Ladies and gentlemen!

I am honored to be here today as a representative of the Bavarian State Government. On behalf of the Bavarian Prime Minister Horst Seehofer and Science Minister Dr. Ludwig Spaenle I would like to welcome you to Bavaria.

“The power of programming 2016” is the third in a series of conferences on “Early Nutrition” here at this venue. It builds on the successful preceding conferences in 2010 and 2014.

As in these years, high-class experts from all over the world have come to Munich today – to share
• ideas,
• results
• and experiences.

I am sure that this conference will contribute substantially
• to effective obesity prevention
• and a healthier society.

Overweight and obesity are a widespread phenomenon in Western societies:
• They have doubled in frequency over the last 30 years
• and affect around half of all adults in Germany.

This alarming trend can’t just be shrugged off – it has to be taken seriously.

Overweight and obesity are among the most severe health risks in the Western world.
They significantly increase the likelihood of
• cardiovascular diseases,
• diabetes
• and cancer.
Consequently, they profoundly affect the well-being of the individuals concerned.

Besides their devastating effects on individual health, overweight and obesity
- increase costs for healthcare
- and ultimately cause damage to the economy.

Here in Germany and Bavaria, we are aware of this problem – and we have tackled it:

A number of campaigns have already been started in order to
- provide help and information.
- and encourage people to lead a healthier life.

However:
For those already suffering from overweight, it is very hard to lose it again.

That’s why I could not agree more with Benjamin Franklin’s words:
“An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.”

Effective prevention is

- the key to fight health risks
- and one of the core elements of our health policy here in Bavaria.

You get down to the root of the problem.

In order to prevent obesity and associated diseases, you tackle the cause of this health risk.

There is evidence

- that the likelihood of developing obesity or overweight later in life
- can be influenced by nutrition during infancy and early childhood.

By researching programming effects of early nutrition and lifestyle, you are about to clarify exactly how these programming effects work.
Your results will help develop

- practical **strategies**
- and concrete **recommendations**.

Parents might soon know how exactly nutrition influences their children’s **predisposition** for obesity – and act accordingly.

Your research is

- **precious**
- and **promising**.

I am convinced: It will contribute to a healthier and happier **society**.

Dear Professor Koletzko!

On behalf of the Bavarian State Government it is my great pleasure to thank you and all of your team

- for **coordinating** the “Early Nutrition” project
- and for **organizing** this conference.
– You have scored a great success!
Moreover, I thank the European Commission
for funding the project –

And most importantly:

I would like to convey my heartfelt thanks to all of you –

- for your personal commitment,
- for your hard work
- and for your invaluable contributions.

I wish all participants

- an interesting and successful conference
- with a free and open exchange of ideas.

Have a good time here in Munich!
And welcome to Bavaria!