

PRESS RELEASE

## **The Federal President of Germany Steinmeier to visit gamescom 2026 and open gamescom congress**

- **A first:** The Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier is the first German head of state to visit gamescom, the world's biggest games event
- **On stage:** He will open the gamescom congress on 27 August with a keynote and join a panel discussion on the role of games in our democracy
- **Two themes in focus:** This year's gamescom congress centres on 'Playing Field Democracy' and 'The Games Effect'

In 2026, Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier will become the first German head of state to attend gamescom, the world's biggest event for video games. On 27 August, he will take part in the opening of the gamescom, the world's leading conference on the potential of games. The announcement was made today by the organisers of the gamescom, Koelnmesse and game – The German Games Industry Association. The Federal President will open the congress with a keynote speech and join a panel discussion on the role of games in our democracy. He will then visit gamescom, meeting game developers and members of the community in person to gain a first-hand impression of the many ways games enrich culture and society.

The gamescom congress takes place as part of gamescom. It is aimed at a broad audience from fields such as culture, education, politics, research and the media, as well as representatives from a range of economic sectors keen to learn how other fields can benefit from the games industry's innovations. This year, the congress puts two highly relevant social themes centre stage through its programme strands 'Playing Field Democracy' and 'The Games Effect': the positive influence of video games on democratic education, and games as an engine of innovation across the

most varied fields – from medicine and industry to the skilled trades, the service sector and public administration.

**About gamescom:**

gamescom is the world's biggest gaming event and the most important business platform for the international games industry. From 24 to 30 August 2026, it brings together developers, trade visitors, companies and millions of fans from around the world – on site in Cologne and digitally across the globe. The week opens on 24 August with the developer conference gamescom dev. gamescom then opens to the public on the evening of 25 August with the major opening show gamescom Opening Night Live. Throughout the week, gamescom offers a unique blend of entertainment, business and community experience. Alongside gamescom in Cologne, gamescom latam in São Paulo and gamescom asia x Thailand Game Show in Bangkok have established themselves as further successful international gamescom editions.

**About the gamescom congress:**

The gamescom congress is the world's leading conference on the potential of games in a digitalised world, with connections reaching far beyond the digital and media sectors. Speakers from Germany and abroad present their topics in talks, seminars and panel discussions. The gamescom congress takes place every year as part of gamescom in Cologne and is organised by Koelnmesse GmbH and game – The German Games Industry Association. The gamescom congress is funded by the state of North Rhine-Westphalia.

**game – The German Games Industry Association:**

We are the association of the German games industry. Our members represent the entire video game ecosystem, from development studios and publishers to esports event organisers, educational institutions and other related entities. We are

co-organisers of gamescom, the world's biggest event for video games. We are a shareholder in the Entertainment Software Self-Regulation Body (USK), the Foundation for Digital Games Culture, the esports player foundation, game events and the collecting society VHG, as well as co-host of the German Computer Game Awards. Serving as a central point of contact for media, as well as political and social institutions, we provide comprehensive expertise in areas including market development, game culture and media literacy, and address any inquiries or concerns. Together we are making Germany the heart of gaming worldwide. With games, we enrich the lives of all people.

**Koelnmesse – Industry trade fairs for the gaming industry:**

Koelnmesse is an international leader in staging trade fairs in the gaming and entertainment sector. At its Cologne venue, gamescom presents the world's biggest event for computer and video games and Europe's largest business platform for the games industry. gamescom brings together gaming fans, trade visitors and exhibitors from around the world effectively – physically on site or digitally from anywhere in the world. This makes gamescom the B2C, B2B and B2G event for games. Koelnmesse is also expanding its portfolio internationally in a targeted way: in South East Asia, gamescom asia x Thailand Game Show provides a further effective industry platform for the rapidly growing Asia-Pacific games market, comprehensively connecting supply and demand. For Brazil and Latin America, gamescom latam is an important event that aims to accelerate the dynamic growth of this market.

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