



Dear Readers,

The German Shepherd Dog is currently facing mounting public criticism. In traditional media and on social media, our breed is often portrayed as being in poor health, overbred and no longer suited to modern times. This type of reporting lacks differentiation and does not reflect the reality of responsible breeding and husbandry.

As breeders, dog handlers and dedicated members of the Verein für Deutsche Schäferhunde (SV), we cannot allow these portrayals to go unchallenged. Criticism is only meaningful if it is technically sound, objectively justified and solution-oriented. Vague condemnation of an entire breed or association benefits neither animal welfare nor public education.

The German Shepherd is and will always be a high-performance working breed. Health, resilience, strength of character and trainability lie at the heart of our breeding work. The breeding requirements, health programmes and performance tests in the association are among the most demanding in the dog breeding world. Anyone who ignores these facts is deliberately or inadvertently distorting the image of our breed.

Of particular concern is the frequent assertion that German Shepherds are inherently problematic in terms of health or character. Such statements fail to recognise that a dog's development, behaviour and performance are the result of a combination of breeding, rearing, training and husbandry.

A few individuals' irresponsibility must not be used as an excuse to dismiss an entire breed.

This is precisely why we must take a clear stance. We advocate responsible, controlled and transparent breeding. We advocate expert training and husbandry that respects the German Shepherd's character. We also believe that extremes, of any kind, have no place in our breeding philosophy.

Public criticism does not call for retreat, but presence. It calls for clarification instead of justification, and for facts instead of emotions. Every dog kept responsibly, every test conducted properly and every breeding effort documented transparently is a convincing argument in favour of the German Shepherd.

The German Shepherd does not need to be defended with loud voices, but with competence, a strong stance and a sense of responsibility.

As long as we all – judges, breeders, dog handlers and owners – are aware of this responsibility and act accordingly, I am not worried about the future of the German Shepherd.

Yours truly,

Barbara Ullrich-Kornadt

Dr. Barbara Ullrich-Kornadt