



Welcome to:

European Workplace Innovation Network | April Bulletin

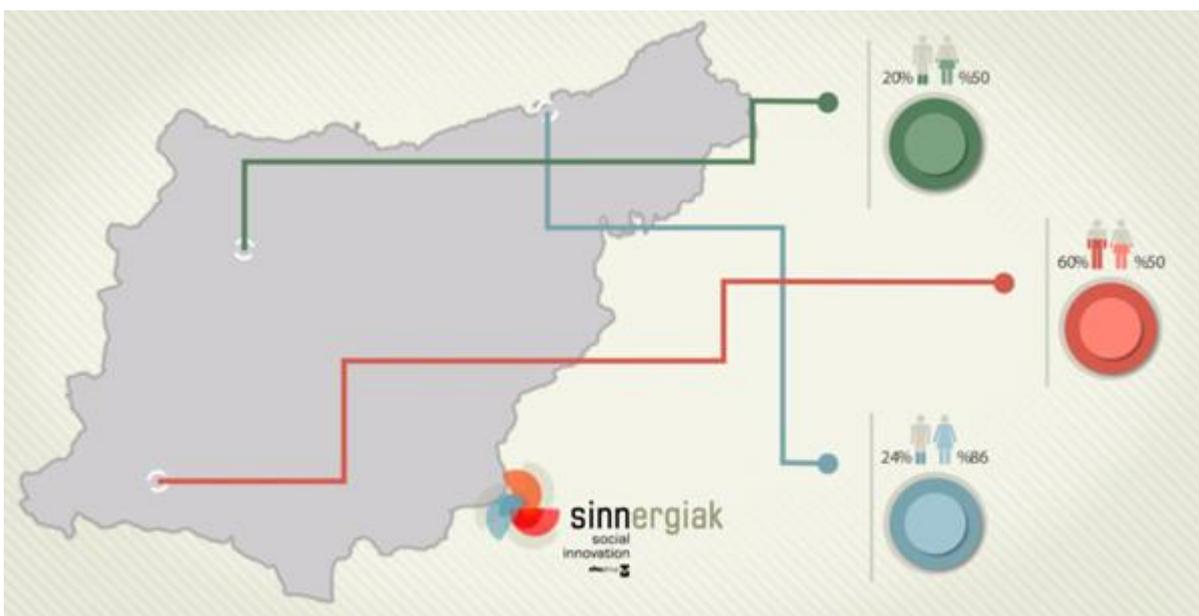
EUWIN is an initiative of the European Commission's Directorate General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs

A thousand flowers

Workplace innovation is blooming all over Europe!



In the **Basque Country**, work is beginning on the second phase of the Gipuzkoa workplace innovation programme which aims to support employee participation and organisational change in companies across the region. EUWIN's Steven Dhondt and Peter Totterdill travel to San Sebastian this month to offer international support. You can see a short presentation about the programme [here](#).



Estonia hosts EUWIN's next major conference, to be held in Tallinn on 31st May with speakers from across the Baltics and Nordic countries. Our host is *Enterprise Estonia*, the national innovation agency, which aims to create a coalition to help stimulate and resource workplace innovation across the country. [Read more.](#)



The Netherlands achieved a groundbreaking collective agreement in the 'big metal' industry sector in February after months of tough negotiations. The agreement includes a section on the need for workplace innovation (in The Netherlands called 'sociale innovatie') to involve workers and their unions in robotisation, digitisation and organisational change. It also speeds up the inclusion of workplace innovation in the national [Smart Industry, Dutch Industry Fit for the Future](#) programme. [Frank Pot discusses the agreement . . .](#)



In **Scotland**, the *Fair Work Convention* published its [Framework](#) document in March. The Convention, which includes representatives from business, trade unions, NGOs, the public sector and universities, was established by the Scottish Government to create a vision for "world-leading working life where fair work drives success, wellbeing and prosperity for individuals, businesses, organisations and society."

According to the Convention, "We believe that fair work is work that offers effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment and respect; that balances the rights and responsibilities of employers and workers and that can generate benefits for individuals, organisations and society." The Framework sets a clear context for the development of a workplace innovation strategy for Scotland. Watch for updates in future editions of the Bulletin!



And early summer will see EUWIN-supported events in **Portugal, The Netherlands** and **Romania**:

On **20th May** Peter Totterdill will lead a special track on workplace innovation at the [International Conference on Innovation, Entrepreneurship in Marketing and Consumer Behaviour](#) in **Lisbon**. The Conference will be followed by a Roundtable to explore effective ways of stimulating and resourcing workplace innovation in Portugal. Participants will include high level policymakers and other stakeholders in the future of the workplace such as AMA, IP (Agência para a Modernização Administrativa), AEP (Associação Empresarial Portuguesa), AIP (Associação Industrial Portuguesa), CML (Câmara Municipal de Lisboa), COTEC, CECO, SENSUP, SPI (Sociedade Portuguesa de Inovação), Turismo de Portugal, Universidade Europeia and several independent experts. The Roundtable aims to bring Portugal into the community of countries that actively support workplace innovation. [Read Maria Sousa's case study](#) of an innovative Portuguese Company.

