore Sports Council (Amendment Act) that expands formal definitions to include esports
- [Upcoming] Proposed regulation of loot boxes in online games

Notes:

a. Of the total impact, direct impact accounted for USD 836 million of value added and 5,700 of the jobs supported. Note that job estimates have been rounded to the nearest 100 for ease of reporting.
b. This report focuses on the following four segments of the video game ecosystem: development and publishing, hardware and peripherals, retail, and esports. We have also removed the indirect and induced effects of the retail segment to avoid double counting. Furthermore, we recognise that additional contributions from other segments of the industry such as tourism and MICE are not quantified and may increase the overall impact.
c. The BAU scenario assumes industry growth follows existing market trends without any new policy that supports or restricts the industry, while the accelerated scenario assumes faster growth driven by supportive government policies, and is derived from third-party projections or benchmarked against high-growth markets such as the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Source: Access Partnership analysis.

Country deep-dive: Thailand

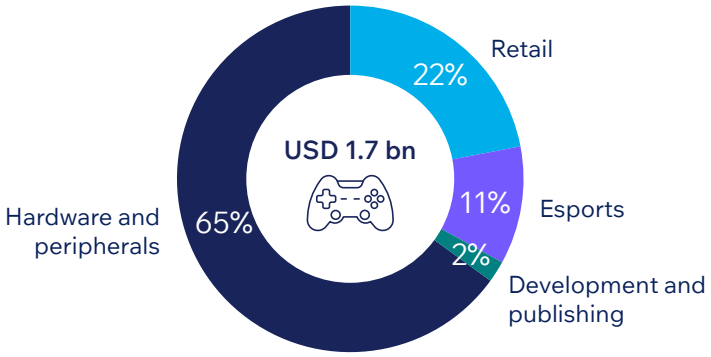
2025 economic footprint of the video game industry

USD 1.9 bn
industry revenue

USD 1.7 bn
value added[a]
0.30% of 2025 GDP

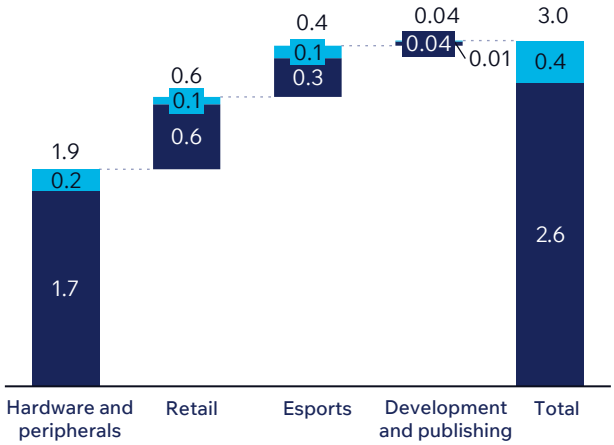
143,900
jobs supported[a]
0.36% of 2025 employment

Value added contribution by segment[b]

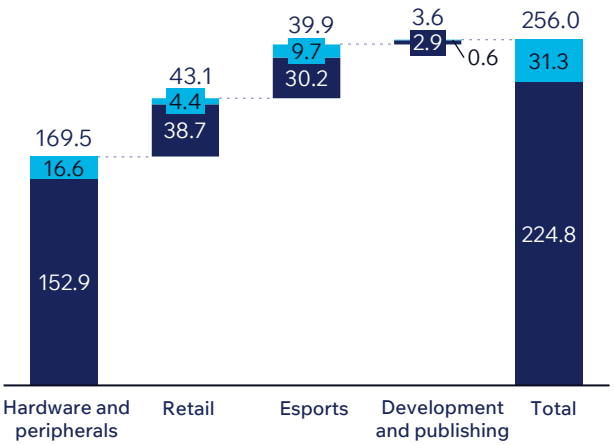


By 2030, the industry has the potential to generate up to USD 3.0 billion and support 256,000 jobs.

Projected value added (USD bn)[c]



Projected jobs supported (000s)[c]



Accelerated growth BAU growth

Note: Numbers may not sum due to rounding.

Unlocking growth through policy action in Thailand

1 **Support greater evidence-based and proportionate regulatory approaches** by introducing formal and regular consultations between government agencies, industry stakeholders, academia, and the public.

