



Get Your 5 A Day - Mindfulness and Mental Wellbeing at  
Work: Training and Games for Public Sector Managers

## Summary Report

Belgium

Cyprus

Finland

United Kingdom

2018



CARDET

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

This document is a summary report on research (O1) 5 Ways to Wellbeing in the Public Sector and it covers all five sub-outputs (A1–5) of the research.

### 1.1 Background

- Needs analysis on the Training Needs of Managers in Public Sector has been developed as a part of Erasmus+ supported project “Get Your 5 A Day- Mindfulness and Mental Wellbeing at Work: Training and Games for Public Sector Managers”.
- The aim of the project is to develop skills and competences (via a training programme & Game) to proactively and positively manage mental wellbeing and build resilience at work by using a gamified e-learning tool. The project is aimed at Public Sector Managers, as statistics show this group is lagging behind in partner countries in a lack of awareness and tools/resources to address psychosocial risks e.g. burnout, at work.
- This research allows the partnership to gain a better understanding of the current situation in these areas. This will be used as a basis for developing the training programme within the project. The Needs Analysis report is produced on two geographical levels: National and Comparative European report (EN) covering all the partner countries.
- Mindful Managers provides 'open and innovative practices in a digital era ' by developing an innovative course in wellbeing aimed at Public Sector Managers so that they are able to develop habits for mental wellbeing at work and also develop healthy mindfulness habits in employees and teams of workers.
- This project will be embedded in the 'digital era' by developing an App and an e-learning game which will facilitate wellbeing habits of Managers by encouraging and reminding them to practice the core habits of the 5 ways to wellbeing (including mindfulness, building work relationships, being active at work, lifelong learning and 'giving' to others at work) throughout their working day. Public Sector spending cuts across Europe have hit training



hard as well as development budgets for staff, resulting in fewer investments for training in this sector. Access to Mindful Managers learning resources via the digital medium are at low cost to the Public Sector as the App will be available freely throughout the project and most Managers/team colleagues already own a smartphone for access to the App.

- Gamification increases learners' engagement and motivation, demonstrates progress and creates habits which means that the learning process is much more effective and learners have fun while learning about improving their own and others' wellbeing at work.
- The project promotes work based learning (WBL) and will use mentoring and coaching at work for training purposes. As WBL is aimed at developing work-relevant skills in VET (raising resilience and building healthy habits for positive mental health and wellbeing at work) learners will find it easier to bring the newly acquired concepts into the workplace and apply them into their daily work habits.
- Mindful Managers will promote WBL as a flexible and efficient way of building skills' and knowledge development at work, integrating personal/emotional wellbeing habits at work.
- Outcomes will be
  - Framework Design Research and Report (O1): Training Needs of Public Sector Managers in Mental Health and Wellbeing to run over the first 6 months of the project in order to gain a full understanding of the training needs in the Public Sector of Management level staff.
  - Development of the 'Mindful Managers' training programme (including 2 pilot phases) (O2)
  - Development of an e-learning game/App with the training materials and a number of other resources to meet the needs of target groups across Europe (O3)



- Development and piloting of Reflection Rounds<sup>1</sup> for Public Sector Managers (O4)
- Development of the Guide: "Developing Mindful Managers: A Guide for Improving Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Public Sector" (O5)
- Eight Multiplier Events will be held during the project to ensure a wide group of members of the target groups are given opportunities to participate and give feedback on the project and benefit from project results.

The final Needs Analysis report is a result of sub-outputs A1–A4, carried out in Cyprus, Belgium, Finland and the United Kingdom in order to collect a comprehensive understanding of the needs of the target group and ensure the quality of the outputs.

## 1.2 Aims

The overall aim of the Needs Analysis on the Training Needs of Public Sector Managers is to establish the current situation of the target group in partner countries, which the project can be founded on.

- To research the **current situation** of public sector managers' wellbeing.
- To research the **current state of training methods** of mental wellbeing among public sector managers
- To analyse **education** among public sector managers.
- To analyse the **training needs** of public sector managers concerning their wellbeing.
- To share **knowledge and understanding** among partner countries regarding the current situation and challenges of public sector managers wellbeing.

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<sup>1</sup> Reflection Rounds will consist of groups of 4/5 mentees meeting for 3-4 sessions (each lasting 4 hours) with a facilitator to learn from whilst also learning from each other. Members all have the same developmental goal in mind e.g. building their skills and usage of good habits for mental health and wellbeing at work.



