

**Awareness concept for the digital conference  
„Selbstbestimmung stärken! Demokratie leben!“**

**by the Kompetenznetzwerk „Selbst.verständlich Vielfalt“**

**on June 18th 2024**

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## **1. Introduction**

The LSVD<sup>+</sup> - Verband Queere Vielfalt e.V. is part of the competence network (Kompetenznetzwerk) "Selbst.verständlich Vielfalt" and, together with the Akademie Waldschlösschen, the Bundesverband Trans\* e.V. and Inter-geschlechtliche Menschen e.V., is dedicated to reducing discrimination and hate towards queer and trans\* people. The Kompetenznetzwerk is funded by the federal program "Demokratie leben!".

At our professional events, workshops and networking sessions, we want all participants to feel safe and comfortable. In order to ensure the best possible participation of everyone involved and a respectful atmosphere at our events we have drawn up this awareness concept. This concept and the information it contains are also available online in German as well as in German in simple language.

We are aware that awareness work is an ongoing process and that concepts have to be adapted sensitively according to the needs of those affected. If you have any questions, feedback or criticism, please do not hesitate to contact us at

koordinierungsstelle@lsvd.de.

### **3. Self-conception**

The LSVD<sup>+</sup> is a civil rights association and represents the interests and concerns of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans\*, intersex and queer people (LGBTIQ\*). As part of the democratic civil society, we advocate that all people have the right to be different without fear at any time and in any place. To ensure the adherence of human rights equal participation and effective legal protection against discrimination is necessary. In our work as a civil rights association as well as in our projects we oppose anti-LGBTIQ\* and anti-democratic attitudes just as resolutely as other group-related discriminatory ideologies. We view discrimination and devaluing attitudes from an intersectional perspective. Furthermore, we want to empower people and promote their awareness for LGBTIQ\* issues. Especially with regard to forms of marginalization that overlap with LGBTIQ\* discrimination or go beyond it, it is our concern to continuously educate ourselves and to further our own sensitivity in this regard. In our work, we deal with our own attitude in a discrimination-critical way.

At our events, we want to create a respectful and appreciative space for further education, exchange, networking and empowerment for all participants - whether in person or online. All people should feel safe and comfortable at our events. We do not tolerate any form of discriminatory, derogatory or abusive behavior. We do not tolerate antisemitism, racism (including anti-Muslim racism), ableism, sexism, antiziganism, ageism, classism, LGBTIQ\* discrimination or hatred and agitation.

We are aware that barrier reduction, awareness and diversity-sensitive project design are continuous learning processes and that unconscious tendencies and biases can also lead to hurtful or boundary-violating situations. We want to create safer spaces, knowing that we cannot provide universally safe spaces. However, we are committed to being on the side of those affected in cases of boundary violations or hurtful behavior, and to providing staff support and resources to best assist those affected.

#### **4. Awareness principles**

##### Definatory power:

The principle of "definatory power" is based on the understanding that those affected define for themselves what constitutes an assault or violent behavior. We are subject to this definition in our awareness work.

##### Partiality:

In the context of our awareness work partiality means that the awareness team always stands up for the protection and needs of those affected and represents their interests in relation to other visitors, participants, organizers and others present.

With this awareness concept, we would like to create binding structures and procedures that support those affected by assault or people in difficult situations at our events. At the same time our goal is to help to prevent assaultive behavior and unsafe circumstances from the outset. We are aware that marginalized persons are exposed to structural forms of discrimination that are based on unequal power relations. These are often reflected in unconscious prejudices, microaggressions and/or violence and resulting assaults should not be seen as individual cases. Therefore, we show our solidarity especially to people who experience structural (intersectional) discrimination. At our events, it is important to us that the awareness work is

- centered around the needs of persons affected by boundary-violations or in crisis
- partial
- and in solidarity with those affected.

It is also important to us that the power to define what constitutes an assault or a threatening situation lies with the persons affected. The needs and wishes of those affected are at the center of the awareness work.

The awareness team is bound by confidentiality and treat all incidents, conversations and personal data confidentially.

