

PEGI

Advertising Compliance Report

April 2010



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the project

From November 2009 through January 2010, PEGI S.A. monitored game advertisements in order to measure the compliance with the PEGI labelling guidelines¹. The analysis was based on a broad sample of **more than 1000 advertisements** from eight European countries (United Kingdom, France, Spain, Italy, Denmark, Poland, Belgium and the Netherlands). The research sample was taken from a variety of media: specialised games magazines, daily newspapers, games websites, billboards, TV and radio adverts, etc. In total, advertisements from more than **60 different game publishers** were collected.

the purpose

- to show the **commitment** of the videogames industry to make the PEGI age rating system a long-lasting **success**.
- to improve our signatories' understanding of the system and its guidelines – and create a **practical** point of reference to **optimise** the labelling guidelines.
- to create a benchmark for **future improvement** of advertising compliance, encouraging good practice.

the result

We are happy to say that the average European compliance across all media is already very high: **83.2%** of all the adverts were **compliant** to the PEGI labelling guidelines, using the **strictest** possible interpretation.

¹ version of October 2009



is that a good result?

Yes, it is. It's a very **good start**. The monitoring was unannounced, gathered as many ads as possible and checked them against all details of the guidelines in the strictest way. For example, some ads did have a PEGI age label but were still counted as non-compliant because the label was not shown exactly according to the guidelines. However, there is definitely **room for improvement** and we are confident that the compliance rate will increase in the future. Achieving a compliance level close to 100% should be possible if we keep working with publishers to improve the content and understanding of our guidelines.

the lessons

From the non-compliant cases we learned that it is more difficult (**but not impossible**) to comply in online advertising (e.g. campaigns are sometimes fragmented via web banners). Occasionally, an advert can escape the attention of even the most attentive publisher, and these stand-alone cases make up for a large part of the non-compliant adverts. The response from publishers – who received their individual results – is encouraging. Many expressed their dedication to become fully compliant by the next round of research and some publishers have started reviews of internal processes. The project also led to increased communication with publishers in order to clarify and **progress** the labelling guidelines further.

the reason

Clear and correct labelling on packaging and in adverts is a **very strong driver** of PEGI **awareness** and **recognition** among consumers. As a consequence, the impact of the industry's commitment on European and **national authorities** is not to be underestimated, as it will **enhance the credibility** and diminish the need for further regulation in this field. The compliance project will be continued on a



regular basis. Our aim is to use these updates to continually strengthen overall results, to provide a feedback tool for publishers and to identify potential improvements.

the context

In 2008, a survey by the Advertising Standards Association in the United Kingdom showed that 99% of video games adverts were compliant with their advertising codes². The survey was done after the recommendation by Dr. Tanya **Byron** in her **review**³ that the British government should commission an investigation into whether video games were being advertised in a responsible way and whether children were being encouraged to play games that were unsuitable for their age or experience.

the criteria

The PEGI compliance criteria have been deliberately set **very strict**. As pointed out, creating a strong visibility of the PEGI age labels in advertisements can produce a massive **boost in consumer awareness**. But to achieve this, it is crucial to create consistency continually across the board. This means that we checked the adverts against **all the details** of the labelling guidelines and whether the ad was targeting the appropriate age group (according to publication, timing, content). Another important element of the labelling guidelines, the packaging of videogames, was not included in this project. For videogames packaging, there is a virtual 100% compliance rate with that part of the guidelines.

the methodology

To evaluate the approach and finetune the standard for advertising compliance, a two-week trial test was carried out with adverts from France in October 2009. Based on these trial results, the decision was made to divide advertisements into

² <http://bcap.org.uk/The-Codes.aspx>

³ <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/byronreview/pdfs/Final%20Report%20Bookmarked.pdf>



four classes, allowing a minimum amount of flexibility towards interpretation of the labelling guidelines:

- Class 1: Non-compliance (no PEGI presence)
- Class 2: Low compliance (eg. small PEGI icon on the game packaging)
- Class 3: High Compliance (eg. clear PEGI icon but no url or too short on TV ads)
- Class 4: **perfect compliance**

For the statistics and percentages, class 1 and 2 were considered as non-compliant adverts while class 3 and 4 were compliant.

the feedback

One of the benefits of this research is that we encountered new forms of advertisement that were not specifically covered in the existing guidelines. This allowed us to **adapt** the guidelines and include these exceptions where necessary.

Some examples:

- advertisements for bundles (adverts for console + games)
- contest adverts including games (crossword, quiz,...)
- advertorial (advert for a game presented as an article)
- trailers (similar to movie trailers)
- sponsoring advertisements (TV broadcast sponsored by a videogame)

