Session 4

Crisis Development at Workplace Level

PD Dr. Martin Behrens

WSI Summer School

IG Metall Training Facility Pichelssee, 19 September 2012
Contents

1. Protecting jobs during times of crisis
2. What is crisis doing to conflict within the establishments
1. Protecting Jobs during Times of Crisis
The Great Recession: GDP Development

Source: IMK-Report No. 56
The Great Recession: Employed Persons

Source: IMK-Report No. 56
Measures taken to safeguard jobs (2009), Share of works councils indicating that a measure has been used within their establishment

Source: WSI Works Council Survey 2009
2. What is Crisis Doing to Conflict/Cooperation within the Establishments
Share of establishments with new works agreements according to subject, before and during crisis

Share of establishments with new works agreements according to subject, before and during crisis

„Has your employer interfered with works council’s participation rights?“ Response: „Yes, often“; comparison 2007/2010

„Has your employer interfered with works council’s participation rights?“ Comparison 2007/2010


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>4.1%</td>
<td>14.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Conclusions

- During times of crisis we observe a remarkable reduction of conflict between works councils and establishment-level management.

- The assumption that the crisis has helped to stabilize cooperation at the establishment level finds some support in the data.

- But: The impact of crisis on conflict/cooperation is indirect in a sense that you do not need to be immediately affected by the economic downturn to feel the pressure.
Conclusions (continued)

- At times of crisis we also observe a markable reduction in the scope of WCs' activities.

- This finding, however, is subject to further investigation because it might not just be the result of „focusing on jobs“ but more of „lets wait and see“. 