2 **Calibrate regulatory measures** based on level of risk, in areas like online safety and youth protection, to avoid imposing high compliance costs for smaller developers.

3 **Facilitate access to funding** such as through grants, venture financing and public private partnerships to support early stage and scaling game developers.

Existing and upcoming regulations that may affect the video game industry

- [Upcoming] Draft Game Industry Promotion Act, a proposed legislation aimed at formalizing support for the domestic game industry

Notes:

a. Of the total impact, direct impact accounted for USD 687 million of value added and 58,300 of the jobs supported. Note that job estimates have been rounded to the nearest 100 for ease of reporting.
b. This report focuses on the following four segments of the video game ecosystem: development and publishing, hardware and peripherals, retail, and esports. We have also removed the indirect and induced effects of the retail segment to avoid double counting. Furthermore, we recognise that additional contributions from other segments of the industry such as tourism and MICE are not quantified and may increase the overall impact.
c. The BAU scenario assumes industry growth follows existing market trends without any new policy that supports or restricts the industry, while the accelerated scenario assumes faster growth driven by supportive government policies, and is derived from third-party projections or benchmarked against high-growth markets such as the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Source: Access Partnership analysis.

7. Appendix B: Methodology

Four core segments of the video game industry were quantified. The value added and employment impact of each segment were estimated in four successive steps:

1. **Estimating the revenue generated by firms across the four segments.** The analysis considered only revenue generated from production activity taking place domestically. Where available, revenue estimates published in national studies were directly incorporated into the model. At this stage, the share of revenue generated from exports was also estimated.
2. **Projecting the growth rates across the four segments.** The "Business-As-Usual or BAU growth" and "Accelerated growth" rates under the two scenarios were estimated.
3. **Refining the revenue estimates using stakeholder inputs.** Preliminary estimates were reviewed and refined based on inputs from national gaming associations and government agencies.
4. **Estimating value added and employment impacts using an Input-Output (IO) model.** The final revenue estimates were used as inputs into a country-specific IO model to estimate the value added and job impact.

7.1. Step 1: Estimating the revenue generated by firms

7.1.1. Game development and publishing

The game development and publishing segment captures revenue earned from mobile, PC, and console games.

Revenue from mobile games was estimated by multiplying local developers' and publishers' share of global in-app purchase (IAP) revenue by total global IAP revenue. The local share was estimated using a power law curve, based on the top 1,000 developers and publishers globally in 2025 identified through data aggregators such as AppMagic.[109] This approach has been used in literature to model the value capture of the app industry where a significant share of the market value accrues to a few top players.[110] The IAP revenue was then further adjusted to include advertising revenue earned.[111]

Revenue from PC games was estimated by multiplying local developers' and publishers' share of global revenue on Steam (a leading global PC games distribution platform) by total global Steam revenue. The local share was estimated using a similar power law curve based on rankings from Gamalytic (a games market intelligence firm).[112] The resulting Steam revenue estimate was then scaled up to total PC game revenue using Steam's share of the overall PC games market.[113]

Revenue from console games was estimated using the ratio of PC and console titles developed by local developers and applying this ratio to the estimated PC game revenue.[114] As there is no equivalent

[109] Sources include: AppMagic (2026), "Top Publishers". Available at: https://appmagic.rocks/top-charts/publishers; and Digital Economy Promotion Agency (2025), "Digital Content 2024". Available at: https://www.depa.or.th/storage/app/media/file/depa_DC25_PressCon_Presentation_TH_V1.pdf

[110] Caribou (2016), "Winners and Losers in The Global App Economy: Where You Live Matters". Available at: https://caribou.global/publications/winners-and-losers-in-the-global-app-economy-where-you-live-matters/

[111] Sources include: BCG (2026), "How Platforms Are Colliding and Why This Will Spark the Next Era of Growth". Available at: https://www.bcg.com/publications/2025/video-gaming-report-2026-next-era-of-growth; and Xsolla (2023), "Data.ai: Mobile game app revenue split evenly between ads, IAP". Available at: https://gamesbeat.com/dataai-total-app-revenue-mobile-games-in-app-ad-spend/

[112] Gamalytic (2026), "Publisher List". Available at: https://gamalytic.com/game-list