## **4. Awareness at the digital conference**

### 4.1. Before the event

As part of barrier reduction two sign language interpreters will be assigned to the event. They will accompany the online symposium during all presentations and discussions in the plenary session as well as during one of the workshops. Which workshop will be accompanied by the interpreters will be decided and communicated in advance in consultation with the people who require translation. All this information is communicated during registration and information about the specific needs of the participants are requested before the event.

The awareness concept is made public online in German, English and in German in simple language before the event. Reference will be made to it in the announcement emails. An awareness team with two persons is available for the day of the event. The awareness team is approachable in the main Zoom session, can be contacted via chat and has the opportunity to open breakout sessions independently in order to talk to people seeking help. The awareness team also has the option of excluding people from the event.

The conference moderator, speakers and employees are made aware of the awareness concept. A reference to this is incorporated into the announcements and the moderation.

### 4.2. During the event

The conference moderator mentions the awareness team at the start of the conference. The awareness persons are identified as such on their digital name tags (example: "AWARENESS\_first\_name\_last\_name\_(pronouns (optional))"). They can be contacted in the plenary session via meeting chat. The awareness team can also be contacted in the plenary session during the workshop phase. If the awareness persons themselves become aware of assaults or threatening situations, they first speak to the person affected and carefully ask about their feelings and needs.

The affected person has the authority to interpret what constitutes an assault. This means that they do not have to explain themselves, are taken seriously and are supported in exactly the way they want. This can look like:

- an open conversation with the awareness persons
- a break away from the event
- the possibility to return to the event strengthened or to leave it safely
- the referral to a crisis-specific point of contact
- if explicitly requested, a conversation between the awareness persons and the assaultive party or an accompanied conversation between the affected person and the assaultive party
- exclusion of the assaultive person from the event

Close attention should be paid to the needs of the person affected. No measures are initiated that the person does not want. Also, no pressing or encroaching questions will be asked. If a discussion with the assaultive person or their exclusion from the event is desired, they will be given the opportunity to state their position to the awareness team. Here, too, the principle of partiality applies: the protection and needs of the person affected must always be the central focus.

#### 4.3. After the event

In the event of an assault, the persons affected will be offered a follow-up telephone conversation by the awareness team the following week after the end of the event. The awareness persons commit to deleting the personal data (e.g. telephone number) of the persons affected immediately thereafter.

After the event, the awareness team should be guaranteed sufficient time and space for self-care. In case of assaults at an event, the awareness team will meet with the LSVD<sup>+</sup> staff responsible for the event at an appropriate time. The aim should be to exchange information anonymously about the incident, future adjustments to the prevention measures and the further procedure.



## 5. Definitions/Glossary

In the following glossary we have explained a selection of terms aimed at anti-discriminatory language. These are relevant in the context of the awareness work in our present concept as well as in our events. This list does not claim to be exhaustive. We are aware that terms and definitions change over time and in use by different individuals and communities. We always welcome feedback to expand and adapt the following definitions.

### ABLEISM

Ableism refers to discrimination and derogatory attitudes towards people with a physical or mental impairment or due to learning disabilities. It is therefore "able-ism" when a person is judged because of a certain, often (but not always) externally perceivable characteristic or disability - of being "handicapped". The word "ableism" sounds similar to "racism" or "sexism". This is intentional. Ableism refers to a form of discrimination - just like racist or sexist ways of thinking and behavior. Discrimination can also be phrased as a positive expression. For example, when people with disabilities are told again and again how great it is that they "can do" everyday things. Everyone would find it unpleasant if they were "praised" for opening a door or combing their hair, for example.<sup>1</sup> However, people with disabilities are not a homogeneous group. Their experiences, opportunities and identities depend on many factors: sexual orientation, gender identity, skin color, age, religion, (social) origin, whether or not they identify with the gender assigned at birth.

Note: In the German version of this concept we use the spelling "BeHinderung"/"beHindert" after consultation with the Inklusives Queeres Zentrum Berlin (IQZ) to refer to the structural and active restriction of participation of disabled people through barriers from the outside. Since to our knowledge there is no English equivalent, we will use the terms „disabled“/“disability“/“impaired“/“impairment“.