EUWIN's Steven Dhondt and Frank Pot have secured a workplace innovation symposium at the prestigious [Wellbeing at Work Conference](#) to be held in **Amsterdam** from **29th May – 1st June**.

On Tuesday **7th June**, EUWIN will organise an [event](#) in **Bucharest** in partnership with ITOL Central Eastern Europe. Roxana Mocanu is Learning Practice Leader at ITOL and responsible for their part of the event. She explains, "ITOL is a Romanian organisation responsible for lifelong learning and for training trainers. In the past years ITOL has also been focused on creating continuous training environments within companies. In this sense, the connection to workplace innovation is quickly made. ITOL helps to promote new organisational design and workplace innovation through several events." In 2015, ITOL invited EUWIN to Bucharest for the first time to present its ideas on workplace innovation. The event in June will follow up this first event and is targeted at 60 participants, mainly practitioners and companies, to share experiences on workplace innovation.

Watch out for updates on [EUWIN's Events Page](#)!

When corporate targets threaten creativity

GRIMSHAW ARCHITECTS



Innovation is a *force majeure* in the architecture industry as buildings, technology and ideas all change over the course of a project and new thinking and new skills are required to move on to the next one. But the creative design process is often threatened by the bureaucracy that is inevitably set up to handle projects. Creativity can be blunted when corporate objectives outmuscle innovation. According to one architect: *“So what tends to happen on those projects, is there is a smaller and smaller amount of creative opportunity compared to a huge amount of turning the handle to make this huge project happen.”*

The multi-award winning practice Grimshaw Architects was founded by Sir Nicholas Grimshaw in 1980. The practice became a Partnership in 2007 and operates worldwide with offices in New York, London, Melbourne, Sydney and Doha employing over 400 staff. Projects range from air, rail and other mass transit related buildings to residential, hotels, workplaces, exhibition halls, retail sport, industrial design and masterplanning.

As a member of the [Creative Workplace Group](#), Grimshaw invited representatives of the Met Office, Saint-Gobain, Red Gate Software, Nottingham City Council, Anna Hart Design and the UK Workplace Organisation Network (UK WON) to visit its London HQ for one day. The visitors spent time talking to a cross-section of staff discussing a wide range of ways to maintain the creative edge in mature organisations including balancing creativity with technical and regulatory requirements, strengths-based management and promoting people to do what they're good at rather than automatically making them become line managers in order to progress. What were the results? Check below.

[Read more](#)

Download the UK WON case study [here](#).

The Fifth Element

What is workplace innovation really about? And how can managers create a system of working practices that leads to high performance *and* high quality of working life?



The Fifth Element was created precisely to help organisations of all types answer these questions. It builds on in-depth analysis of literally hundreds of research articles and case studies, as well as on much practical experience of stimulating and supporting workplace innovation. For businesses it offers a practical, evidence-based approach to understanding workplace innovation practices as well as their impact on performance and working life, and it has found many applications across Europe. *The Fifth Element* describes the enabling, responsive and innovative culture that is so deeply embedded in some organisations. It is about the meeting point between high performance and a great quality of working life.

This type of culture is not the product of an initiative or a leadership development programme. It is only created when four bundles of workplace practices, “elements”, are in place. They form a system of mutually supporting parts in which jobs, teams, line management, organisational structures, procedures, learning, innovation processes and leadership are aligned around common principles and values.

Curious to learn more? Join thousands of people who have watched our great [animated film](#)? Or listen to [Tom Francis](#) (New Applications Business Manager at Saint-Gobain) talk about *The Fifth Element*.

We’re continually updating *The Fifth Element* pages in the EUWIN Knowledge Bank as well as adding new films and case studies. Watch out for our *Users Guide to The Fifth Element* – coming soon!

And please share your experiences of workplace innovation with us!

[Explore *The Fifth Element* here](#)

When policymakers should intervene



Countries such as France and Germany have supported workplace innovation through national programmes and interventions for well over four decades, backed by successive governments of different political complexions. This evidence shows that public intervention can indeed generate a return on investment in terms of productivity, innovation, health and many other key indicators. More recently (as we show above) programmes of intervention have begun to emerge in the Basque Country and Scotland, while policy discussions are currently taking place in several other EU Member States. Does that mean that policymakers are indispensable to close the gap between evidence-based practices and common practices in Europe's workplaces?