[113] Sources include: Quantumrun (2025), "Steam Game Statistics". Available at: https://www.quantumrun.com/consulting/steam-game-statistics/; Games Industry.biz (2025), "72% of devs believe Steam has a monopoly on PC games, according to study". Available at: https://www.gamesindustry.biz/72-of-devs-believe-steam-has-a-monopoly-on-pc-games-according-to-study; and Demandsage (2026), "Steam User Statistics (2026): Market Share, MAU & Revenue". Available at: https://www.demandsage.com/steam-statistics/

[114] Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (2021), "Game Industry Report 2021". Available at: https://platform.mdec.com.my/cmscdn/v1.aspx?GUID=7cb3314d-fc00-4892-8d6f-b4676072be6a&file=SEA-Game-Industry-Report_Final.pdf

database that systematically tracks console game revenue in the same way as AppMagic or Gamalytic, a similar power law curve cannot be modelled. This approach makes a critical assumption that the relative number of titles developed for each platform is proportional to the eventual revenue earned across those platforms.

The export ratio was estimated either through (i) industry estimates published by national and international statistics (i.e., export share of industry output), or (ii) through gaming databases (i.e., total revenue earned by domestic developers and publishers net of revenue earned in the domestic market).[115]

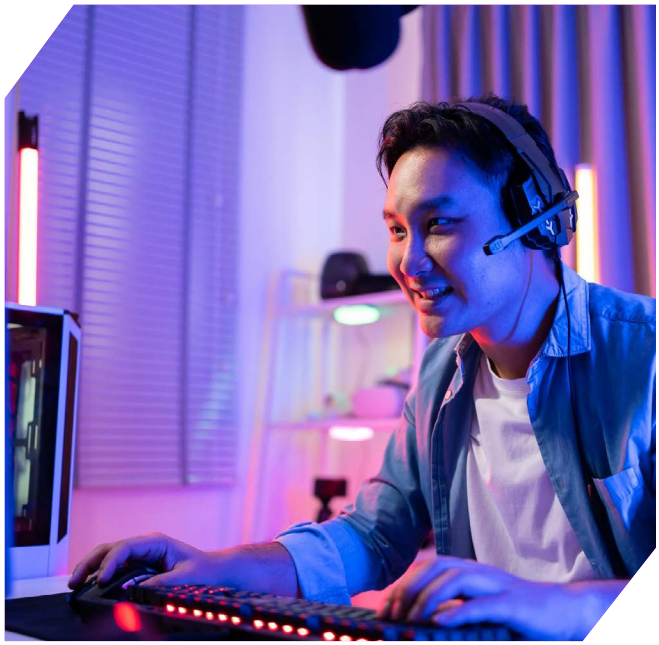
7.1.2. Hardware and peripherals

The hardware and peripherals segment captures revenue generated from the manufacturing of the following gaming products: consoles, laptops, desktops, mice, keyboards, microphones, headsets, and chairs. Mobile phones have been excluded from this definition. While most gamers in the five markets are mobile-first gamers, with smartphones being their main gaming device, this study have chosen to exclude it within the list of gaming products for two reasons. First, mobile phones are used for a wide range of purposes, including gaming. Second, unlike the current list of products, mobile phones are not typically marketed for gaming purposes, or to enhance gaming experiences. The exclusion of mobile phones has also been validated during the stakeholder interviews to be reasonable in the context of focusing on products that are marketed as primarily for gaming or to enhance the experience.

Revenue was estimated by taking the average of two approaches. The first approach estimated manufacturing output by scaling up export value using the export share of total output. This ratio was derived from international databases on merchandise trade and gross output.[116] Export values were adjusted for re-exports to ensure a more conservative estimate of the actual domestic manufacturing activity.[117] The resulting value was then multiplied by the gaming-related share of the hardware and peripherals market.[118]

The second approach estimated manufacturing output by summing export value with the value of domestic production. Domestic production is defined as the domestic expenditure on gaming hardware and peripherals net of imports.[119] This is estimated based on the import share using national Supply-Use Tables and Input-Output Tables.[120] This approach uses country-level data on imports and domestic demand to construct total output, unlike the first approach which relies on global trade-to-output ratios.

The export ratio of hardware and peripherals segment was estimated by dividing the export by the total output value.