### 1.3 Research Methods

Needs Analysis on the Training Needs of Public Sector Managers is carried out in 5 stages:

1. **Desk research** gives an overview of the situation of training needs for public sector managers' wellbeing in each partner country. The desk research aims to gain a 'snapshot' of the local, regional and national issues of importance linked to the issues of how to provide work-based training and support for mental wellbeing at work.
2. **Focus groups/country** for Public Sector Managers and Public Sector Workers are used to provide needs analysis for the target group by the partners, one focus group (O1-A2) with minimum of 6 representatives of the target group in each, for each partner country. The focus groups are group interviews that will be exploring the training needs of Public Sector Managers and workers in terms of understanding current gaps in training provision relating to the subjects of mental wellbeing and health at work.
3. **In-depth Interviews (3–6)** will provide additional rich data to that gathered via the focus groups and desk research. The interview will include themes regarding the challenges faced in participating countries, current provision, and areas of demand. The overall aim of the interview will be to identify training needs and issues for Public Sector Managers and workers in the field of mental wellbeing at work.
4. **National Analysis Reports** are based on the data gathered from the desk research, the focus groups and the interviews, partners will produce a short (10–15 pages) National Analysis Report outlining the needs of Public Sector Managers and workers in the countries they are based.
5. **Summary Report** produced by the Output leader is one transnational summary report (EN) outlining the findings on a European level, highlighting similarities and differences across countries and cultures. The report and the findings will comprise an important foundation to the development of the



Mindful Managers Training Programme training materials to ensure they meet the needs of the target group in the partner countries.



## **2 DESK RESEARCH RESULTS**

The desk research (O1–A1) brings forward a 'snapshot' of the local, regional and national issues of importance linked to the issues of how to provide work-based training and support for mental wellbeing at work.

### **2.1 Basic situation in partner countries**

#### **Belgium**

The public sector is the collective name for government services and parastatals (semi-governmental organizations) that provide essential facilities for citizens and that deal with the protection of the residents (CLB, 2018).

Belgium is a federal state with authorizations divided over different administrative levels (Belgian Federal Government, 2018). At the highest level are the federal state, the communities and the regions. All are authorized for different domains but are equal on a legal level. The level below are the provinces. They work under the supervision of all higher authorities. At the lowest level are the municipalities. They also work under the supervision of the higher authorities and are generally funded by the regions. (Belgian Federal Government, 2018).

The highest level is the federal government, the communities and the regions. In general, the federal government deals with themes related to the general interest, like finance, justice, social security, public health, and home affairs. Included here are the king, the federal government with a maximum of 15 ministers, the federal parliament, and Federal Public Services (FPS/FOD) and Public Planning Services (PPS). The ministers execute the laws and have a legislative power. The Parliament exists of two chambers, namely the Chamber of Representatives with 150 members and the Senate with 60 members. Each FPS (before known as ministries) includes a minister and handles a domain in public services, like Personnel and Organization, Finance, and Home Affairs. The Public Planning Services (PPS) work at important social themes that cross FPS's. An example is the Social Integration, Fight against Poverty and Social Economy PPS. The three communities in Belgium are the Flemish Community, the French Community, and the German-speaking community.



These are responsible for culture, education, the use of languages and personal issues of health policy and assistance to individuals (e.g. reception of immigrants and family assistance). Belgium has 3 different regions: the Flemish Region, the Walloon Region, and the Brussels-Capital Region (image). Regions are legislative and executive bodies. Regions have authorization for economy, employment, agriculture, water policy, housing and public works among other things. The Parliament and the government of the Flemish Region are merged with the Flemish community into one. (Belgian Federal Government, 2018.)

The second level are the 10 provinces. They have developed initiatives on education, social and cultural infrastructures, preventive medicine and social policy. They also deal with the environment, roads and waterways, use of languages, etc. The lowest level are the municipalities. These are authorized for public works, social assistance, law enforcement, housing, and education. Belgium has a total of 589 municipalities. (Belgian Federal Government, 2018.)

The number of public sector managers is hard to find out in Belgium. According to Van Hertogen (2013), 45% of a total of wage earners in in 2012 in Belgium work in the public sector, which is equal to 1 679 740 public wage earners. In his article, the public sector includes any employment funded mainly by the government. Thus, next to public services, it also includes health, welfare and large parts of the cultural sector, public transport, post and communication and other government employment.