### AGEISM

Ageism describes the social and/or economic discrimination of people on the basis of their age. In principle, this form of discrimination can affect people of any age, but younger and older people are particularly affected in the labor market. Women\* and disabled or chronically ill people are also disproportionately affected by ageism.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Fachstelle Ergänzende unabhängige Teilhabeberatung, <https://www.teilhabeberatung.de/woerterbuch/ableismus>

<sup>2</sup> Antidiskriminierungsstelle des Bundes, <https://www.antidiskriminierungsstelle.de/DE/ueber-diskriminierung/diskriminierungsmerkmale/alter/alter-node.html>

## ANTI-FEMINISM

Anti-feminism refers to social, political, religious or academic movements and groups that oppose feminism in an organized way. Anti-feminism is directed against feminist causes such as the elimination of sexism, the implementation of equal rights or the empowerment of women.<sup>3</sup> Anti-feminist ideologies often originate in religiously fundamentalist or right-wing groups. They use the term "Frühsexualisierung" ("sexualisation of children") to fight the issue of promoting acceptance of LGBTIQ\* identities in schools and day-care centers.

## ANTISEMITISM

Antisemitism refers to discrimination against Jewish people. This discrimination or hatred is based on a world view that ascribes certain biological characteristics or traits to Jewish people in a generalizing and racializing manner and constructs them as a homogeneous group far beyond their religious affiliation. Antisemitism can be directed against individuals as well as against groups and institutions.<sup>4</sup>

## ANTIZIGANISM

Antiziganism is a form of racism that is primarily directed against Roma and Sinte people. The term is controversial, as in German it also reflects the pejorative attribution "Zigeuner\*in" ("gypsy"). Nevertheless, it is used by some advocacy groups of the Roma and Sinte to promote a critical view of these and other terms imposed by others.<sup>5</sup>

## BARRIER REMOVAL

The process of removing physical, verbal, visual and other participation-hindering barriers for all people in order to enable the most inclusive social environment possible is called barrier removal. In particular, people with physical and/or mental disabilities should be "de-barred" in a targeted manner and all social spaces should be made accessible to them as much as possible in order to enable full, effective and equal participation.<sup>6</sup>

## BIPOC/BIPOC

The acronym "B(I)PoC" is a term that refers to Black, Indigenous and People of Color. The term is intended to explicitly make Black and Indigenous identities visible in order to counteract anti-Black racism and the

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<sup>3</sup> Amadeu-Antonio-Stiftung, <https://www.amadeu-antonio-stiftung.de/antifeminismus/was-ist-antifeminismus/>

<sup>4</sup> Vielfalt.Mediathek, <https://www.vielfalt-mediathek.de/kurz-erklart-antisemitismus>

<sup>5</sup> Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, <https://www.bpb.de/themen/rassismus-diskriminierung/antiziganismus/>

<sup>6</sup> Lebenshilfe, <https://www.lebenshilfe.de/informieren/wohnen/barrierefreiheit-fuer-menschen-mit-behinderung>

invisibility of Indigenous communities. The term seeks to highlight the specific violence, cultural erasure, and discrimination experienced by Black, People of Color, and Indigenous people. It also seeks to unify the aforementioned communities. Nevertheless, it is meant to underscore the fact that not all BIPoC have the same experiences, especially when it comes to systemic oppression. The term is political because it is self-defining and empowering. The term is used in both activist and scholarly ways.<sup>7</sup>

## BLACK

Black people is a self-designation and describes a social position affected by racism. "'Black' is capitalized to indicate that it is a constructed pattern of attribution and not a real characteristic based on the color of one's skin. Thus, being black in this context does not mean being assigned to an actual or assumed 'ethnic group,' but is also linked to the common experience of racism, of being perceived in a particular way."<sup>8</sup>

## CISGENDER

"Cis" is a prefix meaning "on this side" or "on the same side." A person is cisgender if the biological sex ascribed at birth matches the gender identity.

## INTERPRETIVE AUTHORITY

In awareness work, interpretive authority is understood as the principle that only the person affected can define what constitutes an assault for them. This is to ensure that neither the person being assaultive or boundary-violating nor other people are in a position to deny this assault.