[115] Sources include: Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation (2024), "Malaysia Digital Industry Report (MDIR)". Available at: https://platform.mdec.com.my/cmscdn/v1.aspx?GUID=d92b6192-fc92-4f08-9521-b90b8dec3fe1&file=MDIR%20Report%20H1%202024%20v2.pdf; Kementerian Komunikasi dan Digital Republik Indonesia (2024), "Peta Ekosistem Industri Gim Indonesia 2024". Available at: https://api-djed.komdigi.go.id/api/v1/download/77c52e87-8751-471b-a47f-0c8702f4a92d; Digital Economy Promotion Agency (2025), "Digital Content 2024". Available at: https://www.depa.or.th/storage/app/media/file/depa_DC25_PressCon_Presentation_TH_V1.pdf; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2026), "Trade in value-added". Available at: https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/sub-issues/trade-in-value-added.html; and AppMagic (2026), "Top Publishers". Available at: https://appmagic.rocks/top-charts/publishers

[116] Sources include: CEPII (2026), "BACI". Available at: https://www.cepii.fr/CEPII/en/bdd_modele/bdd_modele_item.asp?id=37; and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2026), "Trade in value-added". Available at: https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/sub-issues/trade-in-value-added.html

[117] Department of Statistics Singapore (2026), "Merchandise Trade". Available at: https://www.singstat.gov.sg/find-data/explore-data-themes/trade-investment/merchandise-trade/latest-news-data

[118] Sources include: The Business Research Company (2026), "Gaming Keyboard Market Report 2026". Available at: https://www.thebusinessresearchcompany.com/report/gaming-keyboard-global-market-report; The Business Research Company (2026), "PC Gaming Mouse Market Report 2026". Available at https://www.thebusinessresearchcompany.com/report/pc-gaming-mouse-global-market-report; Statista (2026), "Gaming PCs & Laptops". Available at: https://www.statista.com/outlook/amo/media/games/gaming-hardware/gaming-pcs-laptops/worldwide; and Quantumrun (2025), "PC Gaming Market Size Statistics And Demographics 2026". Available at: https://www.quantumrun.com/consulting/pc-gaming-market-size-statistics/

[119] Euromonitor (2026), "Video Games". Available at: https://www.euromonitor.com/industry/appliances-electronics

[120] Sources include: Department of Statistics Singapore (2026), "Supply, Use and Input-Output Tables". Available at: https://www.singstat.gov.sg/find-data/explore-data-themes/economy-prices/supply-use-and-input-output-tables/latest-news-data; Department of Statistics Malaysia (2023), "Malaysia Input-Output Tables, 2021". Available at: https://www.dosm.gov.my/portal-main/release-content/malaysia-input-output-tables-2021; Office of the National Economic and Social Development (2025), "Input-Output Tables (I-O Tables)". Available at: https://www.nesdc.go.th/en/info/input-output-tables-i-o-tables-en/; Badan Pusat Statistik Indonesia (2025), "Input-Output Tables Indonesia 2020". Available at: https://www.bps.go.id/en/publication/2025/01/27/ea74e60a8662a70a734fa431/input-output-tables-indonesia-2020.html; and Philippines Statistics Authority (2021), "Supply and Use and Input-Output Tables". Available at: https://psa.gov.ph/statistics/supply-and-use-input-output

7.1.3. Retail services

The retail services segment captures revenue generated from the sale of physical copies of games (i.e., boxed game sales) and gaming hardware and peripherals through local sales channels, including both physical stores and e-commerce platforms.

Revenue from the boxed game sales covers only PC and console games, as mobile game sales occur through mobile app stores (captured under the first segment) and are therefore assumed to be zero in local retail. This revenue was estimated by applying the share of PC and console spending, and the share of physical sales, to total domestic game spending.[121]

Revenue from the retail sale of gaming hardware and peripherals was estimated by multiplying the domestic share of global sales by total global sales of gaming hardware and peripherals.[122]

As retail sales occur domestically, there is no export contribution from this segment.

7.1.4. Esports

The esports segment captures revenue from competitive gaming (including both professional and amateur tournaments) and the surrounding ecosystem. It includes revenue from: (i) the sponsorship and advertising revenue earned by players, teams, and event organisers, (ii) merchandise and ticket sales, (iii) streaming, (iv) media rights, and (v) publisher fees (i.e., amount paid by esports organisers to game publishers to license and host tournaments). Esports betting was explicitly excluded from this analysis due to limited and inconsistent data across third-party sources. Additional revenue earned by game publishers from increased gamer participation are also excluded in this segment to avoid double-counting revenue from the game development and publishing segment.