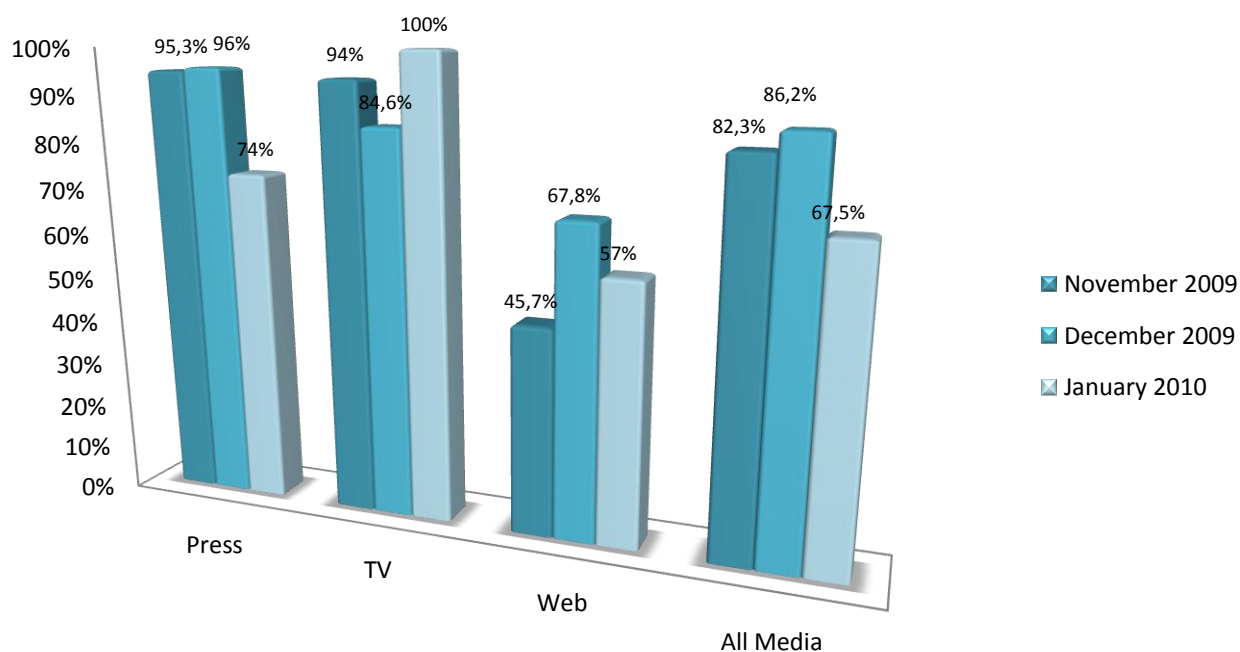
“Click here” banners on websites or very small static banners with only a game title and character were not taken into account. Animated banners, video banners and bigger static banners were included in the research, since there are no technical constraints to display the PEGI age label.

Third-party retail advertisements are not included in the research, as unfortunately retailers are not signatories to the PEGI Codes.



the results

France



Press:

- 41/43 compliant adverts in November = 95.3%
- 49/51 compliant adverts in December = 96%
- 14/19 compliant adverts in January = 74%
- 104/113 compliant adverts for 3 months = **92% Press Compliance**

TV

- 63/67 compliant adverts in November = 94%
- 22/26 compliant adverts in December = 84.6%
- 3/3 compliant adverts in January = 100%
- 88/96 compliant adverts for 3 months = **91.6% TV Compliance**

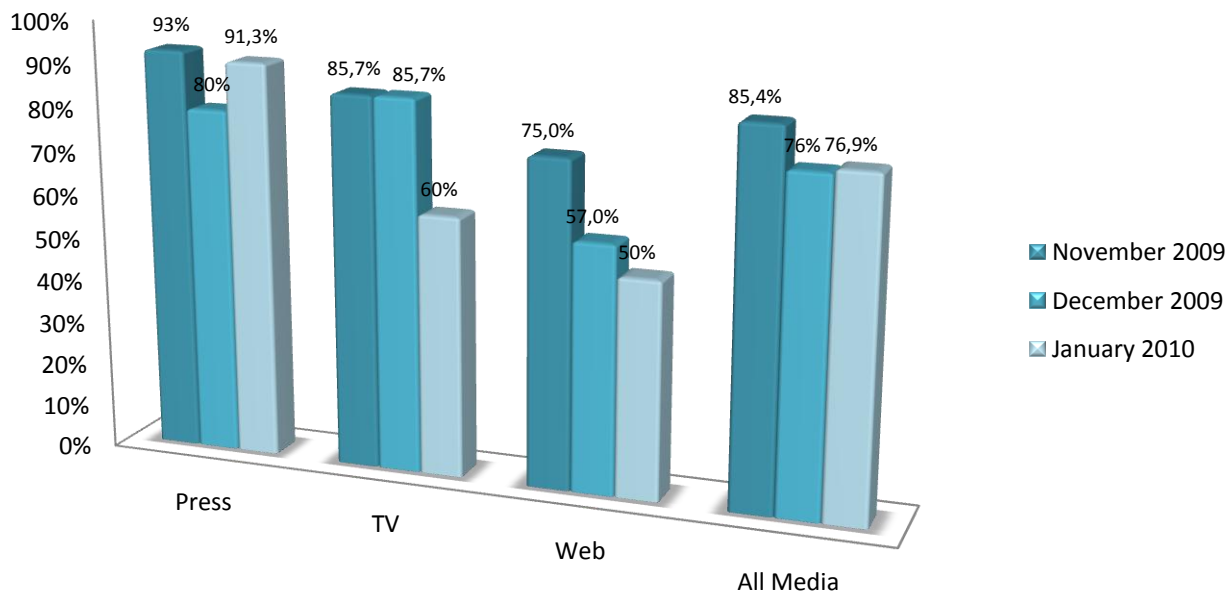
Web

- 16/35 compliant adverts in November = 45.7%
- 19/28 compliant adverts in December = 67.8%
- 12/21 compliant adverts in January = 57%
- 47/84 compliant adverts for 3 months = **60% Web Compliance**

