

Reforming working life through workplace development programmes

Finnish and other European experiences

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Alternative levels of target for policy measures

- Macro level?
- Workplace level?
 - The most difficult and sensitive level.
- Individual level?

The right balance between different levels?

Workplace development through programmes

- **Workplace development** refers to purposeful activity,
 - which aims to improve workplace performance and quality of working life (incl. OSH)
 - through innovative developments in organizational, management or other work-related practices (i.e. workplace innovations = WIs)
 - based on cooperation between management and employees.

- A **workplace development programme** refers to WPD in which
 - development is guided by a shared framework that applies to several companies simultaneously;
 - the content of the framework has been accepted by management and staff of the companies and by other major stakeholder groups such as policy-makers, social partners, and researchers, consultants and other experts; and
 - the involved companies engage in exchange of information, interaction and cooperation.

Policy options in workplace development

Hard regulation

- Indirect
 - Directives or binding rules that focus *indirectly* on matters in the workplace
- Direct
 - Directives or binding rules that focus *directly* on matters in the workplace

Soft regulation

- Indirect
 - General policy frameworks
 - Conferences
 - “Good practice” guides
- Meso-level
 - Education and training
 - Coaching
 - Research
 - Learning networks
- Direct
 - Subsidised consultancy and action-oriented research projects
 - Tax credits

Nature of problem and recommended policy options in workplace development

Policy option Nature of problem	Soft indirect regulation	Soft meso-level regulation	Soft direct regulation	Hard regulation
Lack of information on the significance of WIs	X	(X)		
Lack of skills & competences on how to implement WIs		X	(X)	
Lack of motivation to produce WIs		(X)	X	(X)
High level of risk related to WIs		(X)	X	(X)

Workplace development strategies and programmes in European countries and regions

- **Norway:** long history (1960s→), close ongoing cooperation between social partners (SPs)
- **Sweden:** long history (1970s→), fragmentation, horizontal policy integration
- **Finland:** governmental programmes (1990s→), industry-wise cooperation between SPs
- **Denmark:** national campaigns, close company-level cooperation between SPs
- **Germany:** massive governmental programmes (1970s→) in cooperation with SPs
 - E.g. **North Rhine-Westphalia:** funding to workplace innovation in SMEs
- **France:** government funding (1970s→)

Workplace development strategies and programmes in European countries and regions

- **The Netherlands:** focus on company level, increased tripartite cooperation (2000s→)
- **Flanders:** ecosystem building by government, SPs and researchers (2000s→)
- **The UK:** loose networking between different stakeholders (2000s→)
 - **Scotland:** ambitious government-led strategy (2010s)
- **Ireland:** ambitious government-led strategy (2000s)
- **The Basque Country:** ecosystem building by provincial government (2010s)
- E.g. **Estonia, Lithuania, Poland and Portugal:** exploration ongoing

Workplace development on the political agenda in Finland

- **1995:** launch of the first national-level Workplace Development Programme TYKE and continuation of the National Productivity Programme NPP (PM Lipponen I)
- **1999:** continuation of the TYKE and NPP programmes, and launch of the National Well-being at Work programme (PM Lipponen II)
- **2003:** launch of the Workplace Development Programme TYKES with increased resources and the Veto programme (PM Vanhanen I)
- **2007:** expansion of the mandate of Tekes to funding of workplace innovation (PM Vanhanen II)
- **2011:** drawing up a National Working Life Development Strategy for Finland (implemented under the name of “Working Life 2020”) and launch of the Tekes’ “Liideri – Business, Productivity and Joy at Work” programme (PM Katainen)
- **2015:** reduction of government spending on R&D as part of austerity measures, continuation of Working Life 2020 (coordinated by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy) and the Tekes’ Liideri programme (PM Sipilä)

Focus areas of Working Life 2020



Workplace development on the agenda of social partners in Finland (industries with ongoing programmes)

- Metal and engineering industry
- Chemical industry
- Banking and insurance
- Tourism, restaurants and leisure-time services
- Ski centres
- Cleaning
- Forestry
- Municipal sector
- The church

Major successes and shortcomings of the Finnish TYKE/TYKES programmes

- +++ Improvements in participating workplaces
- ++ Strengthening of skills and competences
- ++ Strengthening of networking
- + Boosting public debate and awareness
- +/- Sustainability of the improvements attained
- Diffusion of good practices

Conclusion (1/2)

- Focus in programmes exclusively on soft regulation.
- Highly uneven distribution of programmes by geographical area.
 - Well-established position: e.g. Norway and Germany
 - Increased foothold: e.g. Finland and Flanders
 - Frameworks recently established: e.g. Scotland and the Basque Country
 - Exploration just started: e.g. Estonia, Lithuania, Poland and Portugal
 - Mixed cases: e.g. Sweden and the Netherlands
 - No activity: many European countries

Conclusion (2/2)

- No universal solution to the question of how to target programme resources successfully
 - the answer depends on the wider policy framework and the overall national or regional development infrastructure.
- Cooperation between policy-makers (direction), social partners (social legitimacy) and research (insight) crucial.
- Meeting the challenges of diffusion as a major challenge.
- The European Workplace Innovation Network (EUWIN) as a new mechanism for Europe-wide cooperation <http://portal.ukwon.eu/>