Competitive esports revenue was first estimated by multiplying global esports revenue by each country's domestic share.[123] The domestic share was estimated using a set of indicators relevant to esports, such as the number of esports players, esports earnings, number of gamers, and consumer spending on games.[124]

As this approach primarily captures the competitive core of esports, a scaling factor was applied to account for the broader ecosystem (e.g. additional streaming and content-related revenues beyond tournaments). This is in line with findings from academic papers such as Anh et. al., which find that the revenue from competitive esports captures only part of the total ecosystem value.[125]

Economic activity of esports was assumed to be fully domestic (i.e., there is no export contribution). While tourism receipts from foreign fans attending esports events or sponsorship revenue from foreign companies may have contributed to some export impact, due to the lack of reliable and robust data, export contribution is assumed to be zero for esports as well. Additional insights from stakeholder interviews validated the exclusion as the growth of international esports events in certain markets may have slowed due to a moderated domestic demand for tournaments that are more popular with foreign fans. For example, while mobile-based tournaments have become more popular in some markets, these events do not attract as many foreign fans as compared to PC or console tournaments. However, in markets which continue to hold international esports tournaments regularly (i.e., at least once a year), stakeholders interviewed shared that foreign fans typically make up 15%-40% of visitors (depending on factors such as event scale, location, and the popularity of participating teams), while a significant share of sponsorships comes from domestic firms.

[121] Sources include: Newzoo (2019), "Games Market Trends and Publishers to Watch in Southeast Asia: The World's Fastest-Growing Mobile Games Market". Available at: https://newzoo.com/resources/blog/games-market-trends-and-publishers-to-watch-in-southeast-asia-the-worlds-fastest-growing-mobile-games-market; Xsolla (2025), "Indonesia's gaming market: A rising force in Southeast Asia". Available at: https://xsolla.com/blog/indonesia-has-a-winning-video-game-market; Digital Economy Promotion Agency (2025), "Digital Content 2024". Available at: https://www.depa.or.th/storage/app/media/file/depa_DC25_PressCon_Presentation_TH_V1.pdf; and Games Industry.biz (2024), "GamesIndustry.biz presents… The Year In Numbers 2024". Available at: https://www.gamesindustry.biz/gamesindustrybiz-presents-the-year-in-numbers-2024

[122] Sources include: Euromonitor (2026), "Video Games". Available at: https://www.euromonitor.com/industry/appliances-electronics; Omdia (2025), "Games peripherals and accessories will be a $20 billion market in 2025, Omdia finds". Available at: https://omdia.tech.informa.com/pr/2025/sep/games-peripherals-and-accessories-will-be-a-$20-billion-market-in-2025; Nintendo (2025), "Financial Results Explanatory Material". Available at: https://www.nintendo.co.jp/ir/pdf/2025/251104_4e.pdf; and Sony (2025), "Supplemental Information for the Consolidated Financial Results". Available at: https://www.sony.com/en/SonyInfo/IR/library/presen/er/pdf/25q2_supplement.pdf

[123] Sources include: Game Publishing and Marketing Summit (2025), "The Global State of Game Publishing & Marketing 2025". Available at: https://investgame.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Global_State_Of_Game_Publishing_Marketing_Report_2025.pdf; and Quantumrun (2025), "Global Esports Revenue Projections 2026". Available at: https://www.quantumrun.com/consulting/global-esports-revenue-projections/

[124] Esports Earnings (2026), "Overall Esports Stats". Available at: https://www.esportsearnings.com/history/2024/countries

[125] Ahn, J., Collis, W., and Jenny, S. (2020), "The one billion dollar myth: Methods for sizing the massively undervalued esports revenue landscape". Available at: https://www.ijesports.org/article/15/html

7.2. Step 2: Projecting the growth rates

The "BAU growth" scenario assumes that companies in the industry continue growing based on general market trends in the country and no new government policies are introduced to exogenously stimulate or restrict the industry growth. This growth is based on publicly available industry projections.[126] Note that our analysis looks at the current landscape as business as usual and does not account for impacts of any new policies, both supportive and restrictive.

