

USK regulations for gamescom 2017



gamescom
Cologne, 22 - 26 August 2017

Information for gamescom exhibitors Advice on the colored wristbands

As every year, the majority of the exhibition space will be freely accessible to all family members even without wristbands. With these colored wristbands, Koelnmesse and gamescom exhibitors in collaboration with the USK (German abbreviation for "Entertainment Software Self-Regulation Body") ensure that younger visitors only have access to content intended for their age group: Only visitors who have demonstrably attained the age of 12, 16 or 18 (confirmed via photo ID or health insurance card with photo) will receive the respective wristband and gain access to the appropriate areas. There are no exceptions. Parental accompaniment or consent forms do not replace proof of age.

The corresponding wristbands will help booth personnel identify which visitors have access to the different areas of any given booth. Additionally, the competent authorities of the City of Cologne will thoroughly monitor compliance with the German Children and Young Persons Act (JuSchG) at the fair. Prior to the fair the USK will be rating every game and will stipulate the corresponding age categorization depending on the content. The USK will function as contact for any queries regarding youth protection regulations prior and during the fair. The contact for questions concerning youth protection at gamescom is:

Marek Brunner
e-mail: gamescom@usk.de

Please address any questions concerning tickets, reservations and directions to: gamescom@visitor.koelnmesse.de

For exhibitors (B2C + B2B):

Koelnmesse has officially assigned USK (Entertainment Software Self-Regulation Body) as youth-protection authority at gamescom. This task encompasses the age rating of any kind of content that is intended to be exhibited, (all platforms including mobile apps, browser games, game portals as well as trailers, stage presentations and other contents). Additionally, USK serves as the primary contact for all gamescom exhibitors with regard to any youth-protection-related issues, whether prior to or during the fair itself.

As an exhibitor you are entirely responsible for ensuring that your booth and presentation conform to German youth-protection requirements under the provisions of the German Children and Young Persons Protection Act ("JuSchG"). Compliance is validated by the regulatory authorities during the fair. For the purpose of consistent and uniform implementation, Koelnmesse and USK have jointly adopted the regulations described below. These regulations apply for ALL exhibitors at gamescom, entertainment and business area.

What must be submitted?

Versions for all platforms including mobile games and browser games and self-running trailers or game-related stage presentations for exhibition at the fair. This applies to the public and business areas equally. Games and trailers to be shown exclusively in the 18+ area or in the restricted sections of the business area are not subject to classification. For purposes of transparency, however, and to avoid discrepancies on location (criminal law relevance) it is recommended to submit these contents as well.

Content which has already been checked by the USK, corporate identity trailers and advertising without gaming content and gaming reference (e.g. for tools, middleware, hardware, e-commerce) does not have to be checked.

IARC Ratings

The designation of online games and apps in line with the IARC system is invalid outside of connected platforms and therefore cannot be used for retail versions or for exhibition of the product at gamescom.

When is the gamescom deadline?

All game content and trailers must be submitted to USK on data carriers, via FTP or cloud transfer **not later than 07.08.2017, 3:00 p.m.** All gamescom applications submitted in technically acceptable versions and before the deadline will receive a guaranteed result by the evening of 21.08.2017. Submissions received after the deadline will not be processed in time for gamescom and cannot be publicly exhibited.

Please do not collect several items for checking but forward them **individually to USK together with the application form** as soon as they are ready for presentation at the fair. Early submission benefits you and us by providing an opportunity to meet the submission deadline. A **subsequent rating** of items for checking not submitted to USK by the above deadline is generally **not possible**. There will be no on-the-spot ratings issued in Cologne.

How to submit?

Please use our submission form which you can download from the USK homepage, and note that you request a review of content for gamescom where designated. The application must be sent to USK, along with the item for checking and documentation. In case that information and game data is transferred digitally (FTP, cloud transfer), the application must be attached to the mail. The USK is happy to provide an FTP folder for the game to be digitally transferred.

The rating fees are based on the current cost structure.
www.usk.de/en/extramenu/login/publisher/material/cost-overview

Important for first-time submitters?

Companies having content reviewed by the USK for the first time automatically fall under the rule of pre-payment. Please plan sufficient time for the clearance of all payments.

National pavilions

National pavilions in the business area which are presenting different prototypes, trailers and products should please submit an application with all contents and content lists for which an overall pavilion rating will be provided. In the case that individual contents deviate from the USK approval applied for, these may be removed from the collection and presented separately or submitted and reviewed separately.

Use of the rating logo at the booth itself

gamescom has an area open to the general public (about 90%) where booths are accessible to the whole family regardless of age. At gamescom, content up to and including USK 12 can be presented openly. There are some rules, however, that must be respected:

All game stations must be clearly labelled (recommendation: minimum 3,5 x 3,5 cm) with the appropriate USK symbol. USK has appropriate templates available for download at www.usk.de/en/publisher. Areas with games for 16- and 18-year-olds must also be clearly labelled as such near the entrance of the booth. **The USK does not provide any stickers!**

Content that is rated **USK 18 or not rated by the USK** may be presented only in areas accessible to persons aged 18 years and above. The exhibitor must guarantee that access checks will be conducted by booth personnel. Screens/displays must be positioned in such a way as to prevent younger audiences from watching.

Content classified **USK 16** can be placed within an open booth but in a manner that ensures that the monitors/displays can be seen only by the active player or players, thus preventing younger audiences from watching.

In the case of displays featuring **USK 12**-rated content, exhibitors must also ensure that younger visitors cannot actively play the games by themselves, although they are allowed to watch.

Content labelled **USK 0 and USK 6** can be made accessible to all audiences

without restrictions.

Compliance with all youth protection regulations can be achieved through the use of privacy screens. Access control is, of course, still necessary.

Upon admission, in accordance with the age on their photo ID/health insurance card with photo, the organizer (Koelnmesse) will provide visitors with three types of non-removable wristbands in colours corresponding to the colours of the respective USK stickers for ages 12 / 16 / 18 which support booth personnel in terms of age verification. Please note that the wristbands will also be handed out on Tuesday and that age checks must also be carried out on Tuesday (including in the business area)!

The competent authorities (the City of Cologne) will thoroughly monitor compliance with the German Children and Young Persons Protection Act (JuSchG) at the fair and take the appropriate legal actions in the event of violations of the law. Any violations will be punished by closing the trade fair booth of the responsible company and can result in substantial fines.

Contacts

To prevent the latter, USK is available to help you resolve any questions, problems and ambiguities regarding youth protection.

Responsible USK employee:

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