



Zurich, 22nd January 2024

Ombudspersons of ETH Zurich Yearly report 2023

Personnel

Martin Hohmann stepped down from his position at the end of February. We would like to thank him most sincerely for his great commitment.

Statistics 2023

	2023		2022
Total cases	162		127
Function	Number	Percent	Percent
PhDs	63	39%	35%
Admin. & technical staff	33	20%	22%
Students	19	12%	15%
Professors	13	8%	10%
Postdocs	10	6%	9%
Senior Scientists	16	10%	2%
Others	8	5%	7%
Gender			
Women	91	56%	51%
Men	70	43%	49%
Other	1	1%	0%
Language			
German	71	44%	54%
Other	91	56%	46%

Effort			
Low (<8h)	110	68%	68%
Medium (8-24h)	42	26%	21%
High (>24h)	10	6%	11%
Concern			
Misconduct	39	24%	-
Leadership conflict	64	40%	-
Peer conflict	9	6%	-
Other	50	31%	-

The number of cases received by the ombudspersons has risen continuously since 2020. Compared to the previous year, the number in 2023 has again increased significantly by 30%. Other trends include a slight increase in inquiries from women and inquiries in English.

At the suggestion of the school management, the ombudspersons have also been keeping statistics on the type of concerns since this year. However, the concerns often overlap (e.g. inappropriate behavior and leadership conflict), so these figures should be interpreted with caution.

Further activities of the ombudspersons

- Presentations by the ombudspersons at the information event for new doctoral students and at most departmental conferences. In the context of these presentations, it became clear that the ombudspersons and their working methods are still not sufficiently well known, particularly among doctoral students and undergraduates. As a direct result of the presentations, several people contacted the ombudspersons with their concerns (this may partly explain the significant increase in cases).
- Margrit Leuthold took part in a roundtable on mental health, gave a presentation at the Insight Forum and was involved as a jury member of the Art of Leadership Awards (ALEA).
- Jonas Nakonz conducted two mediation and counseling trainings for AVETH counselors and helpdesks.

Insights from the ombudspersons' work

- Still some conflicts of interest situations due to incomplete implementation of dual career rules.
- There are still many cases of doctoral students and postdocs who do not want to take steps to address inappropriate behavior and gross management deficiencies for fear of harming their

careers (including informally, after completing their doctorate). The ombudspersons work confidentially, i.e. no content or information is disclosed to third parties without the express consent of the person seeking advice. The ombudspersons do not engage in any activities on their own initiative without the consent of the person seeking advice.

- The independence of the ombudsperson's office is an important aspect for many people seeking advice.

Die Ombudspersons:

Margrit Leuthold
Jonas Nakonz
Annette Spiro
Kathrin Teuscher