The "Accelerated growth" scenario assumes that the government introduces new policies that create a favourable environment for businesses in the industry to grow faster. This growth is derived either from third-party projections or benchmarked against high-growth markets with more favourable regulatory climates such as the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).[127] For example, the National Gaming and Esports Strategy launched in 2022 includes 86 initiatives, such as ambitious targets to establish 250 gaming studios in the country and develop over 30 globally recognised games, to position Saudi Arabia as a global hub for gaming and esports.[128] In the UAE, the Dubai Program for Gaming 2033 was introduced in 2023 with initiatives aimed at boosting Dubai's competitiveness as the top 10 cities in the global gaming industry by 2033.[129]

7.3. Step 3: Refining the estimates

Preliminary revenue estimates and growth rates for the four segments were shared with industry associations and government agencies through interviews conducted between February and April 2026. These stakeholders assessed the assumptions and estimates, and provided additional inputs that were used to refine the final revenue values.

7.4. Step 4: Constructing an IO model and estimating industry multipliers

The value added was estimated using the historical relationship between value added and gross output in the economy. The revenue generated in each segment of the video game industry was used as inputs into a multi-year IO model, based on the Inter-Country Input-Output (ICIO) tables compiled by the Organisation for the Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).[130] This economic contribution is captured based on three successive effects:

- **Direct effects:** Economic activity directly related to each segment of the video game industry.
- **Indirect effects:** Economic activity generated by the suppliers of businesses in each segment of the video game industry.
- **Induced effects:** Economic activity generated by re-spending income directly or indirectly received from employees in each segment of the video game industry.[131]

This approach estimated multipliers for every dollar of additional value added—that is, how much gross output and value added is generated for every dollar of revenue generated. These multipliers were derived for each industry and then used to estimate the total economic contribution associated with production activity in each segment of the video game industry. The industry multipliers applied for each segment are in Table A1.

[126] Sources include: Niko Partners (2025), "SEA of Opportunities: Exploring the Rise of Southeast Asia Video Games Market". Available at: https://nikopartners.com/sea-of-opportunities-exploring-the-rise-of-southeast-asia-video-games-market/; Mordor Intelligence (2026), "Southeast Asia Gaming Market Size & Share Analysis - Growth Trends And Forecast (2026 - 2031)". Available at: https://www.mordorintelligence.com/industry-reports/southeast-asia-gaming-market; Statista (2026), "Video Games". Available at: https://www.statista.com/outlook/emo/media/video-games/southeast-asia; Deep Market Insights (2026), "South East Asia Gaming Accessories Market Size & Outlook, 2025-2033". Available at: https://deepmarketinsights.com/vista/insights/gaming-accessories-market/south-east-asia; Statista (2026), "Gaming Hardware". Available at: https://www.statista.com/outlook/amo/media/games/gaming-hardware/southeast-asia; Abmagazine (2024), "Asian esports soar". Available at: https://abmagazine.accaglobal.com/global/articles/2024/jan/business/asian-esports-soar.html; Antom (2025), "Southeast Asia Gaming & Payment Trends Report: A Young and Mobile-First Region Poised for the Next Wave of Global Growth". Available at: https://knowledge.antom.com/southeast-asia-gaming-payment-trends-report-a-young-and-mobile-first-region-poised-for-the-next-wave-of-global-growth; and International Monetary Fund (2026), "GDP per capita, current prices". Available at: https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/NGDPDPC@WEO/OEMDC/ADVEC/WEOWORLD

[127] Sources include: Newzoo (2025), "Global games market to hit $189 billion in 2025 as growth shifts to console". Available at: https://newzoo.com/resources/blog/global-games-market-to-hit-189-billion-in-2025; BCG (2025), "Gaming Industry Emerges from Post-Pandemic Slump: 55% of Gamers Are Playing More in the Last Six Months". Available at: https://www.bcg.com/press/9december2025-gaming-industry-emerges-from-post-pandemic-slump-gamers-playing-more; Statista (2026), "Games". Available at: https://www.statista.com/outlook/amo/media/games/worldwide; The Business Research Company (2026), "Gaming Keyboard Market Report 2026". Available at: https://www.thebusinessresearchcompany.com/report/gaming-keyboard-global-market-report; Quantumrun (2025), "PC Gaming Market Size Statistics And Demographics 2026". Available at: https://www.quantumrun.com/consulting/pc-gaming-market-size-statistics/; Statista (2026), "Revenue of the gaming hardware and accessories market worldwide from 2019 to 2030, by segment". Available at: https://www.statista.com/forecasts/1463134/gaming-hardware-market-size-globally-segment/; and Deep Market Insights (2026), "Middle East And Africa Esports Market Size & Outlook, 2025-2033". Available at: https://deepmarketinsights.com/vista/insights/esports-market/middle-east-and-africa