## EMPOWERMENT

Empowerment refers to measures and techniques that aim to improve the (political and social) responsibility and (action and decision-making) autonomy of people. Ultimately, the aim is to strengthen self-empowerment.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Universität zu Köln, <https://vielfalt.uni-koeln.de/antidiskriminierung/glossar-diskriminierung-rassismuskritik/bipoc>

<sup>8</sup> Amnesty International/Jamie Schearer, Hadija Haruna, Initiative Schwarze Menschen in Deutschland (ISD), <https://www.amnesty.de/glossar-fuer-diskriminierungssensible-sprache>

<sup>9</sup> Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung, <https://www.bpb.de/kurz-knapp/lexika/politiklexikon/296315/empowerment/>; Quelle: Schubert, Klaus/Martina Klein: Das Politiklexikon. 7., aktual. u. erw. Aufl. Bonn: Dietz 2020. Lizenzausgabe Bonn: Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung

## ERROR FRIENDLINESS

Making mistakes is part of the process of trying to live in a discrimination-critical way. An error-friendly way of dealing with oneself, mutual support and appreciation of all attempts is helpful here. This provides strength and motivation to keep trying and to stand up for issues that are important for everyone.<sup>10</sup>

## CLASSISM

Classism means the categorization and often the devaluation of people based on

- their social background (e.g. what educational qualifications and occupations their parents have or in which environment they grew up)
- their socioeconomic position (e.g. how much they earn in their job or whether they have a fortune) and
- their milieu affiliation (e.g., what school degree or what interests they have).

That means classism is mostly directed against low-income, unemployed and homeless people. Classism affects life expectancy and limits access to housing, education, health care, power, networks, participation, recognition, and money.<sup>11</sup>

## LGBTIQ\*

The acronym LGBTIQ\* stands for:

- lesbian/s
- gay/s
- bisexual/s
- trans\* (people)
- intersex (people)
- queer (people)
- the asterisk stands for all non-heterosexual and/or non-cis/endo identities beyond and in between.

More info on each designation is available here:[www.lsvd.de/de/ct/3385](http://www.lsvd.de/de/ct/3385)

## MULTIPLE MARGINALIZATIONS

When individuals or groups are multiply marginalized, they are affected by different forms of discrimination and mechanisms of oppression. This phenomenon was described by the lawyer and activist Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 with the term "intersectionality". Accordingly, a Black disabled trans\* man is

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<sup>10</sup> Stapeltor, [https://www.stapeltor.de/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/ST\\_Awareness\\_Booklet\\_Screen\\_01.pdf](https://www.stapeltor.de/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/ST_Awareness_Booklet_Screen_01.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> Gleichstellungsportal, <https://www.gleichstellungsportal.de/abc-der-gleichstellung/klassismus/>

confronted with anti-Black racism, ableism or barriers, and trans\*phobia. These structural disadvantages and forms of discrimination are rarely clearly separable and shape a person's experiences together.

### ISLAMOPHOBIA

When Muslims are discriminated against, marginalized, treated with hostility or attacked because of their religious affiliation, this is called islamophobia. Muslims are made into social "others" by ascribing negative characteristics to them: They are often considered reactionary, dangerous, oppressed by their religion, or difficult to integrate. These foreign attributions declare that Muslim people do not belong culturally, religiously or nationally.<sup>12</sup>

### QUEERPHOBIA

Queerphobia is understood as discrimination, violence and hatred towards LGBTIQ\* (see above).

