

Evaluating the effectiveness of the labour inspection in Switzerland in preventing psychosocial risks

“Contemporary
Ergonomics challenges
in Europe”

26th of November, 2015

Latvia

Quelle: totia

The contents of this presentation

1. Is this an ergonomic issue?
2. What is the problem?
3. What are the aims?
4. How we plan to proceed
5. Where we are now
6. The future

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What is «ergonomics» (see IEA website)

- Ergonomics (or human factors) is the scientific discipline concerned with the understanding of interactions among humans and other elements of a system.
- Practitioners of ergonomics and ergonomists contribute to the design and evaluation of tasks, jobs, products, environments and systems in order to make them compatible with the needs, abilities and limitations of people.
- Organizational ergonomics is concerned with the optimization of sociotechnical systems, including their organizational structures, policies, and processes.

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We are doing research on...

- The evaluation and design of a task
- How does the training and qualification of the labour inspectors fit with their task?
- How can we design their work structures, policies and processes so that they are effective?

Our belief: It is not «ergonomic» to ask people to perform tasks for which they are not equipped, or that are unnecessarily difficult.

The payoff:

Labour inspectors have less stress. HEALTH
Their work becomes more effective and efficient. PRODUCTIVITY

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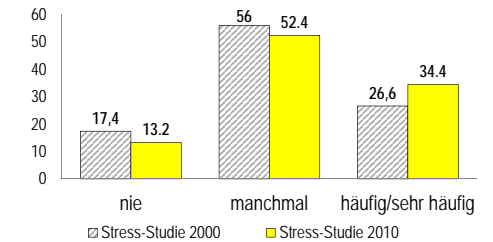
The problem

- Changes in the working world
- Psychosocial demands are very frequent issues in the workplace
- Legal requirement that health must not be endangered by working conditions
- Psychosocial demands may put health at risk
- Labour inspectors must control workplaces to ensure that the law is being kept
- It is not easy to see or measure psychosocial risks

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Reports of Stress 2000 and 2010

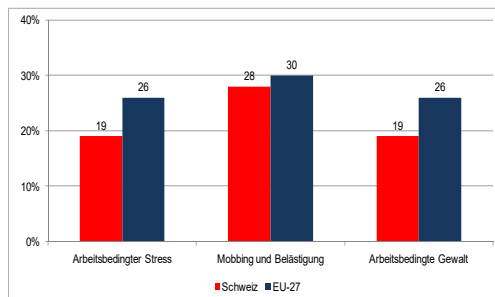
% of employees, N₂₀₀₀ = 996, N₂₀₁₀ = 1'003



Quelle: Grebner, Berlowitz, Alvarado, & Cassina (2011): Stress bei Schweizer Erwerbstätigen. Zusammenhänge zwischen Arbeitsbedingungen, Personalmerkmalen, Befinden und Gesundheit

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% of enterprises with management plans relating to psychosocial risks



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Quelle: European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (2010).
European Survey of Enterprises on New and Emerging Risks (ESENER)

Problems for labour inspectors

- Psychosocial problems at work are not easily detected or measured.
- Objective differences management/workers
- **No classic limit values**
- **Multifactorial causes** und **unspecific effects**
- Psychological matters are still **Tabu for many people**

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Aims of the Swiss Labour Inspection Priority 2014-2018

- Improve **knowledge and practice** of labour inspectors in regard to psychosocial risks
- Increase **employer awareness** of psychosocial risks in enterprises.
- Improve prevention practices in enterprises.
- Reduce the number of accidents and illness related to psychosocial problems at work.

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Define the Role of the labour inspector Visiting an enterprise :

- **Information and advice**
- **Controle and sanctioning**

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How to control? Integration in system audits

- Are psychosocial issues being addressed by the enterprises?
- Does the enterprise measure and assess their risk?
- Is the management appropriate to the risk?

Quelle: fotolia

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The priority program measures

- Labour inspectors
 - Training courses
 - Guidelines for inspections and handling complaints.
- Enterprises
 - Handouts / Publications
 - Websites
 - Articles in magazines, etc
 - Training at branch level
 - Seminar presentations



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Evaluation of the program

Feedback by labour inspectors – structured interviews and accompanied visits

Effectiveness at company level (pre- and post- interviews with control group)

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Where are we now?

Almost 300 company interviews – first round almost finished

Approx 80% of labour inspectors are participating (some cantons excepted)

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