[128] Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (2022), "National Gaming and Esports Strategy (NGES)". Available at: https://www.vision2030.gov.sa/media/svtpwvei/nges_strategy_en.pdf

[129] Dubai Future Foundation (2023), "Hamdan bin Mohammed launches 'Dubai Program for Gaming 2033'". Available at: https://www.dubaifuture.ae/latest-news/hamdan-bin-mohammed-launches-dubai-program-for-gaming-2033/

[130] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2026), "Inter-Country Input-Output tables". Available at: https://www.oecd.org/en/data/datasets/inter-country-input-output-tables.html

[131] For example, in the publishing and development segment, direct effects are the value added and jobs generated by game development studios and publishers, indirect effects are those generated by art, design, or marketing companies that support the activities of game development studios and publishers, and induced effects are those generated by employees in game development studios and supplier companies spending their income.

Table A1: Industry multipliers

Segment of video game industry	Industry and ISIC Code
Game development and publishing	Information and telecommunication services (ISIC: J)
Hardware and peripherals	Manufacturing (ISIC: C)
Retail services	Wholesale and retail trade (ISIC: G)
Esports	Arts, entertainment, and recreation activities (ISIC: R)

The gross output result was used to estimate the number of jobs supported, based on the historical relationship between economy-wide gross output to Full-Time-Equivalent (FTE) employment. Employment data for each country was estimated using data from Trade in Employment database compiled by the OECD as well.

An additional step was taken for the impact of the retail services segment – as this segment sits directly downstream of video game development and publishing, and the manufacturing of gaming hardware and peripherals (i.e., the games developed and the hardware produced are supplied to retail stores for sale), only the direct impact from the IO model was considered for this segment. This removes any potential overlaps in economic impact when summing the indirect impact of the retail services segment, which is the contribution from suppliers, and the direct impact of both the game development and publishing, and hardware and peripherals segments.

To estimate the 2030 GDP and employment contributions of the industry, we first projected the market size of each segment under the two scenarios described in Section 7.2. These projected values were then applied to the IO model using the same methodology as for the baseline year, allowing us to estimate the corresponding gross output and employment impacts in 2030. This approach ensures consistency in scaling the economic contribution of the video games ecosystem over time while accounting for both scenario-driven growth and sectoral interlinkages.



[132] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2026), "Trade in employment". Available at: https://www.oecd.org/en/data/datasets/trade-in-employment.html

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London

Thomas House, 84 Eccleston Square
Office 5.06, 5th floor,
SW1V 1PX, London
United Kingdom

+44 20 3143 4900
london@accesspartnership.com

Brussels

8th Floor, Silversquare Europe
Square de Meeûs 35
B-1000 BrusselsBelgium

brussels@accesspartnership.com

North America

Washington DC

1300 Connecticut Avenue NW,
Suite 250
Washington, DC 20036
USA

+1 202 503 1570
washingtondc@accesspartnership.com

Asia

Bangkok

188 Spring Tower
11th Floor, Unit 106, Phayathai RoadThung
Phayathai, Ratchathewi, 10400
Thailand

+ 66 (2)-8216148

Hanoi

19th floor, Tower 1
Capital Place Building
No 29 Lieu Giai Street
Ngoc Khanh Ward, Ba Dinh District
Vietnam

Jakarta

Revenue Tower 21st Floor
Unit 104 SCBD Lot 13, Jl. Jend. Sudirman Kav.
52-53
Provinsi DKI Jakarta, 12190
Indonesia

+62 21 5020 0949

Manila

CG8ROCKWELL Level 21, 8 Rockwell,
Hidalgo Dr., Rockwell Center, Bgy.
Poblacion, 1210
Makati City, Metro Manila
Philippines

Kuala Lumpur

Common Ground Q Sentral
Level 39, Unit 39-02 (East Wing), 2A,
Jalan Stesen Sentral 2, Kuala Lumpur
Sentral, 50470
Malaysia

Singapore

12 Marina View
#11-20, Asia Square Tower 2
Singapore 018961

+65 8323 7855
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