All Media = 239/293 = 81.6 % compliance in France



United Kingdom



Press:

- 14/15 compliant adverts in November = 93%
- 16/20 compliant adverts in December = 80%
- 22/24 compliant adverts in January = 91.3%
- 52/59 compliant adverts for 3 months = **88.2% Press Compliance**

TV

- 12/14 compliant adverts in November = 85.7%
- 12/14 compliant adverts in December = 85.7%
- 3/5 compliant adverts in January = 60%
- 27/33 compliant adverts for 3 months = **81.8% TV Compliance**

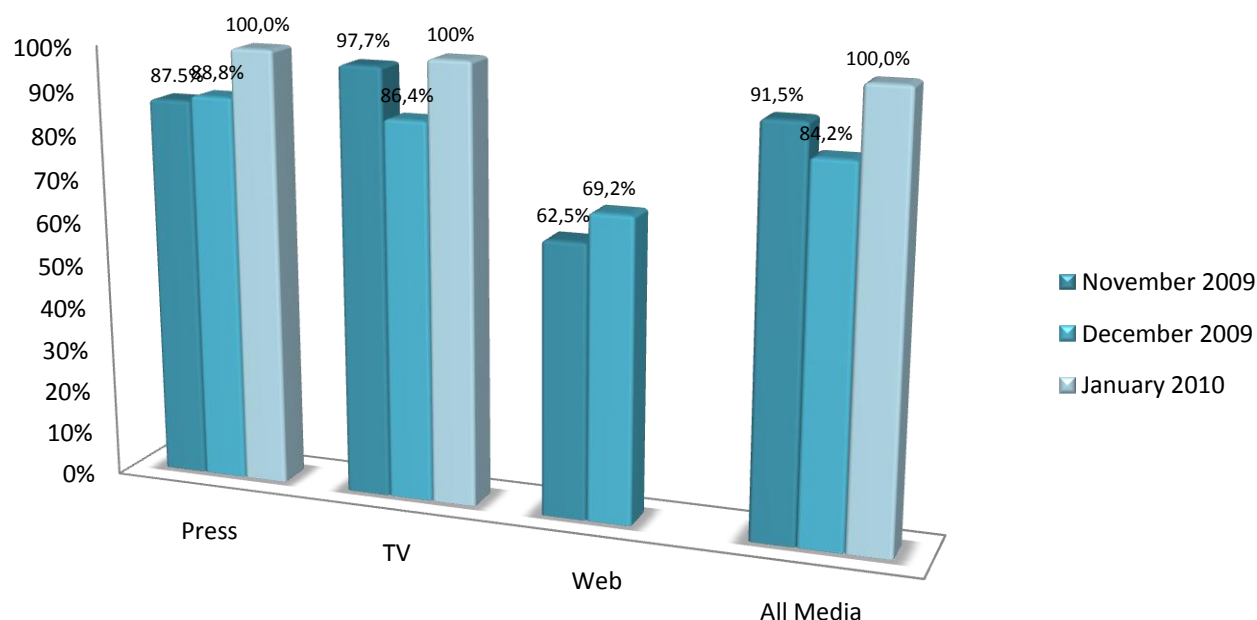
Web

- 9/12 compliant adverts in November = 75%
- 8/14 compliant adverts in December = 57%
- 5/10 compliant adverts in January = 50%
- 22/36 compliant adverts for 3 months = **61.1% Web Compliance**

All Media = 101/128 = 78.9 % Compliance in UK



Spain



Press:

- 7/8 compliant adverts in November = 87.5%
- 16/18 compliant adverts in December = 88.8%
- 5/5 compliant adverts in January = 100%
- 28/31 compliant adverts for 3 months = **90.3% Press Compliance**

TV

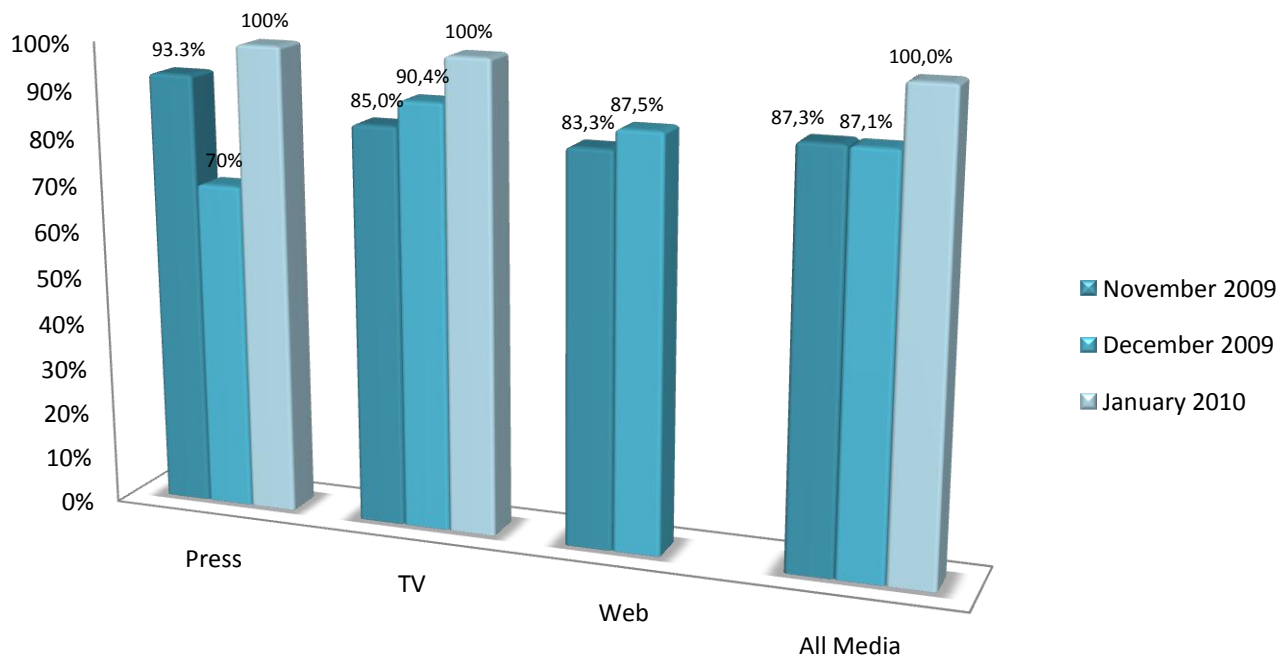
- 42/43 compliant adverts in November = 97.7%
- 38/44 compliant adverts in December = 86.4%
- 2/2 compliant adverts in January = 100%
- 82/89 compliant adverts for 3 months = **92.1% TV Compliance**

