PRESS RELEASE

1,000 Days to The World Games 2029: The Sporting World Looks Forward to Karlsruhe

Karlsruhe, 23 October 2026 – **The countdown is on. There are exactly 1,000 days left until the start of The World Games 2029 Karlsruhe (TWG2029). Figures from politics and sport gathered in Karlsruhe this Friday to start the countdown in the heart of the city.**

At 11:30 a.m. on Karlsruhe's Market Square, directly in front of the 3.5m-high countdown clock from Tissot, the Official Timekeeper of The World Games, which will stand outside the Tourist Information Centre for more than two and a half years, IWGA President Anna Arzhanova, Dr Frank Mentrup (Mayor of Karlsruhe and President of the TWG2029 Organising Committee) and Theresa Schopper (Minister for Sport, Baden-Württemberg) pressed the buzzer together and started the countdown. The LED display now shows exactly 1,000 days until 19 July 2029, the day on which one of the world's largest sporting events, with around 4,000 athletes from more than 100 countries, will be ceremonially opened at the Wildpark Stadium in Karlsruhe.

Mia Bitsch: "Winning gold at The World Games is my absolute career highlight"

All the guests from politics and sport were visibly looking forward to one of the largest multisport events in the world. Mikaelle Assani, German long jump champion and TWG2029 Ambassador, was delighted to have an atmosphere like the Olympic Games Paris 2024 in her own city: "Events like this are very special to me. Experiencing so many different sports at world-class level, and in my own city, is unique. I am already really looking forward to 2029!"

Lucie-Marie Kretzschmar (beach handball) and Mia Bitsch (karate) spoke enthusiastically about their gold medals at The World Games. "Winning gold at The World Games 2025 in Chengdu is my absolute career highlight. I can hardly wait to give everything I have in summer 2029, here in front of a home crowd, to defend the title," said the 22-year-old karateka Mia Bitsch.

Even more complex, even denser, even closer: the Games of short distances

Marking 1,000 days before the start of TWG2029 made clear the great opportunity this multisport event offers not only the city of Karlsruhe but also German sport, as an important milestone on the path towards a successful bid for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. The focus is on the concept of the "Games of short distances", which brings competitions, encounters and the supporting programme together in one place. The Paris 2024 Olympic Games, with their "one-city concept", serve as the blueprint and inspired enthusiasm. Alain Blondel, TWG2029 Sports Director, who led the athletics and para-athletics competitions at the

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Olympic Games 2024 in a senior role, is bringing plenty of insights and ideas to make TWG2029 even more compact.

In addition, around 80 competition managers from 20 countries visited Karlsruhe in the days before the countdown to find out about the state of planning. Their feedback was entirely positive: the encounters were marked by a warm atmosphere and tangible anticipation, a mood that The World Games 2029 in Karlsruhe is also intended to embody.

The focus now turns to the future. There are 1,000 days left to prepare for the great goal: creating a stage for sporting excellence, cultural encounter and international togetherness.

Voices at the Launch of the Countdown

Dr Frank Mentrup, Lord Mayor of Karlsruhe and President of the Organising Committee:
"Unveiling the countdown clock is a very special moment for Karlsruhe. With 1,000 days to go, The World Games are becoming ever more tangible for our city and its people. Karlsruhe looks back on a strong sporting tradition, and we are proud to be the first city in the world to host The World Games for a second time, thereby carrying on the legacy of 1989. As we prepare to welcome athletes and guests from all over the world in 2029, this clock in the middle of the city will be a visible sign of our anticipation."

Anna Arzhanova, President of the International World Games Association (IWGA):
“A countdown is more than a number on a clock. It is a moment when an ambition becomes real. Today, as we reach 1,000 days to go, we can already see The World Games 2029 taking shape here in Karlsruhe. I would like to thank the City of Karlsruhe, the Local Organising Committee, our partners and everyone involved for their commitment and enthusiasm. And a very special thank you to Tissot for helping us mark this milestone. The clock will now remind us every day that Karlsruhe 2029 is getting closer – and that together, we are preparing to welcome the world.”

