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Record number of visitors at gamescom congress 2017 - Europe's most significant conference on the potential of computer games



The gamescom congress attracted more visitors than ever before, taking place 23 August 2017, at the Koelnmesse's Congress Centre North. 850 experts from various sectors and 174 press representatives did not want to miss out on this sold-out conference, which is considered to be a think tank for games and digitalisation. The event launched with a debate on the key medium of games between top campaigners of the main political parties in Germany, CDU, SPD, Die Linke, Bündnis 90/Die Grünen and FDP. The recording can be accessed in German language at <http://www.gamescom-congress.com>. The following conference programme featured 114 speakers from Germany and abroad, hosting various talks and panels, which gave insight into the latest developments and the future of digital games in the fields of knowledge, business, gamification, legal, and life.

gamescom congress 2017

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This year's gamescom congress showed that computer games are more than just entertainment media and revealed their hidden potential in several ways. The dialogue on the influence of games on the digitalisation of our society will be continued at the gamescom congress 2018.



The gamescom congress was opened under the motto "More than Games" by Prof Dr Andreas Pinkwart (FDP), Minister for Economy, Innovation, Digitalisation and Energy for the state of North Rhine-Westphalia, Mayoress of the City of Cologne, Elfi Schöntwepes, Katharina C. Hamma, Chief Operating Officer of Koelnmesse, and BIU Managing Director, Felix Falk. As part of the opening talks, Digital Minister Pinkwart emphasised the significance of the gaming industry as a catalyst and innovation driver for all areas of society and the importance of the gamescom congress as a cross-sector platform for communication as part of the gamescom for the City of Cologne and the state of North Rhine-Westphalia.

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Felix Falk, Managing Director of the BIU: "This year, the gamescom congress has underlined the special relevance of computer and video games for education, society and economy, more than ever before. With the election coming up soon, it was particularly important to us this year to create a political stage for the gamescom visitors and all interested parties, which we accomplished with the Campaign Arena. With this new format, we were able to draw attention to the politics of digital and gaming-related topics on the one hand. On the other hand, we also wanted to use the political arena to encourage people to go and vote on 24 September."

"The gamescom congress is a key component of gamescom and in a few years has developed into one of the main European events for digital games. We are particularly delighted that the gamescom congress attracts visitors from all sectors of the digital economy," said Katharina C. Hamma, COO of the Koelnmesse about the success of the gamescom congress 2017.

The political arena was both the launch event and the highlight of the congress. Moderated by the YouTube stars Florian Diedrich (LeFloid), Peter Smits (PietSmiet) and Colin Gäbel (Rocket Beans TV), the participants Dr Peter Tauber (CDU), Hubertus Heil (SPD), Matthias Höhn (Die Linke), Michael Kellner (Bündnis 90/Die Grünen) and Nicola Beer (FDP) explained their stances on improving the general conditions of the gaming industry and eSports sector in Germany, on the use of digital media in education, and on matters related to the country's digital policies. During the hour-long talks, which were live-streamed on gamescomTV, viewers were also offered the chance to direct their questions to the politicians via social media.

Thereafter, 30 keynote speeches, talks, and panel discussions in the five topic areas of knowledge, business, gamification, legal, and life gave insights into the latest developments and the future of the computer and video games industry. The topic of influencer marketing, for example, had the venue packed full of visitors. During the panel discussion "Influencer Marketing -credibility pays", the trend topic was discussed and critically scrutinised to determine whether a seemingly personalised recommendation is actually more credible than a traditional advertisement. Gesa Geissel (Henkel) hosted a talk "Really big with micro-influencers" that gave practical examples from the beauty industry.

The discussion round "No mon, no fun - is new games funding coming?" involved a heated exchange. Sören Bartol MdB (SPD parliamentary group), Florian Braun (Spokesman for Digitalisation and Innovation of the CDU state parliamentary group for NRW), Prof Dr Linda Breitlauch (GAME Federal Association), Prof Dr Oliver Castendyk (HMS), Felix Falk (Managing Director of the BIU), Prof Dr Jörg Müller-Lietzkow (Universität Paderborn) and Olaf Zimmermann (Deutscher Kulturrat) discussed the political status of funding for games and whether the election will bring state funding for games. This was moderated by Petra Fröhlich (Chief Editor of GamesWirtschaft).

Inspirational presentations and discussion rounds were hosted under the umbrella topic of "More than Life: games fascinate". While architect and curator Paul Galloway (MoMA New York) discussed the artistic applications of digital games and the value of games as design and cultural artefacts as part of the talk "Art in Our Time: Video Games at MoMA", state secretary Heike Raab (Authorised representative for the state of Rhineland-Palatinate in the association and for Europe, for Media and Digital Affairs), together with Dr Tobias Schmid (Landesanstalt für Medien) and Prof Dr Rolf Schwartmann (TH Köln) took part in a panel "A new interstate Broadcasting Agreement" where they discussed the topic of mandatory broadcasting licences for Let's Players on the internet and what a new, sensible licensing model

may look like. The talk "Gamify the CityFuture", which came into being with support from the Goethe Institute in the Ethiopian capital city of Addis Abeba, was highly popular among conference guests and saw the presentation of a city planning project.

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The "Open Stage" was home to a diverse schedule of events with speakers from France, Canada and Russia. Among others, Sean Casey, State Secretary of the gamescom partner country, Canada, spoke about the possibilities of a strong gaming industry. During a Fireside Chat on "Games and interactive infotainment at ARTE", Alexander Knetig (ARTE) spoke about the broadcaster's own web series, "The Art of Gaming", and debunked the theory that public television broadcasters "don't understand" computer games.

To accompany the gamescom congress, the GMK - Society for Media Education and Communication Culture - hosted a free training session for educators on the topic of "Games and School". Alongside workshops and key note speeches, the training participants also received free tickets for a tour of the gamescom, which was taking place at the same time. The event was sponsored by the state of North Rhine-Westphalia and the BIU, Federal Association of Interactive Entertainment Software.

About the gamescom congress 2017

The gamescom congress 2017 took place on Wednesday 23 August from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in the Congress Centre North at Koelnmesse. The event is part of gamescom, Europe's leading business platform for the gaming industry and the global 360 degree event for digital game culture. Under the motto "More than Games", the congress participants discussed the trends and potential of digital games, the societal implications and the possible points of intersection outside of the digital and media sectors. Speakers from Germany and further afield introduced themselves in exciting presentations and talks. The congress was hosted by Koelnmesse GmbH and the BIU – Bundesverband Interaktive Unterhaltungssoftware e. V. (Federal Association of Interactive Entertainment Software), sponsored by the City of Cologne and the State of North Rhine-Westphalia. For more information, see www.gamescom-congress.com.

Note for editors:

Photographs of gamescom congress can be found in our image database online at www.gamescom-congress.com in the 'Press' section. Please request a specimen copy if printed.

Always up-to-date:

Current news about the gamescom congress is available on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).

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