

## **Interview guideline (Player)**

Hello, my name is Le-Anh VO and I am a last year student in the Master of Management, at Louvain Management School. For the purpose of my master thesis, I plan on interviewing 15 people playing online video games (professional and casual) in order to explore the topic of women in Esports. It is important that I stress that the respondents that I interview will remain anonymous, as will the organizations they work for. The interview guide is structured in such a way that the main questions are presented in bold, then composed of numerous reminders to resituate or relaunch the discussion. The goal is to anticipate the points discussed by leaving a good number of reminders available.

I'm going to ask you questions about your practice of video games and your feelings about them for about an hour, asking you to answer as freely as possible. I would like to remind you that this interview is recorded and anonymous. Don't hesitate to correct me if you don't understand a question.

It is also important that you are aware of how the information gathered in this interview will be used. I will ask you a number of questions and later on type out the interview. No one expect my promotor will be able to see this entire transcript. However, what I will do is take out some quotes from the interview to illustrate a common theme, expressed by multiple of the respondents. The end result, my thesis, will be shared with all respondents of this study who are interested in receiving a digital copy, but will only contain aggregated results, to not disclose the identity of individuals. I want to ask you for permission to record this interview. The recording will be deleted, once the interview has been transcribed and the thesis has been written and successfully defended. Is the purpose clear to you, of the recording and in general, of the thesis? May I start recording now? Do you have any questions for me before we start?

### **First icebreaker question**

- How often do you play?
- In a game session, how long do you play approximately?
- What medium do you play the most at the moment?
- What game do you play? Why is this one compared to other online games?
- Do you play other online games or just this one?

## **Beginning of the video game practice question**

### **-How did you start playing video games?**

- > At what age?
- > Who introduced you to video games?
- > What was your first game? On what medium?

### **-How did you start playing online games?**

- > Has anyone recommended a game to you?
- > What was your first online game? On what medium?
- > Did you start with friends or on your own? Were your friends already in the game?
- > Did they join the game at the same time?
- > Have you joined any groups in this game?
- > Have you met people in this game? If so, are any of them significant to you? Do you still see these people?
- > How long did it last?

### **-How did you get started on [Name of game currently being played]?**

- > Did someone recommend it to you?
- > Did you start alone or with friends? Do you still play with these friends? > Have you met people in this game? Markers?
- > Did you join groups before being in the one where you are? If so, do you have one that stood out to you? How did you discover it? Did you play exclusively with this group?

### **-How did those around you see your practice at the start? Why do you think so?**

- > Your friends, your parents, your brothers and sisters?
- > Did they encourage this practice of video games?
- > Have you had any comments regarding your practice of video games? What types?
- > Did you feel recognized by those around you regarding your practice?

## **Entry into professional & competitive practice question**

### **- How did you first discover the professional practice of online video games?**

- > When did you hear about it? At what age ? When ?
- > Through whom? From what media?
- > How did you receive this information? Did that appeal to you? Where were you indifferent?

### **- How did you first discover the professional online video game scene?**

- > What was the first event you attended or participated in?
- > What was your first competition? How did this one go? Where was she?
- > Did it motivate you to continue in the sense of a competitive or professional practice?

**- How did you get into a professional or competitive practice of online video games?**

- > When did you tell yourself that you wanted to become professional, competitive? Or in other words, was there a moment, an experience that made you want to become a professional, competitive player?
- > What motivated you? Why this desire to become a professional, competitive player?
- > What attracted you to this practice?
- > Which game did you choose to start a professional practice? For what reasons ?
- > Did you play several games competitively? Which ?
- > What did you do to get into this professional practice? What means did you use?

**-What were the determining factors that brought you into professional practice?**

- > Was there a precise and decisive moment?
- > People who determined your entry into a professional practice?
- > A particular experience? ( **Think about contracts too** )
- > A level or a level of play reached that allowed you to enter this practice?

**-Did you have any difficulties to achieve this project of becoming a competitive player?**

- > Which ones?
- > Was there an obstacle more important than the others? If yes which ?
- > Did people support you in these difficulties? If yes, how ?
- > How did you overcome this or these obstacles? What did you get out of overcoming this/these obstacle(s)?
- > How long did it take you to become a competitive player despite these difficulties?
- > What did you get out of entering a professional practice? Were you or are you satisfied?

**Have you gained recognition, the satisfaction of entering a competitive practice?**

**-What did those around you think of your practice when you started trying to become a professional?**

- > Your friends, your brothers and sisters, your parents? What do you think ?

> Are there other reasons for these opinions? (If not said) Does the fact of being a woman explain these opinions? Do you feel recognized by those around you?

**-What does he think now of your professional practice? Have their opinions changed? What do you think ? Do you feel recognized by their reviews? (edit question)? Is there always one or more points that pose a problem for them?**

### **Current professional practice question**

**-What is a professional practice for you?**

> What are the criteria that define it for you?

> Is there one criterion more important than the others?

> How do you situate it in relation to other video game practices?

> How do you think society views the professional practice of online video games? And his sports scenes? What should be done to change this representation according to you?

**- For you, what is a good professional player?**

> What are the criteria for defining a good professional player?

> Is there a more important criterion?

> Do you find yourself in this definition that you give?

> [ **If no** ] What do you miss?

> Do you think of a player in particular when you give this definition?

**- Can you describe the professional online video game scene to me? And your game?**

> Who are the actors in this scene?

> Can you describe their roles to me?

> In your opinion, who are the most important players in the professional online video game scene?

