

FACTSHEET

Will girls play video games if I bring them to the classroom?

Misplaced myths about women and technology in general also transfer onto video games. As the proportion of women among computer science and engineering degrees declined over the past 20 years (Miller, 2017; Girls Who Code), the idea that computer science was not for women has strengthened. This has in turn contributed to the perception that girls do not play video games, and that games are not for women.

Aren't female players a minority?

Girls who play video games are not a minority: in Europe, 45% of video game players are female (ISFE, 2020). Even then, the image of the women who play video games is that they tend to play casual mobile games. In 2018, 44% of female gamers played on consoles (6% less than for men and women overall), 54% on computers (similar to overall), and 63% on mobile devices (compared to 48% for men and women) (ISFE, 2019). While a bigger share of female gamers plays on mobile devices, the difference among mobile device players overall is not that important with men, as women represent 51% of all mobile and tablet video game players in 2019 (ISFE, 2020).



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Do girls only play games ‘for girls’?

Since the 1990s, some games have been designed to target a young female audience, and some mainstream games tend to attract a bigger share of female players. However, this distinction seems to be less and less relevant for the industry. For instance, ‘Animal Crossing: New Horizons’, is a farm management game with cute characters, which would be perceived as being ‘for girls’. Yet, the gender demographics of this game are now becoming balanced.

What games should I choose that everybody enjoys?

As a teacher, you should not base your choices of game to use on gender considerations but first and foremost on your learning objectives, in the sense that your primary goal should be to create a more engaging approach to a lesson topic. You can discuss with your students to know whether they like a game, as with any other cultural product, one might prefer some types of games over others.

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