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Successful 2025 financial year: growth driven by strong brands and global portfolio - Koelnmesse strengthens North Rhine-Westphalia as a business hub

Successful 2025 financial year: growth driven by strong brands and global portfolio - Koelnmesse strengthens North Rhine-Westphalia as a business hub

- Koelnmesse achieved turnover of 455.5 million euro in 2025
- Consolidated result totalled 62 million euro
- According to a Prognos study, Koelnmesse events generate an economic impact of approximately 2.64 billion euro nationwide and support about 25,000 jobs across Germany
- A successful start for Confex: more than 40 events in its first full year of operation
- The German Pavilion “Wa! Germany” at Expo 2025 in Osaka welcomed more than three million visitors
- Koelnmesse anticipates that 2026 will be a challenging year for trade fairs, due to the regular cycle of events as well as economic and geopolitical conditions

Koelnmesse looks back on a very successful financial year 2025 and remains firmly on its strategic growth course. With turnover amounting to 455.5 million euro and a consolidated result of 62 million euro, the company reinforces its standing as one of the leading international trade fair organisers, even in a challenging geopolitical and economic environment. In total, approximately 2.5 million visitors from 214 countries and over 43,800 exhibiting companies from 120 nations participated in events organised by Koelnmesse.

“Our development shows that strong brands, an international presence, and long-term investments enable stability and growth even in volatile times,” explains Koelnmesse CEO Gerald Böse. Key growth drivers included, in particular, the strong performance of established flagship events, a robust congress business in Cologne, and international expansion through consistent development of the company's global portfolio. Investments in a sustainable power supply, digitalisation, and modern infrastructure will also strengthen Cologne's long-term competitiveness as a trade fair destination.

“The long-term development of Koelnmesse benefits the entire region, far beyond just the company itself,” says Cologne's Mayor Torsten Burmester. According to a recent Prognos study, the trade fair industry generates approximately 1.36 billion euro in economic impact annually in Cologne and supports 14,000 jobs in the city. “The figures clearly demonstrate the importance of a strong international trade fair venue for value creation, employment, and the economic vitality of our city.”

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With 79 events worldwide, approximately 2.5 million visitors, and over 43,800 exhibiting companies, Koelnmesse further strengthened its international market position during the financial year. A key factor in this success was the strong growth of established flagship events in Cologne. One of the year's standout events was Anuga. "Bigger than ever and unmatched in its diversity," is how Oliver Frese, Chief Operating Officer Koelnmesse GmbH, describes the event. In October 2025, over 8,000 companies from 110 countries showcased their products and innovations in Cologne - more exhibitors than ever before in the trade fair's history and a new record for the trade fair city of Cologne. "Anuga impressively demonstrated the central role it plays in the international food industry. It serves as a showcase for the success of an entire sector and is a key driver of billions in sales," Frese continues.

gamescom also continued its growth trajectory, setting new records for international participation, number of exhibitors, and floor space. At the same time, Koelnmesse is strategically expanding its established brands - including through new formats and spin-offs such as ISM Ingredients. Together with ISM and ISM Manufacturing (formerly ProSweets Cologne), this will create an even more closely integrated platform spanning the entire value chain of the international sweets and snack industry, which convenes annually in Cologne. Frese: "Spin-offs like these underscore our approach of continuously developing successful brands and tapping into new target groups and markets."

Koelnmesse consistently expands its global presence

International expansion remains a central component of Koelnmesse's corporate strategy. What began in the late 1990s with the first trade fair abroad has since grown into an international portfolio of 53 events worldwide. In the past 20 years alone, the number of international trade fairs has more than quadrupled, with eight new shows added in 2025. With new events in Indonesia, Saudi Arabia, India, and other emerging markets, the company is systematically expanding its global presence and tapping into additional growth opportunities. At the same time, Koelnmesse is responding flexibly to geopolitical developments and volatile market conditions. Against this background, some events, such as "FSB Sports Show Riyadh" and "International Hardware Fair Saudi Arabia", which were originally scheduled for June 2026, have been postponed to 2027. Koelnmesse remains firmly committed, however, to the region's strategic importance and the long-term growth prospects in the Middle East.

Expo 2025 in Osaka: German Pavilion attracts millions of visitors

With the German Pavilion at Expo 2025 in Osaka, Koelnmesse once again demonstrated its international expertise in executing large-scale global projects. More than three million visitors visited the "Wa! Germany" pavilion, which garnered significant international attention for its comprehensive sustainable and circular concept. It was also honoured with two awards from the Bureau International des Expositions: the Sustainability Award and the Silver Award for thematic development. The Expo participation thus became a globally visible showcase for

innovation, sustainability, and international cooperation.

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Successful market entry: Confex attracts 40 new events in its first year of operation

The results of the first full year of operation of Confex are extremely positive. More than 40 events underscore the high demand for Koelnmesse's new congress and event centre. The range spanned from corporate events for international companies to IT, scientific, and trade association congresses. Medical congresses experienced particularly strong growth, with several professional associations holding their international seminars in Cologne. The new possibilities Confex provides with regard to space, combined with the appeal of Cologne as a location, led to noticeable growth in attendance at individual events. The Koelnmesse subsidiary Koelncongress surpassed the one-million-guest mark for the first time at congresses, guest events, and other gatherings in 2025.

An economic driver for Cologne and the surrounding region

What is evident on trade fair days - with packed halls, an international audience, and fully booked hotels in Cologne - is also confirmed by a recent Prognos study: Koelnmesse is a major economic driver far beyond the city limits. In an average year, the company's trade fairs generate approximately 2.64 billion euro in revenue nationwide and support more than 25,000 jobs. In Cologne alone, this generates approximately 1.36 billion euro in additional purchasing power. The hotel and food service industry, retail, logistics, and an entire network of specialised service providers in Cologne and North Rhine-Westphalia benefit most. Leading international events, trade fairs, and congresses not only make Cologne a global industry meeting point, but also provide a significant economic boost to the entire region. This does not even take into account the extensive infrastructure investments made in the site. These are precisely the measures through which Koelnmesse is laying the groundwork to ensure that these economic benefits can continue to be realised in the future. The figures also do not include the results of Koelncongress GmbH's congress and event business, which will be reported separately next year.

Outlook for 2026

Looking ahead to the 2026 financial year, Koelnmesse remains cautiously optimistic given the continuing challenging market conditions. "The economic and geopolitical environment will remain challenging and highly dynamic in 2026," says Gerald Böse. "In addition to this, 2026 will be a challenging year for Koelnmesse due to the regular cycle of trade fairs. Leading international trade fairs held every two or three years will not take place in Cologne again until 2027. This makes it all the more important to act with strategic consistency, prioritise investments in a targeted manner, and continue to develop our international brands."

Editorial photos related to this announcement are available for download [here](#).

About Koelnmesse:

Koelnmesse employs around 1,200 people. As a city-based trade fair in the heart of Europe, it operates the third-largest trade fair grounds in Germany and, with almost 400,000 square metres of hall and outdoor space, ranks among the ten largest trade fair grounds in the world. Each year, Koelnmesse organises and manages around 80 trade fairs, guest events and corporate events in Cologne and in key markets all over the globe. Its portfolio reaches over 49,000 exhibiting companies from 129 countries and around 2.5 million visitors from around 200 nations. Until 2040, Koelnmesse is investing more than one billion euro in the development of the trade fair grounds with the most extensive investment programme in its history, enabling it to accommodate all future event formats. In 2024, Koelnmesse celebrated its 100th anniversary - a century of bringing people and markets together worldwide.

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