



## Implementation of Workplace Innovation – Project Partners Experiences

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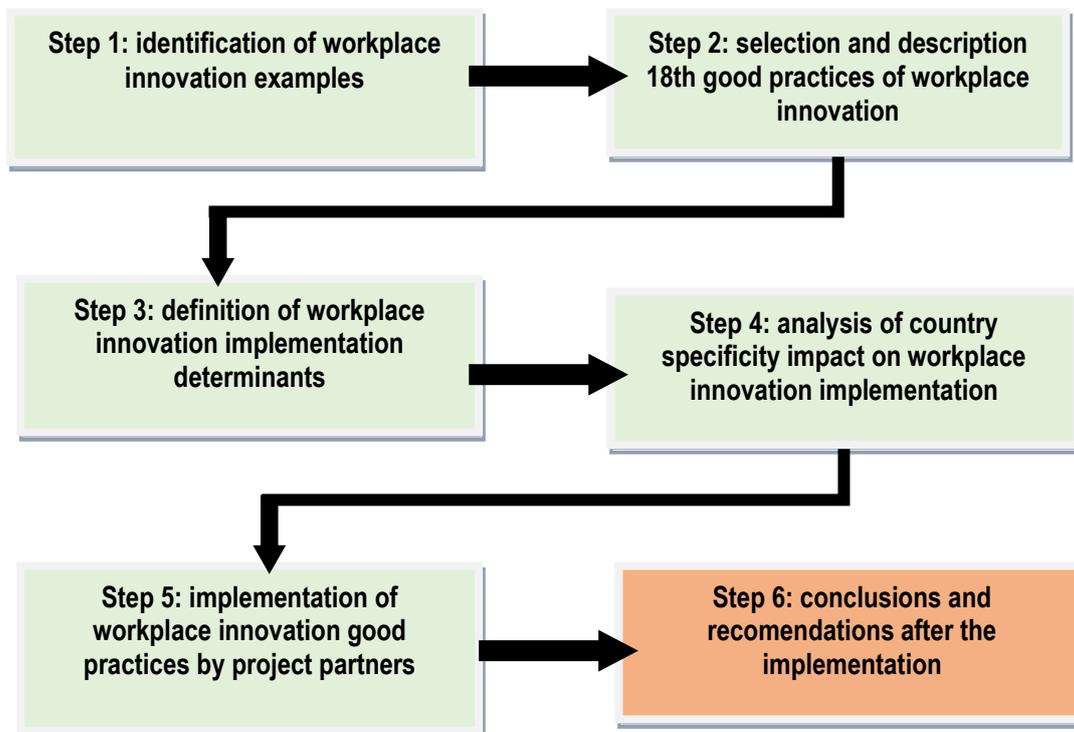
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## Introduction

One of the project's part was to identify good practices of workplace innovation and their implementation in chosen organizations. See the steps how the activity was completed – Figure 1.



In 2019, after detailed analysis 18<sup>th</sup> of workplace innovation good practices had been selected and described – see Table 1.

**Table 1. Good practices of workplace innovation selected and described in KAforHR project**

Best Practice (BP)	Country where BP has been implemented and its effectiveness tested	
Electronic workplace orientation (ePerehdytys)	Finland	12
FISE (Person/employee certification)		
Green walls		
Smartum benefits for employees		
Culture of self-leadership		
WELCOME TO COMPANY – guide for newcomers		
Initiative bonus tied to benefits of the initiative		
TYKY – maintaining the work ability and concept of work ability management		
Anonymous recruiting		
BIF sports		
Tampella work community		
Fastems: The Way We Rock		
Champions League 5S	Poland	1

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<b>Nonmonetary motivations to ensure employees satisfaction with workplace</b>	Latvia	2
<b>Company culture (work-life balance)</b>		
<b>CSR - Corporate Social Responsibility! Success through responsibility</b>	Germany	3
<b>Vocational training in the company according to individual learning capabilities</b>		
<b>Corpworking for SMEs</b>		

Source: Grzesiak M., Olczyk M., Richert-Kaźmierska A., *Baltic Sea wide analysis of Workplace Innovation Best Practices*. KAforHR Report, 2019.