### SAFER SPACE

Safer Spaces are special (physical) spaces. These spaces are about exchanging, sharing (experiences), meeting. What is important about these spaces is that they try to be safer. Safer, because nothing is completely safe, but there are efforts to consciously reduce discrimination. This also happens because these spaces are created by and for those affected by discrimination. For example, there are queer safer spaces, safer spaces for black people, safer spaces for people with disabilities, and so on.<sup>13</sup>

### SEXISM

Sexism is the discrimination, devaluation, violation, and oppression of a person or group based on gender. Sexism is also the idea that genders have an order or sequence. For example, the idea that men are worth more than women. Sexism can be directed against all genders, but girls and women are disproportionately affected, as are people who cannot be assigned to heteronormative, binary ideas of gender.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Bundesministerium des Innern und für Heimat, [https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/downloads/DE/publikationen/themen/heimat-integration/BMI23006-muslimfeindlichkeit.pdf;jsessionid=56444ABFE53C73637E40F2FD08471431.1\\_cid295?\\_blob=publicationFile&v=17](https://www.bmi.bund.de/SharedDocs/downloads/DE/publikationen/themen/heimat-integration/BMI23006-muslimfeindlichkeit.pdf;jsessionid=56444ABFE53C73637E40F2FD08471431.1_cid295?_blob=publicationFile&v=17)

<sup>13</sup> Migrationsrat Berlin e.V., <https://www.migrationsrat.de/glossar/safer-space/>

<sup>14</sup> Bündnis gegen Sexismus, <https://www.gemeinsam-gegen-sexismus.de/ueber-sexismus/wissen-ueber-sexismus/>

## SEXUALIZED VIOLENCE

Sexualized violence refers to any assault on sexual self-determination. The perpetrators - who are predominantly men, although sexualized violence can also be inflicted by women - impose their will on the victims. It is not about lust or eroticism, but about power. Sexualized violence devalues people through sexual acts or communication, humiliates and degrades them.

Not only physical assaults such as rape, sexual coercion or sexual abuse count as this form of violence. It also includes sexual harassment and any form of unwanted sexual communication - obscene words and gestures, intrusive and unpleasant looks, showing or sending sexual content and/or pornography.

Sexual violence is widespread in our society. According to representative surveys, two out of three women experience sexual harassment in their lifetime. Every seventh woman is a victim of severe sexualized violence. Women with disabilities are two to three times more likely to experience sexual violence than women without disabilities. Representative surveys also show that one in three men has already been the victim of sexist assaults.<sup>15</sup>

## SOLIDARITY

Solidarity describes the principle of standing up for one another and supporting one another, even if no personal advantage is to be expected. Solidarity with (multiply) marginalized groups and individuals is particularly important because of their greater structural disadvantage. Showing solidarity with others can mean, for example, protesting alongside them for their interests, supporting them financially or intervening in the case of discriminatory behavior towards them.

## TRANS\*PHOBIA

Trans\*phobia means that trans\* people are disenfranchised, discriminated against, hated, and attacked because of their gender identity. This can manifest in many different ways, from questioning their gender identity to attacks or even murder. The mere encounter with a trans\* person can motivate perpetrators to inflict violence. Misgendering, i.e. addressing a person with the wrong pronoun that is not appropriate for them or using the former name (deadname), can be a form of trans\*phobic behavior. The asterisk symbolizes identities that go beyond or merely intersect with the label "trans," such as non-binary, genderfluid, or the like.

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<sup>15</sup> Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend, <https://www.bmfsfj.de/bmfsfj/themen/gleichstellung/frauen-vor-gewalt-schuetzen/haeusliche-gewalt/formen-der-gewalt-erkennen-80642>

## 6. Resources

The following points of contact and resources may be relevant to referral in awareness work:

### Aidshilfe

Deutsche Aidshilfe (DAH) is the umbrella organization of around 115 organizations and institutions in Germany. It represents the interests of people with HIV/AIDS in public as well as in politics, science and medical research. → <https://www.aidshilfe.de>

### Points of contact for LGBTIQ\* refugees

Counseling centers, interest groups, meeting places →

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1D0NvpwBSaErII0Eyo0oUTWvOG5CQNZI&usp=sharing>

### Antidiscrimination counseling Age, disability, chronic illness

Whether at work, at a government agency, when looking for a place to live, or in their free time - the specialized office supports those affected when they are discriminated against. (Attention, location Berlin! Telephone consultation possible) → <https://www.diskriminierung-berlin.de>