Tuomo Alasoini was principal architect of the Finnish National Workplace Development Programme, first launched in 1995 after extensive research and stakeholder dialogue. Since then Tuomo has steered the Programme and its successors through its different phases of development. Workplace innovation is now represented by the [Liideri](#) programme sitting within TEKES, Finland's national innovation agency. Tuomo was awarded his second (yes, second!) doctorate in March and his dissertation consolidates his reputation as one of Europe's leading thinkers on workplace innovation. [Workplace Development Programmes as Institutional Entrepreneurs: Why They Produce Change and Why They Do Not](#) draws not just on the Finnish experience but also on his knowledge of policies and programmes in ten European and East Asian countries.

This paper highlights four major challenges that will increasingly call into question some of the basic assumptions that have thus far guided the design and implementation of workplace development programmes:

1. First and foremost, the definition of the term "workplace" in the future will become increasingly vague, especially in situations where the work is virtual, mobile and distributed.
2. What does quality of working life mean in an environment where work is more knowledge and service intensive, people's work orientations are more individualistic, and changes at the workplace are more frequent? In the future, it will be increasingly difficult to set generally applicable, concrete criteria that lend themselves to objective measurement.
3. Third, the traditional roles of management and staff may become partially confused in the new working life. The dualism of management and staff, which has previously driven workplace development through collaborative industrial relations, will partially disappear

and be reshaped by methods of working that are increasingly network-based, project-like and communal or based on shared management and self-management.

4. Finally, targets concerning work humanisation and workplace democratisation have been increasingly supplanted by productivity and competitiveness-related targets in workplace development programmes across various countries in recent years. The challenge is to ensure that employees' interests and the crucial role that employees play in change and innovation processes should be explicitly recognised in funding regimes.

This insightful and thought-provoking work will certainly stimulate and inform debates throughout Europe about the indispensable role of policymakers in supporting and resourcing workplace innovation. You can read the whole paper following the link below.



Tuomo Alasoini
TEKES

[Download Tuomo's dissertation](#)

Book now

EUWIN's next major conference in Tallinn on 31st May is bound to be a sell out



Drawing on the increasing interest in workplace innovation practices currently being generated in Estonia, a conference is to be held in Tallinn in May to discuss how the concept works in practice and how businesses can effectively implement it.

'Unleashing Workplace Innovation in Estonia' is expected to attract more than 100 delegates drawn from businesses throughout Estonia as well as policymakers, employers' organisations and trade unions. Its aim is to raise awareness of workplace innovation and to share good practices from other European countries.

The conference is part of a Europe-wide programme of events organised by EUWIN (European Workplace Innovation Network), a learning network that promotes EU-wide knowledge-sharing on workplace innovation. It will be hosted by Enterprise Estonia, the National Innovation Agency.

[Register FREE here](#)

Look out for



2016: *The World Review of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development* has published a Special Issue on Workplace Innovation, edited by Jürgen Howaldt and Peter Oeij.

As technological and business model innovations alone are not sufficient to enhance opportunities for businesses and employment, awareness is rising that better use should be made of human talents and new ways of organising and managing.

[See more here](#)

Save the Date

Keep up to date with EUWIN events



4-5
April
2016

**San
Sebastian, Basque
Country**

The launch of Gipuzkoa Workplace Innovation second edition. More details [here](#).

19-20
April
2016

Porvoo, Finland

Leading Passion: Motivation and Work in the Post-Industrial Era Research Conference. For further information contact Johanna Vuori, Chair of the Organising Committee [here](#). More info [here](#).

20-21 May 2016	Lisbon, Portugal	Workplace innovation will be back again on the ICIEMC-conference. More details here .
9-13 May 2016	Noisy-Le Grand, France	Summer school on ' Quality of working life and vulnerabilities ': The objective of this summer school is to provide a multidisciplinary view of quality of life and vulnerabilities at work. EUWIN is asked to present the network and objectives on the 13th of May.
29 May 1 June 2016	Amsterdam, The Netherlands	Fourth International Wellbeing at work Conference . The EUWIN-team organizes a separate symposium during the event. Any questions can be addressed to Frank Pot here .
31 May 2016	Tallinn, Estonia	Estonia hosts EUWIN's next major conference, with speakers from across the Baltics and Nordic countries. Our host will be Enterprise Estonia, the national innovation agency, which aims to create a coalition to help stimulate and resource workplace innovation across the country. Book your place here .
7 June 2016	Bucharest, Romania	EUWIN will organise an event in Bucharest in partnership with ITOL Central Eastern Europe. More information to come soon. Book your place here .

[Find out more about our events](#)

Please Forward

Thank you for being part of [EUWIN](#). Together we bring together the knowledge, experience and enthusiasm of enterprises, employees, unions, employers' organisations, policymakers and researchers from across Europe. Spread the word! Please forward this briefing to your colleagues, associates and suppliers. Ask them to sign up [here](#). Make sure they don't miss out.

