

# **Workplace Bullying and Harassment**

## The current situation in Germany

Dr. Martin Wolmerath

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- Figures and facts
- Legislation, national policies and judiciary
- Intervention and prevention in companies

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# Figures and facts (1)

- 3.5 % of total employment  $\approx$  1.4 million people  
 $\approx$  in almost every other company
- Every fourth to ninth employee during their working lives
- In every business = private and public sector
- More cases in small and medium sized companies than in companies with 250 employees or more

## Figures and facts (2)

- High risk in the field of private sector services, public service and trade
- $\frac{2}{3}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  bullying cases happen to women
- All age groups, but higher numbers in the age group 30 – 49
- Duration: long term employment does not protect against bullying
- $\approx 50\%$  carried out by superiors,  $\approx 50\%$  by colleagues, 1.5 – 2.3 % by subordinates

# Figures and facts (3)

- Verbal actions are in the foreground
- Cyber-bullying: minor importance

# Figures and facts (4)

- Victim: health, job, 2,000 suicides (men: 1,500; women: 500)
- Bully: legal sanctions are more theoretical, „Angst-Mobber“ (fear-bully)
- Company and employees: costs of around € 15 billion an year (business costs)
- Society: loss of social skills and verbal communication, increase of violence, no figure about the costs

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- Future prospects



# Legislation and national policies

- No specific legislation
- No legislative action
- § 238 StGB: Stalking is criminal
- It seems that the national policies deny the problem
- Bills from the small parties (pirate party: 2013; PDS [now: the left]: 1997) have no chance

# Judiciary

- Bullying is more on the periphery
- Only a few decisions
- Only a very few legal proceedings were successful
- Court is no place to resolve a conflict
- 26.07.2012: Mediationsgesetz (law for promotion of mediation and other methods of alternative dispute resolutions)
- Federal Labour Court: important judgement of 25.10.2007

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# Intervention and prevention in companies

- Company agreements between work councils and employer are essential
- One good example:



Thank you very much for your  
attention and interest

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