### Bundesverband Trans\* e.V.

The Bundesverband Trans\* e.V. advocates for the rights of trans\* persons in the broader sense: i.e. people who describe or have described themselves as e.g. transgender, transident, transsexual, transgender, genderqueer, trans\*, trans, non-binary, crossdresser, trans\* woman, trans\* man. → <https://www.bundesverband-trans.de/>

### Checkit!

Checkit! will advise you on the effects and risks of psychoactive substances and help you with questions about consumption behavior, dependence/addiction and related issues. All services are anonymous, free of charge and confidential. The services can be used by both those affected and their relatives! → <https://checkit.wien>

### LSVD project „Fluchtgrund Queer“

The LSVD project Fluchtgrund Queer (formerly "Queer Refugees Germany") connects, supports and advises LGBTIQ\* refugees and organizations working with them throughout Germany.

→ <https://www.queer-refugees.de/>

### HateAid

HateAid strengthens democracy in the digital space by providing advice and legal support against hate and hate speech online. The project aims to make the digital world a positive place for everyone. Regardless of gender, origin, religion and much more. All with one goal in mind: a network in which freedom of expression is upheld and participation is made possible. → <https://hateaid.org/das-ist-hateaid/>

### Violence against women help hotline

Callers from the German telephone and mobile networks can now reach the "Violence against Women" help hotline under the new, shorter number 116 016. The counseling service continues to be anonymous, free of charge, barrier-free and available in 18 foreign languages. → <https://www.hilfetelefon.de/>

### Hydra

Meeting point and counseling center on sex work and prostitution (Attention, location Berlin! Online counseling possible) → <https://www.hydra-berlin.de/>

### Intergeschlechtliche Menschen e.V.

Intergeschlechtliche Menschen e.V. is committed to a self-determined, discrimination-free life for all people. Intergeschlechtliche Menschen e.V. stands up for the realization of human rights and opposes any kind of discrimination and disadvantage because of gender on a national and international level. (Peer) consultations, groups, resources available. → <https://im-ev.de>

### Mobile Counseling Against Right-Wing Extremism

The Bundesverband Mobile Beratung is the umbrella organization of around 50 mobile counselling teams across Germany that have been providing advice on dealing with right-wing extremism, racism, antisemitism, anti-feminism and conspiracy narratives for over 20 years. The employees network the teams, pool their expertise, represent their interests and are available as contacts for politicians and the media. → <https://bundesverband-mobile-beratung.de>



### MuTeS

Help - also in Turkish - is offered by the Muslim pastoral care telephone "MuTeS" at 030/44 35 09 821. The staff there can be reached 24 hours a day.

### Nummer gegen Kummer

For children and young people, there is the "Nummer gegen Kummer" (number against grief) - available Monday to Saturday from 2 to 8 p.m. on 11 6 111 or 0800/111 0 333. Mail advice for young people is also available via the website U25 Deutschland and via Jugendnotmail

→ <https://www.u25-deutschland.de/>

→ <https://jugendnotmail.de/>

### OFEK e.V.

OFEK e.V. is the first counseling center in Germany that specializes in antisemitism and community-based counseling. OFEK advises, accompanies and supports victims, their relatives and witnesses of antisemitic incidents and acts of violence. → <https://ofek-beratung.de/>

### queerhandicap

queerhandicap recommend scene tips, groups and offers to you. Have fun browsing and trying it out! Club and contact persons on site are gladly there for you. Groups, advice and scene tours available. → <https://www.queerhandicap.de/>

### Rad und Tat e.V.

Events, counseling, culture for lesbian women of all ages with and without disabilities.

→ <https://rut-berlin.de/>

### Suicide prevention

The National Suicide Prevention Program for Germany (NaSPro) is the nationwide network of experts for the exchange and transfer of knowledge on suicide, suicidality and suicide prevention. It links suicide prevention experts and professionals from many areas of society, supported by more than 90 institutions, organizations and associations. → <https://www.suizidpraevention.de/>

### Telephone counseling

Suicide prevention is a difficult topic and it takes a lot of effort to talk about it. Yet it is precisely talking that is so important. The telephone counselling service has developed several offers to make talking possible. That's why the service is always easy to reach and use, always anonymous and free of charge.

→ <https://www.telefonseelsorge.de>