> Are there differences vis-à-vis the professional scene in which you are? Which ones?

> Is the professional scene where you are publicized? At what point ? What do you think of this media coverage?

> Do you have other more publicized video games in mind? Why do you think they are so publicized?

> What do you think is the best team or the best player in the professional scene where you are? Why ? And within the other scene (mixed or female)?

**- Who do you meet in your professional practice of online video games?** > Is there one or more important players in your relationship?

> Do you meet more men or women? Why ?

> How do you explain this proportion?

**- How long have you been playing [Game Name] professionally?**

> Can you list some tournaments in which you have participated lately?

> In your opinion, what is the most important tournament in the professional scene where you appear? Why ?

> Is there a particular tournament that is important to you? Why ?

> Do you have a tournament, a competition that marked you? Which and why?

> Can you tell me about a competition where you are particularly proud of your performance? And that of your team?

> Are there any competitions you would like to participate in? Why can't you? What would you get out of your professional practice if you could take part in these competitions?

> Do you participate in virtual tournaments? What do you get out of these tournaments (what is their role, usefulness)? Do you do a lot?

> What differences would you give between virtual tournaments and real tournaments (IRL/LAN)? What effect do these differences have on the players? (performance, stress, emotion, etc.)

> Have you ever noticed these differences within your team? How? 'Or' What ?

> Have you thought about trying to get started on another game? Another kind of game? Why ?

> Do you see yourself playing an exclusively solo competitive game? Why ?

**-Can you describe the team in which you play? → We forget for Versus players**

> How many are you?

> How was the team founded?

> How long have you been in it?

> What is the general spirit of the team? In training, in competition, outside the game?

> What is your role(s) within the team? Stake ? And offside?

> Can you describe your role and its place within the team? How important is he to the team and the game?

> Can you describe the other roles in the team?

> How do you manage conflicts within your team? Do you have examples of conflict situations between members of your team? How did this get resolved?

> Do you play with other people or exclusively your team?

> Were you in other teams before this one? Why did you leave them?

> Have you learned anything from your experience in previous teams?

**- How do you train in general?**

> Do you have a specific schedule? How does it fit?

> What are the activities in this one?

> Can you describe some of them to me?

> What do you get out of these activities?

> [ **If not mentioned** ] Do you have a coach or manager in your team?

> What is his role within the team? Is he an important, vital part of the team? Why ?

> Does he monitor your performance and that of others? Do you monitor your performance among yourselves? Why ? What do you think of this behavior?

> Is the training different before a competition? If yes, how is it?

**Sexism question :**

**- Have you ever had inappropriate remarks made about your practice of video games? Have you ever heard inappropriate remarks about other players?**

> About what? What type?

> Who made these remarks?

> Were they justified?

> Are these remarks frequent, or were they exceptional?

> Do you think that these remarks can only come from the players? Or also players, organizers, etc? Do you have a particular example to tell?

**- How did you respond to these remarks? How have other people responded to these comments?**

> Did it work?

> Which answer worked best?

> Do you think there is a better way to respond to these remarks? > How would you have done if it was you instead of the person?

> What would you advise other people who experience these remarks?

**- How do you think we can protect ourselves from these remarks?**

> Can it work in your opinion?

**- Can certain remarks be specific to certain types of players?**

> Do you think that the players are more targeted by certain remarks? Why ?

> Have you ever heard some sexist remarks about the players? Do you have an example to describe to me?

> Are there certain types of players who are more targeted by these remarks? Why ?

> What do you think of these remarks?

> In your opinion, what are these remarks based on?

> Are the elements on which these remarks are based justified for you?

**- Are there any preconceived ideas about female players in general? And on the players?**

> Which ones?

> What are they based on?

> Are they specific to certain types of players? Certain types of players? Why ?

> What do you think?

> Do you think that these preconceived ideas carry significant weight in the professional online video game scene? And in people?

**- Has anyone known to you already experienced these received ideas?**

> Can you tell me about an experience in this sense that marked you?

> Why did that mark you? What were these misconceptions based on?

> How was this case resolved? Did the person get support? From who ?

> Are these cases rather frequent? Are there any others in this style?

**- Do you think that some people can play on these received ideas? Or players who can use their strengths, their femininity? If yes, what do you think?**

> Have you ever seen or heard of players using these ideas to their advantage? > Have you ever heard or seen professional female players showing off for advantages?

> What do you think?

> Do you think using these ideas is really useful for people doing it?

**- Do you rub shoulders with the other professional scene? Players from this other scene?**

> Is it different from the one you are in? Why ?

> What types are these differences? Are they important? With regard to your professional scene?

**> Is there a difference in recognition between these two scenes (male/mixed and female)? How does this difference show up?**

> Why do you think this difference exists? What is it based on?

> Do these differences have particular effects on the people present inside?

> In your opinion, how do you think these differences could be reduced?

> Is this possible? How long would that take?

> Who should intervene to reduce these differences? What would their roles be? > Why do you think these differences are not being reduced at the moment?

**- Do you work with mixed teams?**

> Do you know any?

> Have you ever participated in this type of team? If so, how was the cohesion within the team? Was it different from the other teams you were on?

> Are they present in your professional scene? And in general?

> What do you think of this type of team?

> Are they different from the teams you usually work with? Why ?

> Do you think they are growing? How do you think they should be developed?

> Would you be ready to join a mixed team? Why ?

**- For you, what are the barriers for women to access a high esports rank?**

**- How do you see the future of your professional scene? And e-sport in general?**

