*"Made in Germany - made by diversity."*

**GEORG: "It's time to take a stand!"**

**Kreuztal, January 29, 2024 The current demonstrations against the rise of right-wing extremism in Germany are also affecting the local economy. It has been clear for a long time that this is not only a democratic threat, but also an economic one. GEORG in Kreuztal has decided that we need to take a stand right now.**

Since the influx of refugees in 2015, German society has been visibly drifting apart. With the AfD, a right-wing populist party has established itself in the Bundestag and people are stirring up a daily mood against migrants on social media. Some are also openly talking about curtailing the rule of law. All of this was previously unthinkable. In contrast, there are people who stand up for open coexistence and tolerance. GEORG has positioned itself on this side. As a company with strong exports, it has a completely different view of the global world. "We are proud of our diverse and inclusive corporate culture and stand up for freedom, tolerance, partnership and diversity worldwide. I expressly condemn any form of xenophobia, extremism and anti-Semitism," explains Managing Director Mark Georg. There is hardly a country in which there is no GEORG plant and in which no GEORG employee has worked. And regardless of which country the employees come from, which religion or ethnic group they belong to and which gender they are - they all share these values and represent them worldwide. "What's more, we see the diversity of our employees in particular as the foundation of our creative potential," explains Georg. "This is another reason why we, along with many other large and medium-sized companies, deliberately signed the Diversity Charter in 2017, a nationwide initiative that actively promotes diversity in our working environment.

**The shortage of skilled labour is immense - the culture must be right**

Germany's current problems also need to be addressed internally. "I am convinced that we in our company are only a reflection of our society," says Head of HR Thomas Kleb. "That's why we must also take a clear stance against right-wing extremism, anti-Semitism and extremism within our company and enter into discussions with employees if necessary," says Kleb. He is concerned: "The prerequisite for mutual understanding and tolerance is education, information and dialog. Without diversity and tolerance, we would not be able to operate successfully as a global company. We see it as our duty to ensure that those who see this differently remain the minority in Germany." He points out that Germany will be even more dependent on skilled workers from abroad in the future. The skills gap in Germany already stands at 533,000 people. This figure includes vacancies that could not be filled purely mathematically because there were no suitably qualified unemployed people to fill them. The Bundestag has adopted measures to combat the skills and labor shortage. These include incentives for qualified immigrants, prospects for rejected asylum seekers and the strengthening of initial and further training. But the culture in the country must also be right. GEORG advocates a cosmopolitan culture. Germany currently needs to work on this, more than ever before.

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