Web

- 5/8 compliant adverts in November = 62.5%
- 9/13 compliant adverts in December = 69.2%
- 14/21 compliant adverts for 3 months = **66.7% Web Compliance**

All Media = 124/141 = 87.9 % compliance in Spain

Italy



Press:

- 14/15 compliant adverts in November = 93.3%
- 7/10 compliant adverts in December = 70%
- 9/9 compliant adverts in January = 100%
- 30/34 compliant adverts for 3 months = **88.2% Press Compliance**

TV

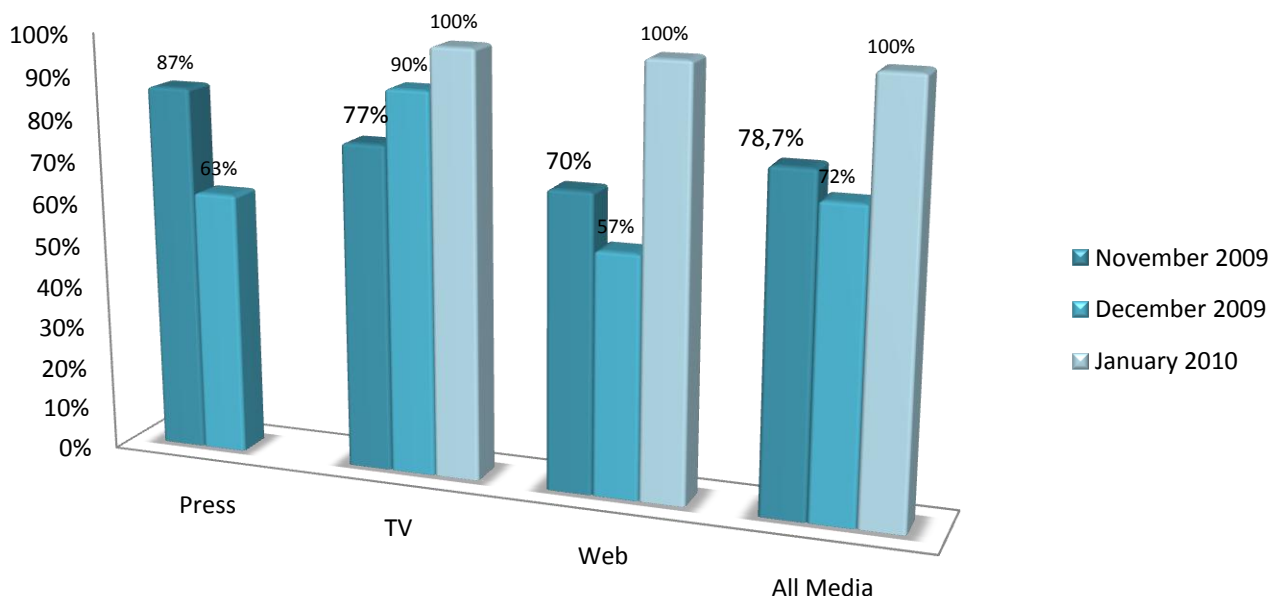
- 17/20 compliant adverts in November = 85%
- 19/21 compliant adverts in December = 90.4%
- 2/2 compliant adverts in January = 100%
- 38/43 compliant adverts for 3 months = **88.4% TV Compliance**

Web

- 10/12 compliant adverts in November = 83.3%
- 7/8 compliant adverts in December = 87.5%
- 17/20 compliant adverts for 3 months = **85% Web Compliance**

All Media = 85/97 = 87.6 % compliance in Italy

Denmark



Press:

- 13/15 compliant adverts in November = 87%
- 5/8 compliant adverts in December = 63%
- 18/22 compliant adverts for 3 months = **81.8% Press Compliance**

