

LEARNTEC



5 – 7 May 2026

Karlsruhe Trade Fair Centre

LEARNTEC 2026 sets the tone for the educational landscape of tomorrow

Artificial intelligence and the DigitalPakt Schule 2.0 are shaping Europe's leading trade fair for digital education – with a new date in 2027

Karlsruhe, May 8, 2026. Yesterday marked the end of LEARNTEC, Europe's leading three-day trade fair and convention for digital education in schools, universities and businesses. The message from exhibitors and speakers at Messe Karlsruhe was clear: artificial intelligence (AI) is set to revolutionise the way people learn. However, the key is not to use AI as a better search engine but view it as a learning partner. Visitors therefore showed immense interest in this year's convention, which linked the latest developments in research and development with educational practice.

For patron Karin Prien, Federal Minister for Education, Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, LEARNTEC is an important platform for dialogue among education stakeholders. In her opening address, she declared: "The key task is not to introduce as much technology as possible into education, but to use it effectively. This requires practical experience, scientific insights and a supportive framework. Above all, however, it requires dialogue between all those who shape education – in schools and businesses, research, and in development and politics."

Digital Pact 2.0: A much-anticipated driver for the digitalisation of schools

In the field of school education, the implementation of funding measures under DigitalPakt 2.0 remains a stumbling block for the sector. School authorities and headteachers are awaiting implementation guidelines from the federal states on applying for funding, commissioning companies and ensuring the measures ultimately reach pupils. This was the topic of the Baden-Württemberg Association of Towns and Cities' symposium, attended by 320 participants. Ralph Müller-Eiselt, Chair of the Forum for Education and Digitalisation, explained that teachers were already raring to go: "We are seeing an unprecedented level of professional development activity among teachers in the field of digital

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topics.” This was also evident among the exhibitors: “We noticed in our discussions that the Digital Pact is slowly gaining momentum, because everyone is eager for it to finally be implemented. Overall, however, there is still a great deal of uncertainty,” says Holger Englert, who heads up sales of IT solutions at VS Möbel. The exhibitor is now expanding its portfolio of learning furniture to include software solutions and immersive elements. Such caution was evident among visitors to LEARNTEC: whilst demand in the corporate learning sector remained stable – despite the challenging economic situation – there was a decline in the number of visitors from the school sector. In total, more than 11,000 attendees discovered the latest solutions from more than 340 companies represented. Messe Karlsruhe this year served as an international stage for the 33rd time – with exhibitors from 20 countries and visitors from 34 countries, including Estonia, the USA, China, the UAE, France, the UK and Spain.

AI is important – but at LEARNTEC it is just one of many critical topics

Visitors’ thirst for information was particularly evident in the high level of interest in the various programme formats offered by the trade fair and convention. The latter saw an increase in attendance of more than 25 per cent, with presentations and panels on AI particularly in demand. Franz Strukelj, Head of the Volkswagen Group Academy, delivered the keynote speech on the first day of the fair. In his presentation on agentic learning, he said: “In future, humans and machines will work together, and that is why it is absolutely vital that we do not merely consume technology but integrate it into our systems and processes. Then we will no longer just train people, but also AI agents, so that humans and machines create value together.” Alongside AI, the dominant themes were gamification, immersive learning and – a highly topical issue – digital sovereignty, data protection and deep fakes. The breadth of topics covered at the trade fair and convention helped LEARNTEC attendees navigate modern technologies and their practical implementation.

Exhibitor Julien Boppert, Partner and Managing Director of Avendoo, says: “We are highly satisfied and saw a very good flow of customers at our stand. This is the case every year, as LEARNTEC is the leading trade fair.” Sebastian Gauter, Head of Sales & Marketing at Know How AG,

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adds: “We had a fantastic few days at the fair and some really good discussions. Our stand was generally always busy, and the quality of discussions was significantly better than in previous years. That was clearly the deciding factor for us in confirming that we will definitely be back next year.” The vast majority of visitors came from large corporations, among them executives from BASF, Robert Bosch, Merck and Ergo Insurance. Visitor Anna Weiß, a learning designer at KKH Kaufmännische Krankenkasse, said: “My expectations were absolutely met. We were here for three days, and my impressions were wholly positive. We visited many innovative providers and manufacturers, as we are looking for a new learning management system. We were also able to take away lots of learnings from the presentations. LEARNTEC left me wanting more – and looking forward to the next one in 2027.”

LEARNTEC 2027: New date at the start of the year

From 2027, LEARNTEC will be pulled forward from early summer to February, returning to the date it held prior to the pandemic. In doing so, it is once again deliberately positioning itself as the first industry gathering in the DACH region at the start of the year, with a view to supporting early investment decisions and innovation launches. The change of date is as a result of discussions with exhibitors and partners which revealed that the start of the year is strategically more favourable for the EdTech sector than early summer.

Britta Wirtz, Managing Director of Messe Karlsruhe, explains: “By bringing LEARNTEC back to February, we are not only responding to market needs but also sending a clear signal, particularly in Karlsruhe, that the event is one of Germany’s most important IT hubs. Our aim is to continuously develop LEARNTEC as a European industry platform in line with market needs, with a diverse range of topics covered by leading experts in their respective fields. That is why Prof. Dr Anja Schmitz, Torsten Fell, Christian Steiner, Prof. Dr Matthias Wölfel and Bianca Baumann are now joining the LEARNTEC programme committee.” Project Manager Stefanie Ruf says: “We are delighted that the new date has been so well received. Proof of this is the successful rebooking rate: by the close of the fair, more than half of this year’s exhibition space has already been rebooked.”

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The next LEARNTEC will take place from February, 2 to 4, 2027 at Messe Karlsruhe.

About LEARNTEC

LEARNTEC is Europe's largest event for digital education. Key decision-makers from industry, the consulting sector, retail and sales, as well as from schools and universities, come to Karlsruhe every year to learn about and discuss the possibilities of digital learning. The LEARNTEC convention provides practical knowledge over three days. Workshops and open discussion panels promote exchange between speakers and participants.

Further information is available online at www.learntec.de/en/