

Media Release

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German President Joachim Gauck Visits “*Wir Zusammen*” Members

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- **Voith recognized for its refugee aid commitment**
- **Employees invited to President’s reception**

Heidenheim/Essen. On 2 September 2016, German President Joachim Gauck visited the members of “*Wir Zusammen*” in Essen, in order to inform himself about the exemplary initiative aimed at the integration of refugees. Among the members is also Voith, which has joined the network with its training sponsorships for refugees.

In his welcoming address, Joachim Gauck emphasized the importance of the strong personal commitment of the companies and their employees towards the people who are currently seeking refuge in Germany. At the same time, the President appealed to other companies to follow this example and contribute to the successful integration of the refugees. Since February 2016, “*Wir Zusammen*” has been pooling the initiatives of more than 100 German companies. A focal point of the individual projects is to give the migrants a long-term perspective for their new life in Germany by integrating them into the labor market.

“Wherever we look we are aware that success is not taken for granted, but that it is always a possibility”, said President Joachim Gauck. “This is why I like this direct approach which entails that alongside our government, our communities and our relevant authorities talking about integration, industrial companies actively take on responsibility as part of our society and start an initiative with an emphatic We.”

Among the nearly 300 guests from the circle of “*Wir Zusammen*” members who attended the visit of the President was also Ilonka Nußbaumer, Senior Vice President HR of Voith GmbH, and the two Syrian Voith employees Abedalrhman Nbo and Nasser Awad. Together with President Gauck and the other guests they were able to inform themselves about concrete examples of the activities of the “*Wir Zusammen*” network in the context of an exhibition. Five integration projects represented the efforts of the participating companies and their employees regarding the integration of refugees into Germany’s social and working environment. The exhibition highlighted that companies of all sizes and from all industries are highly motivated and creative when it comes to taking responsibility for the newly arrived citizens. At Voith, young refugees spend their first training year with an apprenticeship as industrial mechanics. Among other features, the program includes in-house German language courses and intercultural training sessions. The next module set at Voith starts on 1 October 2016.

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* Excluding the discontinued Group Division Voith Industrial Services.

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