TV

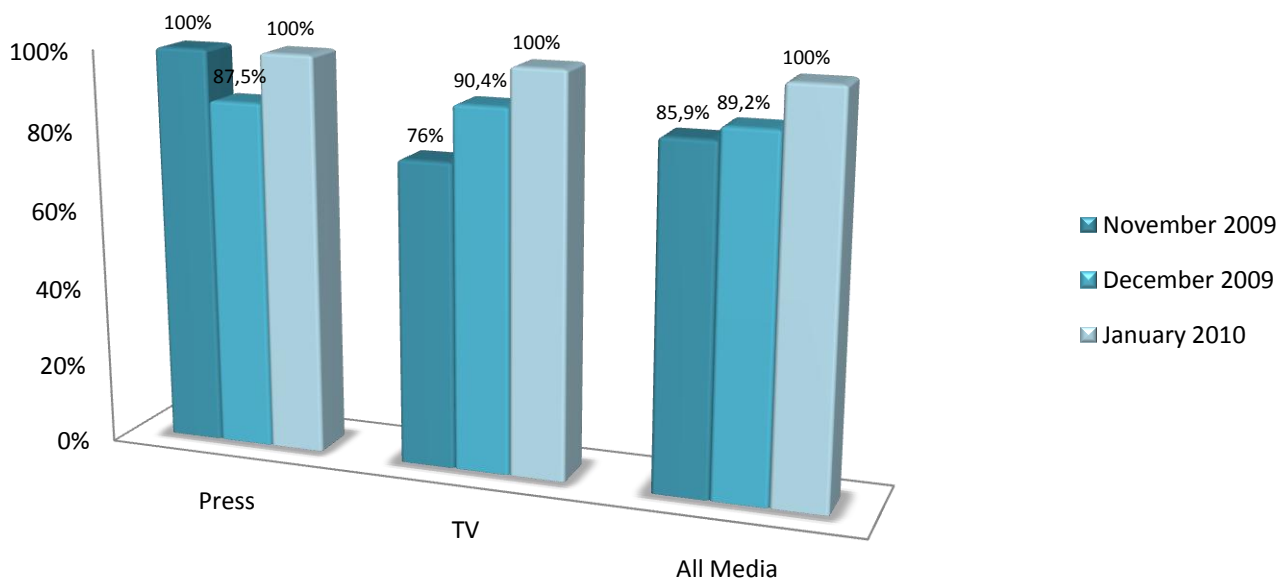
- 17/22 compliant adverts in November = 77.3%
- 9/10 compliant adverts in December = 90%
- 1/1 compliant advert in January = 100%
- 27/33 compliant adverts for 3 months = **81.8% TV Compliance**

Web

- 7/10 compliant adverts in November = 70%
- 4/7 compliant adverts in December = 57%
- 6/6 compliant adverts in January = 100%
- 17/23 for 3 months = **73.9% Web Compliance**

All Media = 62/78 = 79.5 % Compliance in Denmark

Belgium



Press:

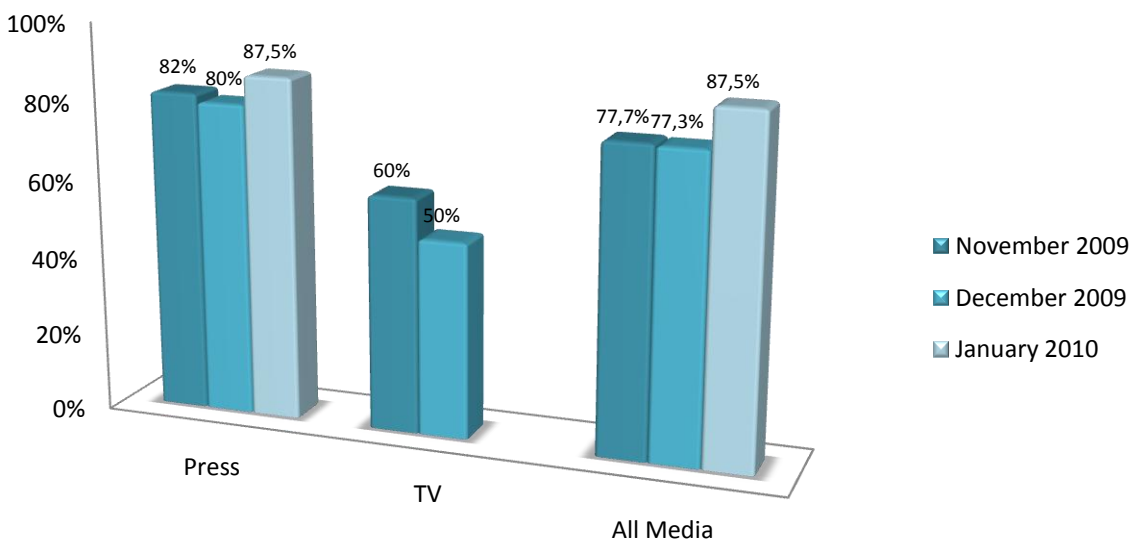
- 26/26 compliant adverts in November = 100%
- 14/16 compliant adverts in December = 87.5%
- 2/2 compliant adverts in January = 100%
- 42/44 compliant adverts for 3 months = **95.5% Press Compliance**

TV

- 29/38 compliant adverts in November = 76%
- 19/21 compliant adverts in December = 90.4%
- 5/5 compliant adverts in January = 100%
- 53/64 compliant adverts for 3 months = **82.8% TV Compliance**

All Media = 95/108 = 88 % Compliance in Belgium

Poland



Press:

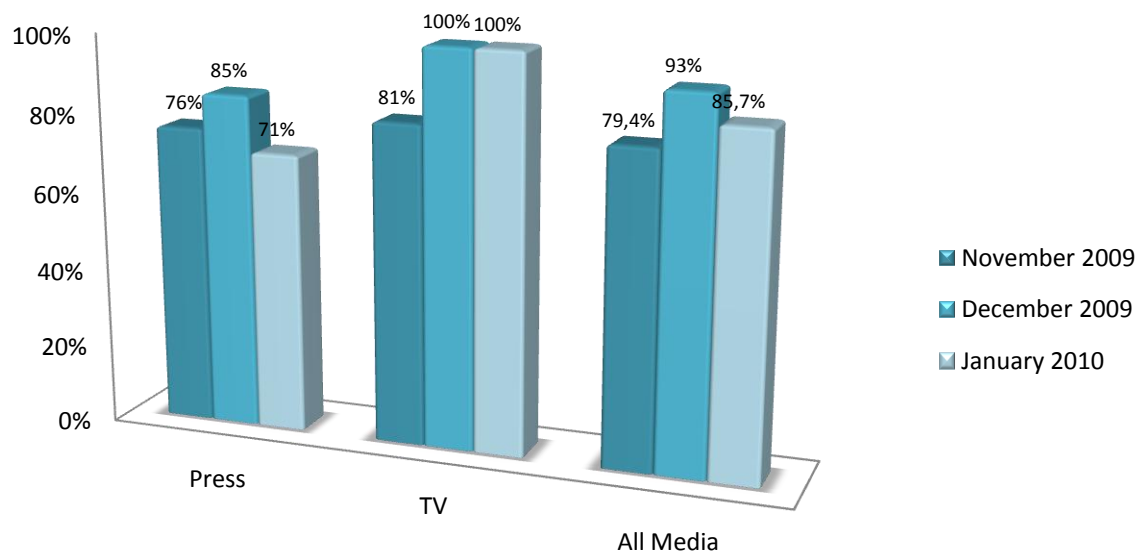
- 18/22 compliant adverts in November = 82%
- 16/20 compliant adverts in December = 80%
- 7/8 compliant adverts in January = 87.5%
- 41/50 compliant adverts for 3 months = **82% Press Compliance**

TV

- 3/5 compliant adverts in November = 60%
- 1/2 compliant adverts in December = 50%
- 4/7 compliant adverts for 3 months = **57.2% TV Compliance**

All Media = 45/57 = 78.9 % compliance in Poland

Netherlands



Press:

- 16/21 compliant adverts in November = 76%
- 11/13 compliant adverts in December = 85%
- 5/7 compliant adverts in January = 71%
- 32/41 compliant adverts for 3 months = **78% Press Compliance**

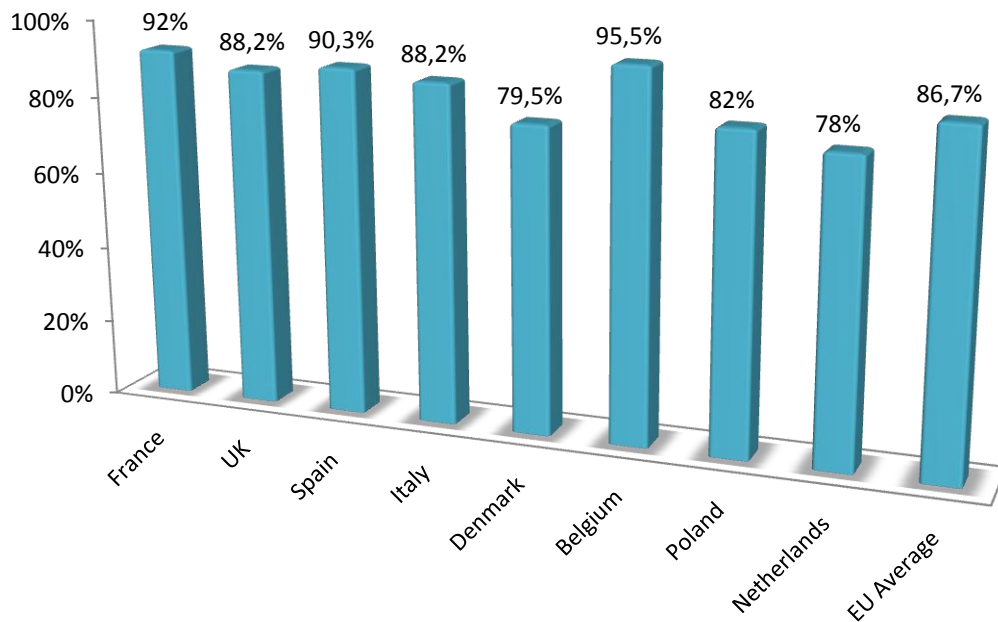
TV

- 38/47 compliant adverts in November = 81%
- 14/14 compliant adverts in December = 100%
- 7/7 compliant adverts in January = 100%
- 59/68 for 3 months = **86.8% TV Compliance**