Another source showed 77617 federal employees in 2013 (FOD Personeel en Organisatie, 2014). The average age of the personnel in the federal government in 2016 is 46.64 years (FOD Beleid en ondersteuning, 2017). Also in the federal government, 24521 employees belong to level A, which equals a master degree, 15099 employees to level B, which means they followed higher education, but for a shorter period. 29250 employees are level C, and thus have a certificate of secondary education, and the remaining 13399 are level D and don't have any certificates. (FOD Beleid en ondersteuning, 2017.)

The public sector has three types of agreements: the statutory 'civil servants' (ambtenaren), the contractual 'workers' (arbeiders), and the contractual 'servants'



(bedienden). The biggest group are the civil servants, with 53.9%. Next are the servants (33.3%), and the smallest percentage is for the workers (12.8%). In general, men are in the minority in the public sector. Divided geographically, we find 41.4% of the employees in Flanders are male, in Wallonia 43.4% and in Brussels 47.2%. Divided over labor contracts, only 31.4% of the servants are male, but of the workers 48.5% are male, and of the civil workers 48%. (FOD Werkgelegenheid, Arbeid en Sociaal overleg & Unia, interfederaal gelijkheidscentrum, 2017)

The following table is the distribution of the employees in the public sector of 18-64 years for the most strongly represented sectors in the public sector.

**Table 1.** Distribution of employees in the public sector among 18-64 years old.

Sector	Percentage
Public administration	45%
Education	34.2%
Transport and storage	8.2%
Human health care and social services	6.6%
Human health care	6.2%
Others	5.9%
Land transport and transport via pipelines	5.4%

The workability monitor is a Flemish measure shows that the percentage of employees in Flanders that have a high-quality job, thus employees that do not identify bottlenecks in terms of mental fatigue, well-being at work, learning opportunities and work-life balance (Stichting Innovatie & Arbeid, 2017). A distribution across sectors gave the possibility to compare the results of the public administration to the average results of all the employees in Flanders. The overall average score of workability in Flanders is smaller than in public administration alone, which is a good sign for the public administration. However, the average in the public administration has declined over the past years, and there was in 2016 only a little difference left with the overall average in Flanders. (Stichting Innovatie & Arbeid, 2017)



As well-being is one of the risk indicators of workability, these data could also be checked separately. They divided the data in ‘not problematic’, ‘problematic’, and ‘acute problematic’. The percentages have changed over the past years. The percentage of employees without problems with well-being at work has diminished. (Stichting Innovatie & Arbeid, 2017)

According to FOD Werkgelegenheid, Arbeid en Sociaal Overleg (2017), well-being at work is defined as the factors related to conditions in which the work is carried out. These factors are safety at work, protection of the health of the employee, psychosocial aspects of work, ergonomics, occupational hygiene, and embellishment of the workspaces.

The Flemish Government showed 7.54% of absenteeism of its employees in 2016 (Informatie Vlaanderen, 2017). This means that out of 100 days of work, an employee is absent for 7.54 days. 0.40% were only one-day absences, 2.04% were shorter than a month, 4.34% longer than a month, and 0.73% was absence due to part time illness. In general, a growing trend since 2008 is observed for absenteeism in the Flemish Government.

In the federal government, 44.9% of the absences of employees were due to stress in 2014 (Agentschap Overheidspersoneel, 2016). Also, the number of certificates due to burn-out has increased. Securex compared working in the private and public sector (2010). Some of the results are as follows:

- Employees of the private sector experience more stress than employees from the public sector.
- Employees in the public sector drink too much alcohol in comparison to employees in private organizations.
- Employees of the private sector are more satisfied with the working conditions than the public sector, and are more satisfied with the leadership styles of their direct supervisor.

Bullying, discrimination and aggression are a bigger problem in the public sector than the private sector.



The same study also compared 3 subsectors within the public sector, namely education, public services and health sector. Public services scored worse than the other two on different variables, like satisfaction, bullying, discrimination and aggressive behavior. (Securex 2010)

## **Cyprus**

According to Soumeli (2008), public sector includes any service under the Republic other than the judicial service of the Republic or service in the Armed or Security Forces of the Republic or service in the office of the Attorney General of the Republic or the Auditor General or their Deputies or, without prejudice to paragraphs 3 and 4 of Section 126 of the Constitution, of the Accountant General or his Deputies or service in any office in respect of which other provision is made by law or service of workers or of other persons whose remuneration is calculated on a daily basis or service by persons who are employed on a casual basis in accordance with “Employment of Casual Officers” (Public and Educational Service) Laws (Law 99/1985 and Law 122/1985).

