

Sexual harassment in the workplace

Guusje Dolsma
Senior Advisor Social Affairs
Confederation of Netherlands
Industry and Employers
VNO-NCW

Sexual harassment: A concern of employers

- **Unacceptable; affront to the dignity of women and men**
- **It creates a hostile or abusive work environment**
- **Negative consequences for work satisfaction and motivation**
- **Costs due to absence from work, loss of good reputation**

Sufficient legal framework

Employers' duty to protect workers against harassment

- Directive 2002/73/EC
 - National implementation
- National law
- Institutional mechanisms

Preventing en managing

Focus on:

- **Changing attitudes towards sexual harassment**
- **Increasing sensitivity relating to this kind of behaviour**

Framework Agreement on Harassment and Violence at work (1)

Aim:

- increase the awareness and understanding of employers, workers and their representatives
- provide employers, workers and their representatives at all levels with an action-oriented framework to identify, prevent and manage problems

Framework Agreement on Harassment and Violence at work (2)

Content:

- proposes a method to prevent, identify and manage problems of harassment and violence at work,
- which requires enterprises to have a clear statement (issue being taken seriously)
- specifying the procedure to be followed
 - essential that complaints about discrimination are treated with due care
 - Dutch Equal Treatment Commission published a checklist for complaints procedures

Framework Agreement on Harassment and Violence at work (3)

- leaves the necessary flexibility to decide on the details at company level
- recognises that the responsibility for determining the appropriate measures rests with the employer

Sexual harassment a work: a mutual concern

Preventing and managing

- A duty of employers
- A mutual concern of employers and employees

Focus on

- awareness raising actions and
- disseminating good practices