Afterwards, the country specificity as a factor of workplace innovation good practices' successful implementation was analyzed and depicted. There were chosen four good practices for detailed analysis

It was found, that practices focused on work ability management are implemented successfully in Scandinavian countries, mainly because of well-developed intellectual background in this field (eg. Finish Institute of Occupational Health) and cooperation between employers, public institutions and universities. In other European countries there is lack of knowledge about possible solutions and methods of implementation, the support for entrepreneurs is low. Practices of transferring part of the work (workforce) from own location to the shared business spaces are present in all project partners' countries. Nevertheless, they are still not very popular. The main target group of companies to implement the practice are either very small, young companies operating in IT and creative industries (startups) or companies using network structures - outsourcing several specialists (there is no need of their presence in company everyday) or companies realizing complex projects (temporary usage of such co-working spaces). The workplace innovation focused on „integration management” is quite popular approach in Finland (a way of SMEs management), in Germany it was common some years ago, but nowadays – even if the benefits are recognized – it's not in use so often. In Latvia and Poland some companies have been making the attempts in implementation, but there is a lack of knowledge about possible solutions and methods of implementation, mental barriers for cooperation (between organizations - fear of losing competitive advantage, trade secrets) and individuals engagement (employees do not feel important/ responsible for companies they work for). Implementation of practices focused on nonmonetary methods of employees' motivation depends on financial situation – both: employee and organization. As partners from Latvia expressed – because of costs (for the organization) – only some of nonmonetary tools can be implemented. Partners from Poland paid the attention on employees' individual financial situation. There are still quite many employees earning “the lowest national wage” – for them the possibility of higher payment is motivating most. Another condition pointed by the Polish partner was the type of organization. Public institutions cannot implement some of the solutions/tools of nonmonetary motivation.

In the last step in this activity, four project's partners had to implement one from the analyzed workplace innovation good practice and report the result/outputs. Partners' opinions and recommendations has been collected and described in the text below.

## **CASE 1: Latvian Chamber of Commerce and Industry PP 9**

1. Implemented workplace innovation

***Workplace innovations focused on improvement of everyday working life (e.g. rationalization of work organization, simplification of procedures, coaching as prevailing management style, supervisor's support)***

2. What was the main motivation for choosing this one?

***These innovations are common for organizations who are rapidly growing and more serious systematization of work processes is necessary to keep things efficient and organized and in order for organization continue to grow.***

3. Do employees and managers have the capability and willingness to engage in workplace innovation implementations?

***Some of them yes but some of them are not so willing to engage and are rather resisting change because of feeling threatened and undermined.***

4. What effects from implementation did you expect at the time of its introduction?

***Resistance from several employees was expected, mostly from those whose work would be most affected by the change as well as the older colleagues who are not so flexible to accept change.***

5. Did you estimate the potential benefits connected with the workplace innovation implementation?

— ***Efficient work and balanced workload***

— ***Reaching higher organization goals***

— ***Motivated and less frustrated employees***

— ***Lower employees rotation***

— ***Clear role, responsibilities and duties within organization***

6. Did you identify and evaluate the risk before implementing the workplace innovation?

***Yes, the risks were evaluated. For example which employees will be in the risk zone - the most resistant, unmotivated, who can potentially quit organization etc.***

7. What results/outputs of workplace innovation's implementations were achieved?

***Several internal procedures were optimized and made efficient as well as employees work were evaluated and tasks were redistributed between employees in a more logical way. Results still need to be evaluated because it takes time for them to be visible and measurable.***

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8. What was the most influenced factor within implementation? (positive/ negative)

Factors	-2 (strongly negative)	-1 (little negative)	0 (neutral)	1 (little positive)	2 (strongly positive)
employers attitude towards this type of workplace innovation in your country				X	
organizational culture in SMEs in your country				X	
relations between employees and dialog between employees and managers		X			
age structure of the workforce		X			
legal conditions (give the examples)			X		

9. What were most important barriers in WP's implementation? (organizational, financial, cultural etc. or others)

**Organizations internal culture and employees who shape it was the biggest barrier.**

10. How does an implemented workplace innovation reflect, and respond to, external economic, social or environmental challenges? (in your opinion)

**Positively because environment is getting more and more dynamic as well as organization is growing so procedures, culture and employees should also be able to adjust to these external tendencies in order to survive and keep growing.**

11. After implementation:

— How do you estimate the whole implementation process? (e.g. in the scale: easy- complicated- very difficult)

**Rather easy with some challenges.**

— Would be the decision the same about choosing the practice to implement?

