

Brexit nightmare: Video game shows grim vision of life after EU

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Endgame: The new video game "Not Tonight" is set in a dystopian post-Brexit Britain

Set in a dystopian post-Brexit Britain, a new video game follows the struggles of a bouncer of foreign ancestry in a world of xenophobia and

immigrant camps, but gamers are divided over its message.

The grim vision of the future played out in "Not Tonight", which has a funereal version of "God Save the Queen" as its theme tune, reflects the fears of its creator, Tim Constant, who developed the game over 18 months as part of a three-man team.

Gamers play the role of a nightclub doorman who has recently lost his British nationality and is forced to do odd jobs to meet the demands of an authoritarian government, whose motto is "work hard, stay out of trouble, and we might let you stay in the UK".

The bouncer, now working in the gig economy, checks the identity of characters via a few mouse clicks and decides whether to allow them into the bar, and later on in the game, whether to let them into the country.

The minimalist and colourful graphics recall the adventure games of the 1990s, while the story-theme evokes "Papers, Please", the surprise 2013 independent success.

"If you look at politics and video games as a whole, they're generally not approached because it can put people off," explained Constant.

But for Olivier Mauco, founder of gaming website Game in Society and professor at Science Po university in Paris, bringing politics into the gaming world can be useful.

"It's a chance for you to live in a dystopian Britain, which is very different, so it has an effect because you will understand the consequences and the impacts—you will make choices, and you will try to reason with them".

'Overtly political'

The game was among the top 10 bestsellers on the Steam download platform when it was released last weekend, and received mostly good reviews, scoring a "very positive" average from users of the site.



The dark vision in "Not Tonight" reflect the fears of its creator, Tim Constant, who developed the game over 18 months as part of a three-man team

But some users criticised the political message.

"Terrible. Propaganda. Refunded," wrote user iPlay_Zombies.

"It's all rather distracting with how in your face it all is while at the same time not really saying anything other than.....what? British people are evil and xenophobic?" added gamer Dr. Marker.

"Being so overtly political means it may not be as hard-hitting as it could be, it's not going to be as punchy," said Mauco.

"It's going to strengthen the pro and anti-Brexit positions, and risks dividing the audience".

It's a risk that Constant was prepared to take.

"I probably knew that there was going to be push back because of the Brexit argument," he told AFP.

"The Brexit vote has happened, so I don't think, even if I do change people's mind, it's gonna change anything. But it might make them think a little bit more about the situation, which is great."

For the small team behind the game, Brexit has already had real consequences.

"The (graphics) artist on "Not Tonight" is Polish, he's just moved back to Poland because he wasn't sure what is going to happen."

The [game](#) is currently available in English on PC via download platforms and will be released on consoles in early 2019.

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