



# Media information

May 14, 2020

## Volkswagen stands up for respectful coexistence

- Volkswagen supports “Wolfsburger Woche für Vielfalt und Toleranz”
- Rainbow flags raised outside brand tower at Wolfsburg plant as symbol of diversity and tolerance week
- Board Member for Human Resources Gunnar Kilian, Works Council Chairman Bernd Osterloh and Board Member for Sales Jürgen Stackmann underscore “Volkswagen’s clear stand on mutual respect”
- Joint action by Aids-Hilfe Wolfsburg and Group Works Council

**Wolfsburg – Volkswagen is supporting “Wolfsburger Woche für Vielfalt und Toleranz” (Wolfsburg diversity and tolerance week) organized by Aids-Hilfe Wolfsburg. Representatives from the German Aids organization and the Group Works Council raised rainbow flags outside the brand tower as a visible sign of the initiative. The rainbow is a global symbol of diversity, tolerance and acceptance.**

### Media contact

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From left: Jürgen Stackmann, Member of the Board of Management Volkswagen Passenger Cars for Sales, Marketing and After Sales, Elke Heitmüller, Head of Diversity Management, Bernd Osterloh, Chairman of the General and Group Works Council, Julia Streuer, Chair of Aids Hilfe Wolfsburg, Gunnar Kilian, Head of Human Resources Volkswagen Group, Daniela Cavallo, Vice Chairwomen of the Group Works Council

Board Member for Human Resources, Gunnar Kilian, praised the initiative’s engagement: “Right now, it is especially important to take a stand. Today, rainbow flags for diversity and tolerance are being raised at Volkswagen. These values are firmly anchored in our corporate culture. Volkswagen is thus taking a clear stand on respect, equal opportunity, coexistence, equal treatment of everyone – regardless of their ethnic origin, color, sexual orientation, religious affiliation or gender.”

The Chairman of the Group Works Council, Bernd Osterloh, said: “In our modern society, no one should be disadvantaged because the way they live and love differs from the majority. And today, it is still

important to actively promote a culture of recognition and acceptance. For me, one example of what this means is that we must systematically oppose attitudes, and above all, actions that attack “marriage for all” or what are known as rainbow families. What matters is not who you love, the only thing that matters is how partners treat each other and how they care for their children.”

Jürgen Stackmann, Volkswagen Passenger Cars Brand Board Member for Sales, Marketing and After Sales, welcomed the initiative and commented: “At Volkswagen we do not tolerate any form of discrimination. That is why we are delighted to be supporting the action of Aids-Hilfe Wolfsburg and are sending an important signal for diversity today.”



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Aids-Hilfe Wolfsburg e.V. initiated the project last year to raise awareness of the International Day Against Homophobia on May 17. "I'm very pleased that everyone involved immediately agreed to take part in this action", Julia Streuer, Chair of Aids-Hilfe Wolfsburg, said. "As a colorful and cosmopolitan community based on solidarity where social origin, sexual orientation and religious affiliation do not play a role, we want to make a striking statement."

Julia Streuer and Joel Kraus from Aids-Hilfe Wolfsburg were joined by Daniela Cavallo, Deputy Group Works Council Chair, Elke Heitmüller, Head of Diversity Management, and Thore Masekowitz, Spokesperson for the "We Drive Proud" network, to send the message about diversity and tolerance outside the brand tower.

On May 17, 1990, the World Health Organization (WHO) decided to declassify homosexuality as a mental disorder. As a result, May 17 was declared the International Day Against Homophobia. Apart from Volkswagen, VfL Wolfsburg, phaeno, Scharoun-Theater Wolfsburg, Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg, Ostfalia Hochschule, Hallenbad Kultur am Schachtweg and Wolfsburg AG are among the organizations also participating in the initiative.

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## **About the Volkswagen brand:**

The Volkswagen Passenger Cars brand is present in more than 150 markets throughout the world and produces vehicles at over 50 locations in 14 countries. In 2019, Volkswagen delivered 6.3 million vehicles including bestselling models such as the Golf, Tiguan, Jetta or Passat. Currently, 195,878 people work for Volkswagen across the globe. The brand also has over 10,000 dealerships with 86,000 employees. Volkswagen is forging ahead consistently with the further development of automobile production. E-mobility, smart mobility and the digital transformation of the brand are the key strategic topics for the future.

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