**Yes**

— Do you think, implemented solution will be kept in the future?

**Yes, but it probably will be adjusted from time to time because of the organizations specific.**

## **Case 2: Vides Dizains Ltd. PP10**

1. Implemented workplace innovation

***Corpworking for SMEs and Nonmonetary motivations to ensure employees satisfaction with workplace***

2. What was the main motivation for choosing this one?

***We had to move to a new office and by using co-working spaces we were able to ensure more flexible rent conditions and rent smaller main office. Also, we didn't need to by new office technology as so-working spaces are well equipped. Taking into account that our new office is located outside the center of city our employees can choose to work from co-working space 4 times per week (we pay for it). One day per week they can work from home or from the main office. Employees are satisfied that they can look for a co-working place near their homes and not to spend so much time travelling to/from work.***

***We already practiced several types of non-monetary innovation in our company, such as: Freedom to choose tools for work (for example MAC or Windows); Flexible working hours (You can start your work from 11:00 and work longer in the evening instead); Birthday gift from the company; Various informal team building activities (Christmas parties, hockey team, boat trips etc.).***

***Following examples provided by KAforHR we decided to start some additional activities, such as "Brown bag" breakfasts or lunches, or free office lunches twice per month, which we dedicate for discussing particular subjects related to our work activities, such as the KAforHR project and its implementation or aspects related to developments in areas relevant for our work (innovation in energy efficiency, design of golf courses, etc.). Sometimes we also try to invite local or foreign experts from outside to share useful information with us. This is quite important that all our employees participate in these reunions.***

3. Do employees and managers have the capability and willingness to engage in workplace innovation implementations?

***Yes, in both cases these work place innovations were easy to implement. This could also be related to the fact that we had to move to a new office and restructure our activities. This helped to introduce changes much easier and faster.***

4. What effects from implementation did you expect at the time of its introduction?

***We expected that this change will help to make our work more efficient and save office costs, which was indeed achieved. Our clients are also satisfied that we are better accessible by cars and provide free parking near our new office. We also wanted to make sure that our employees will stay with us and not decide to look for other jobs closer to their homes.***

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**Team building and communication with each other has become more important taking into account that people are not seeing each other every day (part of employees are in the main office and other part is working from co-working spaces). Therefore, this was important to invent some new non-monetary innovations to make sure that people can communicate and exchange regularly. Both good practices (innovations) appeared to be very useful and very connected.**

5. Did you estimate the potential benefits connected with the workplace innovation implementation?

**Yes, we have made some calculations related to the rent of our new office and possibilities to use co-working options. Based on this we decided how much money we can spend for co-working spaces. Implementing additional non-monetary motivation measures were very much related to this new situation. These activities also help us to monitor and evaluate work productivity and satisfaction with new working conditions of our employees.**

6. Did you identify and evaluate the risk before implementing the workplace innovation?

**Yes, of course. The biggest risk in our opinion was that we will not be able to monitor, how employees are spending their working time and if they are as dedicated to their work tasks as if working from the office. We have asked employees to report regularly to our secretary about their daily routines and inform us immediately if there are any changes in their schedules. Also, we have Skype meetings with our employees time by time.**

7. What results/outputs of workplace innovation's implementations were achieved?

**We achieved more efficient workers and saved office costs, more satisfied clients and employees. Both invented innovations helped to achieve better results as they are very much related.**

