

Prof. Dr. Anne Sanders, MJur (Oxon)

Anne Sanders holds the chair for Civil law, Company law, the law of Family Businesses and Judicial Studies at the University of Bielefeld, Germany. She is co-director of the Institute for Family Businesses at the University of Bielefeld (IFUn) and co-head of the interdisciplinary Bachelor program “Law and Management” at the University of Bielefeld.

Legal forms of long-term oriented business ownership are the focus of Anne Sanders’ research. She pursues this interest working on family businesses, steward ownership and enterprise foundations in businesses such as Patagonia, Bosch, Novo Nordisk, Carlsberg and Dr. Hauschka. With Prof. Steen Thomsen of Copenhagen Business School, Anne Sanders is a reporter of the ELI-Project “Enterprise Foundations”. She was also the chair of the academic working group that has prepared a draft law for a special German legal form for steward owned businesses which was included in the coalition agreement of the CDU/CSU/SPD coalition. She also works on sustainability and corporate law.

Anne Sanders also works on family law, especially prenuptial agreements and the parent-child relationship in new family forms. Her book “Mehrelternschaft” (multiple parenthood) was cited by the German Federal Constitutional Court in April 2024 in approval when the court accepted that more than two persons can be parents under German law. The book also received the award of the German Notary Association (Deutsche Notarrechtliche Vereinigung) 2018.

Apart from company law and family law, Anne Sanders works on court administration and judicial independence and has served regularly as expert for judicial independence and the quality of judges’ work for the Council of Europe. As an expert, she has supported the drafting of four CCJE Opinions (2014, 2015, 2019 and 2021) on evaluation of judges, separation of powers, judicial assistants and judicial councils and a thematic study on lessons learnt from the Covid 19- pandemic. She also worked as an advisor on projects to improve evaluations of judges in Albania, Cyprus and Croatia. She has also written and lectured extensively on challenges to the rule of law, judicial independence and video-hearings. She is co-chair of the permanent EGPA study group for justice and court administration. Anne Sanders has been a part-time judge at the Higher Regional Court of Hamm, Germany (2019-2021) and a Professor II of the faculty of law, and member of the rule of law study group at the University of Bergen, Norway (2021-2025).

Before joining the faculty of law at Bielefeld, she held a position as associate professor at the University of Bonn (2013-2017). She has served as a law clerk/judicial assistant at the German Federal Constitutional Court (2009-2011). She holds a PhD (2007) and Habilitation (2017) of the University of Cologne. She studied law at the Humboldt-University (1997-2001) of Berlin and the University of Oxford (2005/2006). She was supported by scholarships of the Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes. Since 2021, she has served as an official mentor (Vertrauensdozentin) of the Studienstiftung des deutschen Volkes. In 2016, 2017 and 2018, she received teaching awards of the Universities of Bonn and Bielefeld.