



## **Swisscom starts its own sports league**

**A national and international stage for eSports: With the "Swisscom Hero League powered by ESL", Swisscom is establishing a Swiss eSports league in cooperation with ESL, both for professionals and for the general public. Swisscom TV now includes several game channels and in the future a game theme world will be available.**

Gaming has become a national sport in Switzerland: Over 3 million people regularly play on their PCs, consoles or mobile devices. Also in the professional gaming sector - eSports - there are already some teams that compete at international championships and tournaments, which are in no way inferior to popular sports. For example, "The International 2018" in the USA included prize money amounting to 25 million dollars. "eSports is a global trend, so it's time for this sport to become a major Swiss league. With the Swisscom Hero League, we want to offer a professional platform for eSports and also make it accessible to the general public", said Michel Siegenthaler, responsible for offers and marketing at Swisscom, during the launch today at the HeroFest gaming fair in Bern. Swisscom has chosen ESL as its professional partner, the world's largest eSports company with almost 20 years of experience. "It goes without saying that we would like to support the increasingly popular gaming scene in Switzerland to the best of our ability", says Torsten Haux, VP Global Media Rights & eSportsTV. "Our concept *From Zero to Hero* offers the casual player the possibility to turn his hobby into his profession. The best Swiss eSportsman is probably still sitting on the sofa, and we want to give this person the opportunity to compete internationally with top gamers. With the Swisscom Hero League powered by ESL, we are laying the corner stone for professional gaming in Switzerland". A broad foundation is needed for eSports to grow in Switzerland: In addition to a professional league, there will also be so-called Go4Cups for casual gamers. Swisscom Hero League powered by ESL currently offers platforms for the games "League of Legends", "Hearthstone" and "Clash Royale".

### **Swisscom TV brings eSports to the TV**

Stadiums in the USA and Asia are not the only ones filled with gamers, as the demand in Europe is growing massively – for live streams and TV broadcasts as well. Swisscom TV will therefore be the first in Switzerland to bring the special-interest channels ESL.tv, ES1 and ginx to Switzerland, which will start on Tuesday, 16 October, 2018; and it also intends to create a new theme world for gamers



by the end of the year. The theme world will bundle the best programmes, videos and apps on the subject from all sources available on Swisscom TV. Furthermore, Swisscom is continuously optimising all network components to meet the needs of gamers. In addition to high broadband coverage, fast response times (ping) and high upload rates – and ideally symmetrical bandwidths (same bandwidth for upload and download) – are especially important for streamers. "We see games not only as a social trend, but also as drivers for the introduction of new technologies such as 5G and as an economic factor for Switzerland," explains Michel Siegenthaler. "According to surveys conducted by the Swiss Game Developers Association and Pro Helvetia, the total turnover is estimated at CHF 50 million. And that's remarkable, considering the fact that most of the companies involved are start-ups."

### **Media expertise offer for parents and teachers**

Swisscom launches various offerings related to gaming within the scope of its media expertise programme. The new edition of the digital guide "enter", for example, deals with games. And a new course module for parents and teachers will be available from spring 2019. It introduces them to the topic, provides an overview of the current trends in game culture and shows how responsible handling can be promoted in one's own environment. "It is undisputed among experts today that with the right dosage, gaming can also be beneficial for development. But, as with any digital medium, it is important to learn how to use it correctly," explains Michael In Albon, Youth Media Protection Officer at Swisscom.

The Swisscom Hero League, in partnership with the ESL, will start its qualification phase in November. Anyone interested in participating can register now at: [www.swisscom.ch/hero](http://www.swisscom.ch/hero)



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**Press Release**

**More about ESL**

ESL is part of the international digital entertainment group MTG and is the world's largest eSports company, leading the industry with the most popular games in numerous online and offline tournaments. The ESL operates high-quality, branded international and national leagues and tournaments, such as the Intel® Extreme Masters, ESL One, ESL Championship and other major events in stadiums around the world, as well as cups, leagues and matchmaking systems at the amateur level. In addition to competitive offerings, ESL provides a wide range of services in the areas of gaming technology, event management, advertising, marketing and TV production, in order to provide services to the eSports ecosystem at all levels. With offices in Germany, North America, Russia, France, Poland, Spain and China, ESL leaves its footprints all over the world. Further information at [www.eslgaming.com](http://www.eslgaming.com)

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