8. What was the most influenced factor within implementation? (positive/ negative)

<b>Factors</b>	<b>-2 (strongly negative)</b>	<b>-1 (little negative)</b>	<b>0 (neutral)</b>	<b>1 (little positive)</b>	<b>2 (strongly positive)</b>
employers attitude towards this type of workplace innovation in your country					X
employees attitude towards this type of workplace innovation in your country					X
organizational culture in SMEs in your country					X
relations between employees and dialog between employees and managers					X
age structure of the workforce			X		
legal conditions (give the examples)			X		
competitiveness environment (give the examples)					X

9. What were most important barriers in WP's implementation? (organizational, financial, cultural etc. or others)

***In both cases implementing innovations required some additional organizational and managerial work in the beginning. As we have started working in new conditions only starting from September, 2019, we don't know what will be the long term impact. Probably, there have also been some cultural difficulties as older employees haven't been keen to choose to work in co-working spaces despite even longer travel to work in a new office. They have stayed in the main office, where they feel more comfortable.***

10. How does an implemented workplace innovation reflect, and respond to, external economic, social or environmental challenges? (in your opinion)

***We can't judge yet as we have started implementing these innovations only around three months ago.***

11. After implementation:

— How do you estimate the whole implementation process? (e.g. in the scale: easy- complicated- very difficult)

***Easy***

— Would be the decision the same about choosing the practice to implement?

***Yes***

— Do you think, implemented solution will be kept in the future?

***Probably yes, but we have to be flexible in order to thing about new opportunities and innovations to be implemented and/or to replace the old ones.***

### **Case 3: Pomeranian Chamber of Handicrafts for Small and Medium Enterprises PP6**

1. Implemented workplace innovation

*Workplace innovations focused on nonmonetary motivations to ensure employees satisfaction with workplace. Pomeranian Chamber of Handicrafts for Small and Medium Enterprises has introduced several innovations in its work environment e.g.:*

- *flexible working hours providing each employee an opportunity to better manage their time and activities and also maintain work-life balance*
- *the possibility of coming with child to work in emergency situation*
- *adaptation of working conditions to the age diversity*
- *enabling employees to work remotely*
- *providing employees with additional health tests*

2. What was the main motivation for choosing this one?

*The biggest motivation to choose those innovations was the relatively short time needed to implement them, the willingness of employees to implement them and the lack of major financial barriers for their implementation.*

3. Do employees and managers have the capability and willingness to engage in workplace innovation implementations?

*The employees were very positive about the changes PCH introduced, they were also involved in the selection and implementation of innovations.*

4. What effects from implementation did you expect at the time of its introduction?

*PCH expected that the introduced innovations would result in greater employees satisfaction with the workplace, greater identification with employer's brand, greater involvement in work and better management of duties.*

5. Did you estimate the potential benefits connected with the workplace innovation implementation?

*Increased work satisfaction of employees, greater identification of employees with the workplace. The promotional aspect of the Chamber as an organization of SMEs entrepreneurs is that is setting a good example for implementing innovation in the workplace.*

6. Did you identify and evaluate the risk before implementing the workplace innovation?

*The Chamber carefully analyzed the costs and risks associated with the introduction of innovation, but due to the fact that these innovations had a positive impact on the workplace*

**and also very well received by employees and management, they are disproportionate to the advantages of introducing innovation.**

7. What results/outputs of workplace innovation’s implementations were achieved?

**Increased work satisfaction of employees, greater identification of employees with the workplace. The promotional aspect of the PCH as an organization of SMEs entrepreneurs is that it is setting a good example for implementing innovation in the workplace.**

8. What was the most influenced factor within implementation? (positive/ negative)

Factors	-2 (strongly negative)	-1 (little negative)	0 (neutral)	1 (little positive)	2 (strongly positive)
employers attitude towards this type of workplace innovation in your country			X		
organizational culture in SMEs in your country					X
relations between employees and dialog between employees and managers					X
age structure of the workforce					X
legal conditions (give the examples)					X

9. What were most important barriers in WP’s implementation? (organizational, financial, cultural etc. or others)

**The biggest barrier was the mental barrier associated with the modification of work organization on both the employees’ and management ‘s side.**

10. How does an implemented workplace innovation reflect, and respond to, external economic, social or environmental challenges? (in your opinion)

**The implementation of innovations in the environment by the PCH is consistent with trends on the labor market. It is also an element encouraging SME companies associated in the Chamber to introduce innovation as a good practice. These activities are also strengthened by building a positive image of the Pomeranian labor market as attractive and employee-friendly.**

11. After implementation:

— How do you estimate the whole implementation process? (e.g. in the scale: easy- complicated- very difficult)

**The process was quite easy.**

— Would be the decision the same about choosing the practice to implement?