All Media = 91/109= 83.5 % compliance in the Netherlands

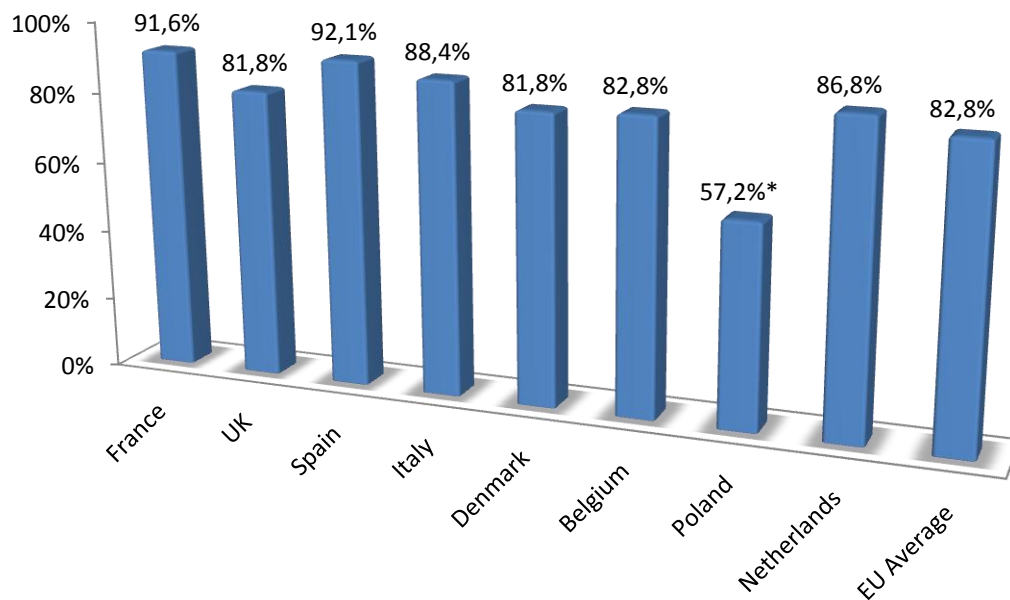
European Compliance - press

(November 2009 - January 2010)



European Compliance - TV

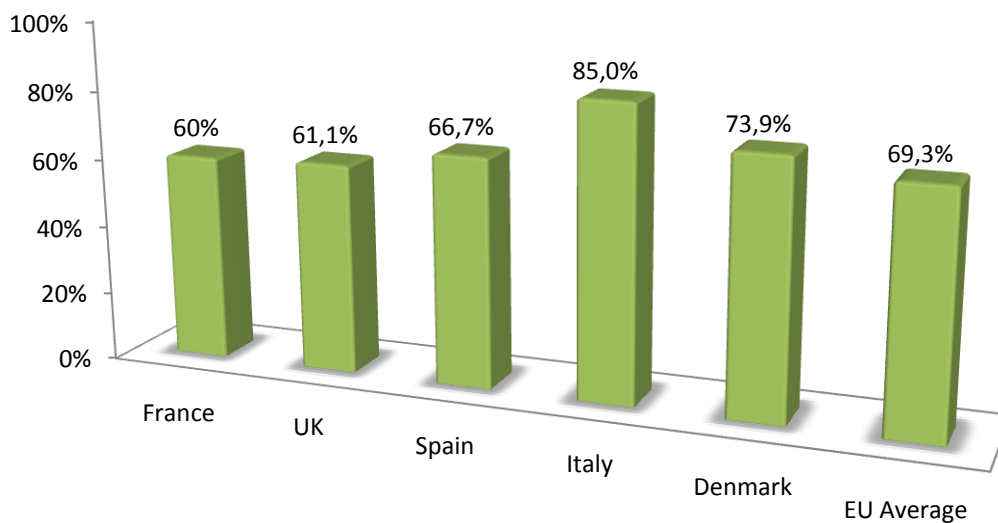
(November 2009 - January 2010)



*Small sample received for TV adverts in Poland (only 7 files)

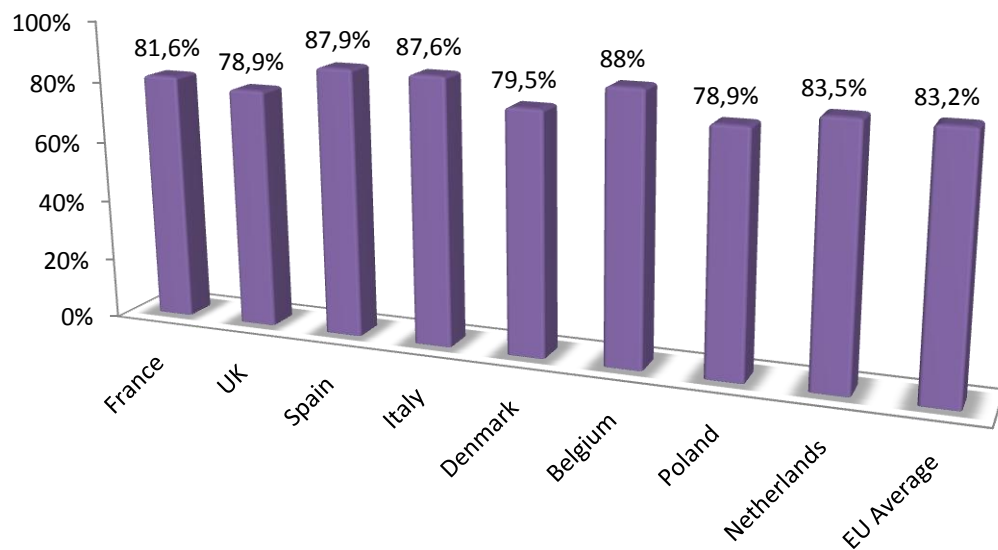
European Compliance - online

(November 2009 - January 2010)



