



## MEDIA INFORMATION

Bonn, May 2, 2023

### Equal eSports Cup:

#### Telekom launches eSports tournament for female and non-binary players

- The Equal eSports Cup is the largest League of Legends tournament for female and non-binary players in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland (DACH region)
- The final is set to take place at the Equal eSports Festival in Cologne on September 2023
- Female and non-binary players can apply now.

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Deutsche Telekom is further extending its commitment for more equality and diversity in the field of eSports. Together with Riot Games, SK Gaming, and the esports player foundation (epf), the company is launching the **Equal eSports Cup** – the first League of Legends (LoL) tournament for female and non-binary players in the DACH region. The four partners want to give all players – irrespective of gender, origin, culture, or social background – a chance to live their dream and make a long-term change to the eSports and gaming scene which is still dominated by male players. This was the companies' declaration to mark the kick-off event of the new tournament series on April 29, 2023.

**Antje Hundhausen**, patron of the new tournament series and the initiator of #equalesports at **Deutsche Telekom** emphasizes: *"The new tournament series is a further important step towards more equality and diversity in eSports. We launched the Equal eSports initiative two years ago. Together with our strong partners, we want to be a game changer and pave the way for the best female and non-binary players to reach the top of eSports. Mixed teams are our long-term goal."*

To promote more inclusion and opportunities for women in the field of eSports, **Riot Games**, the developers behind the League of Legends game, launched a Rising Stars tournament for Nordic countries last fall. The U.S. company is now supporting the Equal eSports Cup, the first independent tournament series in the DACH region. **Adrián Padín Suárez**, Senior Competitive



Experience Manager at Riot Games and responsible for the organization of the tournament series explains: *“The Equal eSports Cup has been designed as a safe space, so all participants are able to demonstrate their skills and realize their full potential. We are delighted that this will promote the professional careers of even more players.”*

The **esports player foundation (epf)** is a non-profit excellence institution. It supports up-and-coming and top athletes on their journey to becoming world class. For **Jörg Adami**, co-founder of epf, the cup is a huge milestone in terms of the Equal eSports initiative: *“It’s the biggest, female, non-binary, and transgender tournament in the DACH region. In addition to RIOT as the publisher, all professional Prime League teams and individual LEC teams such as SK Gaming, G2, Rogue, and Vitality are demonstrating their support for the initiative’s goals by taking part. We are sure that many new female and non-binary professional teams will become established following the tournament. The Equal eSports movement is gathering pace and eSports stakeholders are working together to create something exemplary.”*

**Alexander T. Müller**, CEO of SK Gaming, adds: *“SK Gaming has always believed that gender shouldn’t make any difference. However, female and non-binary players are severely underrepresented in professional eSports. With Project Avarosa, we made a clear choice to be pioneers and promote diversity in the field of eSports. That we are now, three years later, involved in launching the biggest League of Legends tournament for female and non-binary players is the best example that our dedication is bearing fruit. We are delighted that we are able to also give many other talents outside of SK Gaming the chance to join a professional team.*

At the kick-off event, professional players of BIG Chroma and SK Avarosa showcased their skills in a live-show match. The invited guests were also given the opportunity to take a look around the world of League of Legends, the most popular video game on the planet. At the event, they were also able to chat with one another and also speak to Anika “Ryxcales” Wolter (member of the Equal eSports Council, caster, analyst, and eSports host), Miki “BIG Nugget”, and many other eSports professionals.



## Equal eSports Cup facts

More than **10 teams from established eSports organizations** from the DACH region will be taking part in the tournament, including BIG Chroma, Eintracht Frankfurt, Eintracht Spandau, E WIE EINFACH E-SPORTS, French Bees (Vitality), G2 Hel, GamerLegion, KOI, MOUZ, SK Avarosa, and Unicorns of Love.

**Up to four further teams** can also qualify for the tournament in the open qualifiers. All female/non-binary teams, irrespective of whether they are professional or private teams, are eligible to register.

After the preliminary round, a maximum of 16 teams will take part in the four closed qualifiers. The best four teams will qualify for the offline final at the **Equal eSports Festival in Cologne on September 2023**. There, the teams will play for places 1-4 in a best-of-three mode.

## Registration

Interested teams can register via the [official website](#). All of the deadlines to register for the four open qualifier tournaments are listed here as well.

## Prizes

The main prize for the teams and participants is a platform to showcase their skills and the chance to establish themselves in a male-dominated professional player environment. The winner of the offline final will receive 5,000 euros, the second place will win 2,500 euros, third place will get 1,750 euros and fourth place will receive 750 euros. As a special prize, the winning team will also be awarded the **first Equal eSports Cup**. In the closed qualifiers, the winners will also receive 500 euros, the second place will win 250 euros, and the third and fourth-placed teams will each get 125 euros.

## Live stream

The closed qualifiers and the offline final will be broadcast on the eSports player foundation (epf) Twitch channel: [www.twitch.tv/esportsplayerfoundation](http://www.twitch.tv/esportsplayerfoundation)

## How equal is the field of eSports?



**Status quo in terms of eSports equality:** Gaming is the new pop culture for young people. There is room for improvement when it comes to equal opportunities. More than half of all Germans play computer and video games, 48 percent of whom are women. However, estimates indicate that less than 5 percent of professional eSports players are female. Deutsche Telekom – together with SK Gaming and the esports player foundation – would like to change this. With the #equalesports initiative, the company has therefore been campaigning for greater equality and diversity in gaming since 2021 – in both professional and recreational spheres.

**Discrimination and harassment:** A study carried out by the German Olympic Sports Confederation (Deutscher Olympischer Sportbund, DOSB) demonstrated that women in eSports are often subject to discrimination and harassment. Of all the women surveyed, more than half stated that they had been the victim of sexism or harassment.

**Lack of support:** Women in eSports frequently have difficulties in finding sponsors and establishing themselves in teams and organizations. A report by GamesWirtschaft is just one of the documents in which this has been referenced.

**Low prize money:** Women in eSports tournaments often earn less than their male counterparts.

**The great potential of female players:** Mareike “Sayna” Burg was the first female professional player to reach the Prime League and, in spring 2023, even won the Spring Split with her team. Mareike is one of many talents who are supported by Deutsche Telekom’s Equal eSports initiative.

**Equal eSports Cup information:**

<https://www.equal-esports.com/events/equal-esports-cup>

**Further information on the initiative:** <https://www.equal-esports.com/en>

**Information on the partners:**

[www.esportsplayerfoundation.org](http://www.esportsplayerfoundation.org); [www.sk-gaming.com](http://www.sk-gaming.com); [www.riotgames.com](http://www.riotgames.com)

**Photos:** <https://bit.ly/equalesports>

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