**Yes**

— Do you think, implemented solution will be kept in the future?

**Yes.**

### **Case 4: Baltic Institute of Finland PP3**

Implementing new workplace innovations proposed in the project in BIF become very challenging. The reason for this was two-fold:

- firstly, BIF is a small organisation of seven people working with EU funding and development projects, the staff is small and stable, so there are not employees coming in all the time, so the need for orientation activities is close to zero,
- secondly, all the workplace innovations that fit BIF organisation are already in place. BIF has been (and still are) implementing, for instance, Smartum benefits, plants at the office, orientation for new employees, culture of self-leadership, TYKY, nonmonetary motivations, and co-working spaces, for years now already.

To summarise, BIF had found no new workplace innovations for implementing as a part of the project KAforHR.

### Final remarks

Three of four project partners decided to implement workplace innovations as a part of KAforHR project (PP6, PP9 and PP10), from the list of good practices prepared previously. One partner (PP3) stated, there was no need/possibility for implementation – organization is too small and already has implemented proposed solutions.

The main motivation for partners implementing new workplace innovations were:

- the need of change that ensure organization grow,
- the current situation, that requires the company to quickly find new solutions in functioning,
- the need of employees reunion,
- the simplicity of innovation implementation (relatively short time and not too expensive solutions).

**ENTREPRENEURS DECIDE FOR WORKPLACE INNOVATIONS' IMPLEMENTATION IF THEY RESPONSE RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS' NEEDS AND ARE RELATIVELY EASILY TO IMPLEMENT (THE RESULTS CAN BE EXPECTED IN SHORT PERIOD OF TIME).**

The process of workplace innovations' implementation was planned, the risks and potential benefits were calculated – see table below.

PROJECT PARTNER	RISKS DEFINED BEFORE IMPLEMENTATION	EXPECTED BENEFITS
PP6	PP3 has conducted the analysis of implementation risks, but finally did not identify any that could negate the implementation	increased work satisfaction of employees, greater identification of employees with the workplace promotional benefits
PP9	employees in the risk zone - the most resistant, unmotivated, who can potentially quit organization etc.	efficient work and balanced workload reaching higher organization goals motivated and less frustrated employees lower employees rotation clear role, responsibilities and duties within organization
PP10	no possibility to monitor, how employees are spending their working time and if they are as dedicated to their work tasks as if working from the office the need to establish new ways of communication and work-reporting	new ways of monitoring and evaluating work productivity and satisfaction with new working conditions

**ENTREPRENEURS DECIDE TO IMPLEMENT WORKPLACE INNOVATIONS AFTER ANALYSIS OF POTENTIAL BENEFITS AND RISKS. THEY NEED ANALYTICAL TOOLS, HELPING THEM WITH DECISIONS' MAKING WHAT INNOVATION AND WHEN TO IMPLEMENT**

Partners identified factors that have influenced the implementation process mostly, as well as the barriers. As the greatest barriers they pointed:

- organizations internal culture and employees who shape it,
- cultural difficulties as older employees haven't been keen to choose to work in co-working spaces despite even longer travel to work in a new office,
- mental barrier associated with the modification of work organization on both the employees' and management 's side.

**THE SUCCESS OF WORKPLACE INNOVATION IMPLEMENTATION DEPENDS ON PEOPLE AND THEIR ATTITUDE – BOTH: EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES**

All project partners agreed, they are satisfied of implementation the chosen practice. Afterwards, they said it was quite easy to implement it, even if some extra work was needed. They declared, it will be continuing/ developing in future.

**IT'S IMPORTANT TO START THE CHANGES – WORKPLACE INNOVATIONS IMPLEMENTATION! IT'S NEEDED TO CONVINCING EMPLOYERS TO TAKE RISK AND JUST START.**