Dr Babette Kibele, Head of Sport and Volunteering Department, Federal Chancellery:
"We want to give the World Games sports a big stage, and we can only do that with major events. We are therefore delighted that Karlsruhe applied for a second time and has been awarded the event. To inspire young people, we need to move forward with modern sports. Everyone who takes part in sport also knows how many volunteers are needed. We have strategies to make use of existing volunteer expertise to make The World Games 2029 Karlsruhe a great success."

Theresa Schopper, Minister for Sport, Baden-Württemberg:
"We have supported The World Games being based here from the very beginning. It is therefore important that we carry the impetus into the sporting world and into schools across Baden-Württemberg, so that everyone can try out and experience the World Games sports."

Michael Mronz, Presidium Member, German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB):
"Every sporting event has a great power to inspire. In Germany, we still remember the 2006 FIFA World Cup and the surge of enthusiasm it created. Sporting events can unleash that power. The permanent integration of para disciplines into the sports programme is also an important message for society."

Martin Wacker, CEO, The World Games 2029 Karlsruhe GmbH:
"Major events like The World Games always leave something behind: a sense of togetherness, a feeling of community and optimism. If we hold on to that shared feeling, a great deal will remain for the next decade. What happens on the way there? Many conferences will take place in Karlsruhe, with international and regional guests alike. The entire region, many sports clubs and their more than 200,000 members will be involved. And we have an advantage: since TWG1989, Karlsruhe has hosted a major event every two years, which has given us a great deal of experience and will help us make The World Games 2029 Karlsruhe an outstanding sports festival."

Alain Blondel, Sports Director, The World Games 2029 Karlsruhe GmbH:
"We are bringing sport to where people are. That means not only to existing sports venues, but also, for example, into the heart of Karlsruhe. Only in this way can an atmosphere arise that people will talk about for years: 'Wow, I was there.' And ideally not only in Karlsruhe, but all over the world."

Lucie-Marie Kretzschmar, TWG2029 Athlete (beach handball):
"For a sport like beach handball, which almost made it into the Olympic programme in Paris, events like The World Games are of great importance. We, and all the other athletes, are looking forward to presenting our sports to the public here in Karlsruhe, in front of a large audience and in spectacular settings."

Martina Schwall, Volunteer, TWG1989 & TWG2029:
"The World Games 1989 were my first assignment as a volunteer. It is a task that I do wholeheartedly. I am driven by curiosity, but also by meeting people, visitors, and the chance to look behind the scenes. There is nothing nicer than doing this in 2029 in my home city of Karlsruhe."

Free Image Material



The countdown clock on Karlsruhe's Market Square is officially started. From left: Dr Frank Mentrup (Mayor of Karlsruhe and President of the Organising Committee), Anna Arzhanova (IWGA President), and Theresa Schopper (Minister for Sport, Baden-Württemberg). Image source: TWG2029 / Jürgen Rösner



Still 1,000 days to go until The World Games 2029 Karlsruhe. From left: Dr Frank Mentrup (Mayor of Karlsruhe and President of the Organising Committee), Anna Arzhanova (IWGA President), Mia Bitsch (TWG2029 Athlete, karate), Lucie-Marie Kretzschmar (TWG2029 Athlete, beach handball), Mikaelle Assani (TWG2029 Ambassador), Theresa Schopper (Minister for Sport, Baden-Württemberg), Michael Mronz (Presidium Member, German Olympic Sports Confederation, DOSB), and Dr Babette Kibele (Head of Sport and Volunteering Department, Federal Chancellery). Image source: TWG2029 / Jürgen Rösner



A display of strength against a magnificent backdrop: tug of war in the Schlossgarten is sure to be a crowd magnet in the heart of the city. Image source: TWG2029 / Alex Sturm (AI-generated content).



Sport climbing in the middle of the Marktplatz: TWG2029 promises world-class peak performances across the whole city. Image source: TWG2029 / Alex Sturm (AI-generated content).

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About Us

With around 4,000 athletes from more than 100 countries, The World Games take place every four years and are a highlight for sportspeople from all over the world, placing popular, traditional, emerging and trend sports at the centre of attention. In 2029, Germany will host The World Games for the third time: Karlsruhe in 1989, Duisburg in 2005, and in 2029 Karlsruhe again, as a place for sporting excellence, cultural encounter and international togetherness. www.twg2029.com

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