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## gamescom congress attracts new record number of visitors

- 730 participants visit gamescom congress
- Diverse programme underlines the 360-degree character of gamescom
- Audio track: opening speech available on [www.gamescom-congress.com](http://www.gamescom-congress.com)
- In 2017, gamescom congress will also be a core element of gamescom

The gamescom congress continues to grow. 730 private and trade visitors attended the conference on 18 August 2016 within the gamescom in Cologne (compared with 630 visitors in 2015). Under the motto “The future is playing”, the variety of digital games was illuminated intensively and from different perspectives. Split up under the five umbrella topics of knowledge, business, APITs, legal, and life, the gamescom congress was able to offer a unique forum for the technical exchange of computer and video games knowledge to both experts and visitors unfamiliar with the branch. Visitors were able to choose from 36 programme topics with over 90 top-class speakers. For the first time, the opening speech was recorded and will shortly be available as an audio track on [www.gamescom-congress.com](http://www.gamescom-congress.com).

The gamescom congress was opened by Franz-Josef Lersch-Mense, Minister for Federal Affairs, Europe and Media of North Rhine-Westphalia. In his welcoming speech, the Minister emphasised the economic relevance and cultural creative energy of the computer and video games industry. He also underlined the need to take action against hate speech online and for gamers to interact with others respectfully.

Dr. Maximilian Schenk, Managing Director of the German Games Industry Association BIU said about the positive response to the conference: “This year’s gamescom congress underlines the relevance of gamescom, as a 360-degree event, to the most important questions on the digitalisation of businesses and society. Together with partners such as Aktion Mensch, the German Cultural Council, the Frankfurt Book Fair and speakers from Audi, Daimler, VfL Wolfsburg, Schalke 04, Twitch, the WHU, ZDF, and more, gamescom indicates what special role the technology and methods of the games industry play in an increasing number of industries.”

“The response to the 2016 gamescom congress is impressive. With its diversity of subjects, the gamescom congress has firmly established itself as a central platform for the dialogue surrounding digital games, across the gaming industry and even



gamescom congress 2016

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further afield”, commented Katharina C. Hamma, Chief Operation Officer of Koelnmesse, at the same time confirming the continuation of the event in 2017.

Seite  
2/3

Elfi Scho-Antwerpes, Mayor of the City of Cologne, highlighted gamescom’s economic significance for the business location Cologne in her welcoming speech, and praised the dynamic of the games industry as an important trendsetter for the local media economy.

The congress was kicked off with the talk “Playing Instead of Steering: The Car of the Future”. There, Alexander Klotz (Continental), Marcus Kühne (Audi), Alexander Mankowsky (Daimler) and Jens Röper (Designit) discussed what role games could play in the onboard-entertainment in the car of the future.

This was followed by exciting discussions in the five main subjects. In the key subject “KNOWLEDGE: research better, protect better”, representatives from politics and the games industry discussed scenarios for the future of the German child protection system. The State Secretary in the Federal Ministry for Families, Seniors, Women and Children, Dr. Ralf Kleindiek, announced that his ministry will soon present a draft for a reform of child protection laws, which should be adopted within the current legislative period.

There were some equally as exciting presentations and discussions on the topics “BUSINESS: new routines, new opportunities”, “APITS: the computer game as a multifunction tool - powered by Engaginglab”, “LEGAL: a plea on behalf of fun” and “LIFE: finally arrived? Games and the middle of society”. The panel “An unexpected promotion: eSports and football” enjoyed particularly high popularity. In a lively discussion, Berk Gocay (Besiktas Istanbul), Michael Haenisch (Freaks4You), Arne Peters (ESL - Turtle Entertainment), Tim Reichert (Schalke 04) and Felix Welling (VfL Wolfsburg) talked about the future of eSports involvement and the role of large football clubs.

Great unity was shown in the discussion on the topic “Digital hate - an analogue problem?”, the panel members Johannes Baldauf (Amadeu Antonio Stiftung), Dr. Marc Jan Eumann (State Secretary at the Ministry for Federal Affairs, Europe and Media), David Hiltcher (VP Gaming Communities ESL) and Sami David Rauscher (Neue Deutsche Medienmacher) emphasised the necessity of developing a digital civil courage in order to effectively tackle online hate.

The “Open Stage - powered by WHU - Otto Beisheim School of Management” also had a good reception with contributions from Aktion Mensch, Twitch, and SpielFabrique, and ensured some well-filled conference rooms.

**About gamescom congress 2016**

gamescom congress 2016 was held on Thursday, 18 August from 9.00 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. in the Congress Centre North at Koelnmesse as part of gamescom, Europe's leading business platform for the gaming industry. In keeping with the motto 'The future plays', the congress sheds light on how digital games permeate our everyday lives and shape societal discourse. Its focus and diverse range of topics make gamescom congress unique in Germany. The congress is hosted by Koelnmesse GmbH and BIU – Bundesverband Interaktive Unterhaltungssoftware e. V. (German Games Industry Association), sponsored by the City of Cologne and the Minister for Federal Affairs, Europe and Media of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, and organised by Aruba Events GmbH. Further information is available at [www.gamescom-congress.com](http://www.gamescom-congress.com).

**Note for editors:**

Photographs of gamescom congress can be found in our image database online at [www.gamescom-congress.com](http://www.gamescom-congress.com) in the 'Press' section. By using the pictures please specify 'Koelnmesse' as image source.

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