

Speaker: Laura-Romina Goede (Criminological Research Institute of Lower Saxony, Germany)

Presentation title: Catcalling - results of a study on the extent, forms and consequences of sexual harassment without physical contact in Germany

Co-author: Carl Philipp Schröder (Criminological Research Institute of Lower Saxony, Germany)

Catcalling refers to behavior that has sexual connotations or various types of sexual harassment without physical contact. This includes, for example, whistling or kissing noises, leering, supposed compliments or lewd remarks in public spaces. According to sociocultural theory, catcalling or sexual harassment in general is seen as a consequence of gender inequality and societal sexism. It is assumed that culture and social norms shape gender-specific roles into which the individuals of a society are classified according to their gender. Currently, there is much discussion in German politics as well as in the scientific community and the public, about the extent to which catcalling could be punishable and how the behavior of the mostly male perpetrators could be influenced. The Criminological Research Institute of Lower Saxony conducted an online survey (n=3908) in 2021 to investigate the extent, forms, and consequences of catcalling in Germany for the first time. In addition to the characteristics of the perpetrators and victims such as age, gender, sexual orientation, their motivation and relationship to each other, the location of the event and other aspects were also investigated. The result of the study indicates that catcalling is an everyday experience in the life of young female and diverse gendered persons and that more than half of the respondents suffer from certain consequences due to catcalling. Finally, recommendations for action to raise awareness among the population or potential perpetrators and to support those affected are presented.