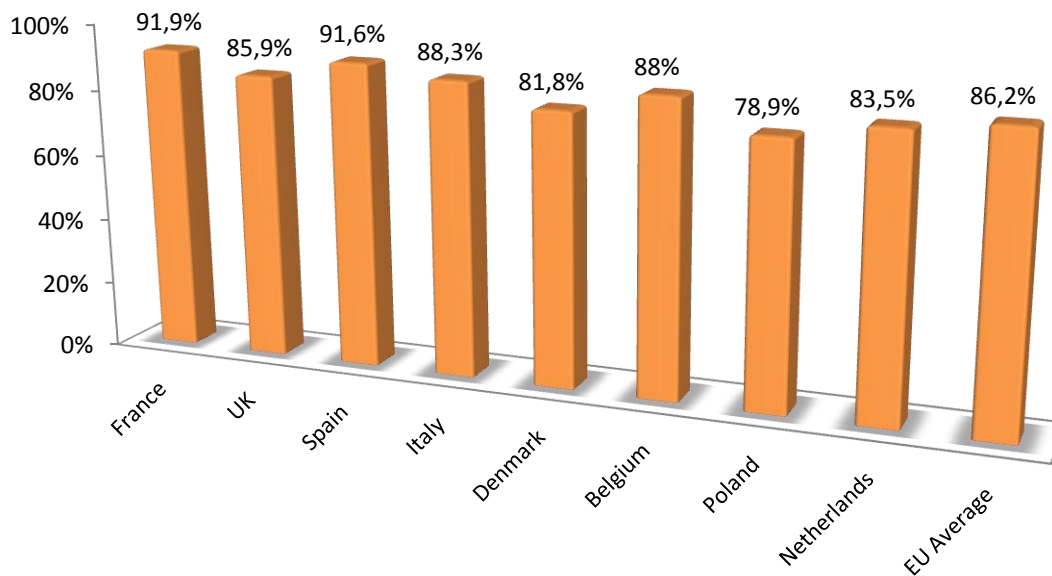
European Compliance - all media

(November 2009 - January 2010)



European Compliance (without online results)

(November 2009 - January 2010)

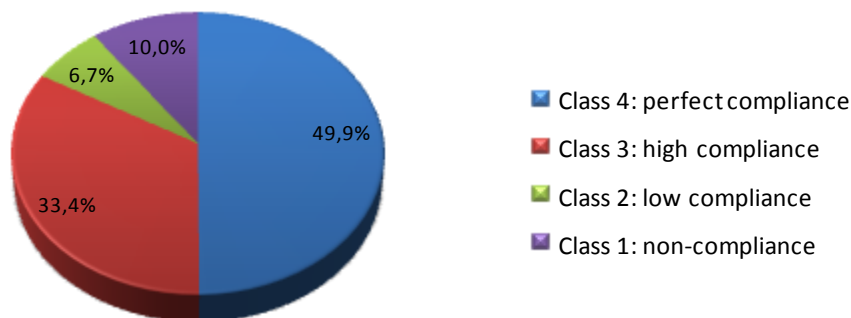


European Outdoor Compliance

Outdoor advertising for videogames is not very common compared to other types of advertising. In total, we found 9 adverts in France, United Kingdom and Spain. Of those 9 outdoor adverts, 8 were compliant, giving outdoor advertising a score of **88.9%**.



Compliance classes

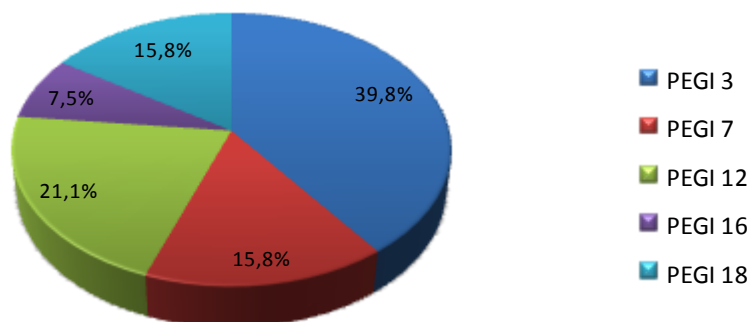


The chart represents the adverts in each class for the entire eight country survey.

508 adverts are in Class 4 (perfectly compliance) }
341 adverts are in Class 3 (high compliance) } 83.3% compliant

68 adverts are in Class 2 (low compliance) }
102 adverts are in Class 1 (non-compliance) } 16.7% non-compliant

PEGI age label frequency



55.6% of the advertisements promotes games that are suitable for small children (rated 3 and 7), while 28.6% of the adverts is of games that target teenagers or older (rated 12 and 16). Only 15.8% of the adverts are targeted to adult audience and are of course broadcasted at specific schedules or published in magazines and websites with an adult target group.



Overview of full advertisement sample per country and age label

	PEGI 3	PEGI 7	PEGI 12	PEGI 16	PEGI 18	Total
France	126	41	67	15	50	299
UK	40	26	34	17	11	128
Spain	57	21	36	9	19	142
Italy	47	16	14	9	11	97
Denmark	24	11	20	4	20	79
Poland	10	2	19	12	14	57
Belgium	57	23	8	6	14	108
Netherlands	45	21	17	4	22	109
Total	406	161	215	76	161	1019
%	39,8%	15,8%	21,1%	7,5%	15,8%	100%



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