From fleeing his country to make a living of his own in Grundfos **17-Nov-2020**

**With dreams of a better future, Amjad Al Safadi fled Syria back in 2015. It took Amjad eight danger-filled days to reach Germany. Today, Amjad is working as an apprentice of ours in Germany.**

He was only 18 years old. He had never been abroad, but now he had just left his family behind, left his studies within mechanical engineering and started a dangerous, secret and nerve-wrecking journey. Out of his civil-war-torn country, Syria.

Though he did not think of it that way he was now a refugee and part of the historic human migration in Europe in 2015, where 1.2 million people from predominately Syria and Northern Africa wanted to create a future for themselves in Europe.

**Earning his living in Grundfos**

Today, Amjad Al Safadi, is 23 years old and works as an apprentice in Grundfos in Germany, where he has been for 2,5 years. Within half a year he will become a Business Assistant Clerk and will continue in the company on a one year contract at first – but he aims for more.

“I am very happy to work in Grundfos. I knew of the company back in Syria and knew the brand through my father but other than this, I did not know much,” Amjad says.

After some time in Germany he got to know, through a volunteer and a friend helping refugees, that Grundfos was looking for apprentices. He applied and was invited for an interview. A few hours later he was offered a position, and Grundfos has paid for some of his German tuition.

“Grundfos is known for its humanitarian support with a desire to help people and create possibilities which is really great. I must say I am in full support of this.”

**8 fearful days**

Amjad’s escape took him through Lebanon, Turkey, Greece, Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia, Hungary, Austria and then finally Germany, which was the final stop for many.

Altogether eight stressful days, travelling by plane, boat, train, bus, car and on foot, while experiencing discrimination, fighting, fear, disempowerment, crowds and uncertainty along the way.

“The sea-crossing from Turkey to Greece was terrible, and I remember children were crying. Suddenly the motor stopped, and we were afraid to be taken by the water police, but after some time we thankfully could continue. When we arrived in Greece, I did not know what to do but I remember I was thinking that this was a new beginning in my life. And when I finally arrived in Austria, well, then I felt safe for the first time,” Amjad explains.

**Future in Germany**

Amjad cannot go back to Syria in the current situation and he is staying on a temporary permit in Germany, but within a few years he can apply for a permanent permit.

“Today my life is good but it is still painful to think of what is still happening in Syria. However, my future is here and I want to make a living of my own – and not be dependent on others or on social welfare. Moreover, I want to top my education with economics, so I can be even more supportive to Grundfos and might work as a Key Account Manager one day. Or, maybe assisting if Grundfos will ever enter Syria. That would be a dream,” Amjad says.

**Strong heritage for social responsibility**

Grundfos has for more than five decades integrated or included people with difficulties entering the labor market helping them to create better opportunities for themselves, and one fundamental value is that the company care for its employees.

This people-oriented mindset has proven to be a great way to bring in other perspectives and it has also created immensely internal pride – each time the company has helped a vulnerable job seeker to make a living of their own.

Just like Amjad.

**Additional info**

Amjad has a brother in Germany too, but still has 3 sisters and his parents in Syria

He is in contact with them several times per week, when the internet connection there allows it

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