In the Republic of Cyprus, the civil servants are distributed in the four categories of the public sector. These categories include the civil service, educational service, security forces and hourly paid workers. Civil service encompasses permanent or casual staff working in the Ministries, Departments and Services; the Educational Service includes the permanent and casual educational staff that works in schools and the staff of Cyprus Productivity Center and the Higher Hotel Institute of Cyprus; the Military personnel is comprised by Police Service, Fire Service and the National Guard (Statistical Service, 2018a). As indicated in table 1, the total of civil servants in January 2018 was 50621. The majority works as permanent personnel with their share reaching 2/3 of the total employees (35,726). Most permanent and casual personnel work in the broader civil service sector, followed by employees in educational service who total more than 13 thousand (Statistical Service, 2018b).



**Table 2.** Research data indicating the number of employees in the public sector in January 2018.

Category		January
TOTAL	Total	50621
	Permanent personnel	35726
	Casual personnel	14895
CIVIL SERVICE	Total	17155
	Permanent personnel	11585
	Casual personnel	5570
EDUCATIONAL SERVICE	Total	13383
	Permanent personnel	10060
	Casual personnel	3323
SECURITY FORCES	Total	12535
	Permanent personnel	7238
	Casual personnel	5297
HOURLY PAID WORKERS	Total	7548
	Permanent personnel	6843
	Casual personnel	705

Most recent available statistical data regarding the number of men and women working in the public sector was in 2013. Specifically, male civil servants were 27.274 and the women 28.229 (MLSI, 2013a).

According to ESPN figures the Republic of Cyprus has the highest levels of paid sick leaves in 2015 across the EU (ESPN, 2016). Based on ESPN data (2016), 40% of civil servants in the Republic of Cyprus, have taken sick leave up to 13 days in 2015, while 30% were absent for up to 3 days without a medical certificate. Civil servants who receive most sick leave days are being employed in the Ministry of Justice and Public Order, the Tenders Review Authority of Cyprus and the Commission for the Protection of Competition of the Republic of Cyprus. The figures for the 2015 sick leave concerning 25,797 employees are revealing.

According to the data for the year 2015 regarding the sick leave of permanent and temporary civil servants as well as the hourly government personnel, the percentage of employees was over 30 %, concerning taking sick leave for more than 13 days. 51 % were employees at the Ministry of Justice, 53.68 % of the Central Jail and 65.22 % of the State Archives.

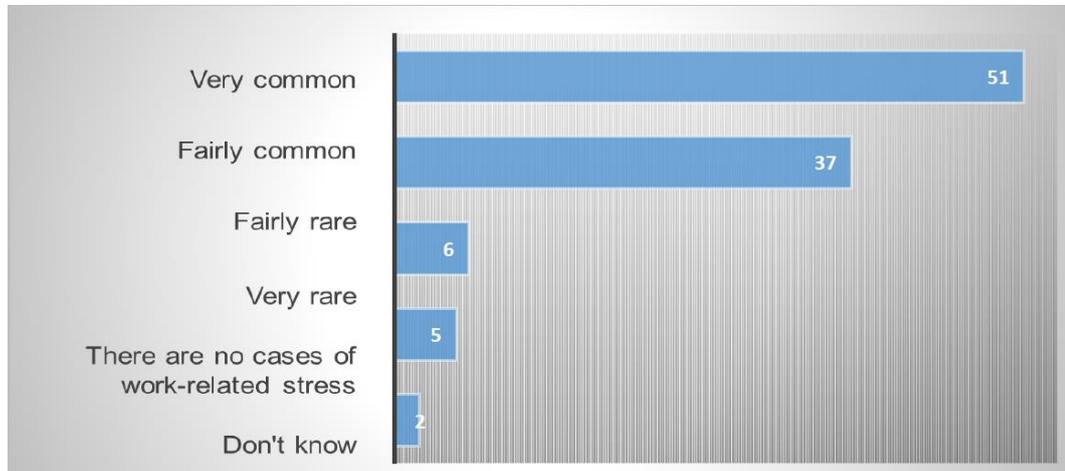
**Table 3.** Research data indicating the figures for the 2015 sick leave in the public sector.

<b>SICK LEAVE IN PUBLIC SECTOR</b>	
23,75%	1-6 days
15,62%	7-13 days
8,79%	14-20 days
5,10%	21-27 days
3,30%	28-34 days
2,50%	35-41 days
0,60%	42 days
2,14%	43 days - 2 months
3,14%	2 months - 6 months
Sick leave without a medical certificate	
13,15%	1 day
9,34%	2 days
6,07%	3 days
4,33%	4 days
2,87%	5 days
2,11%	6 days
1,22%	7 days
1,33%	8 days

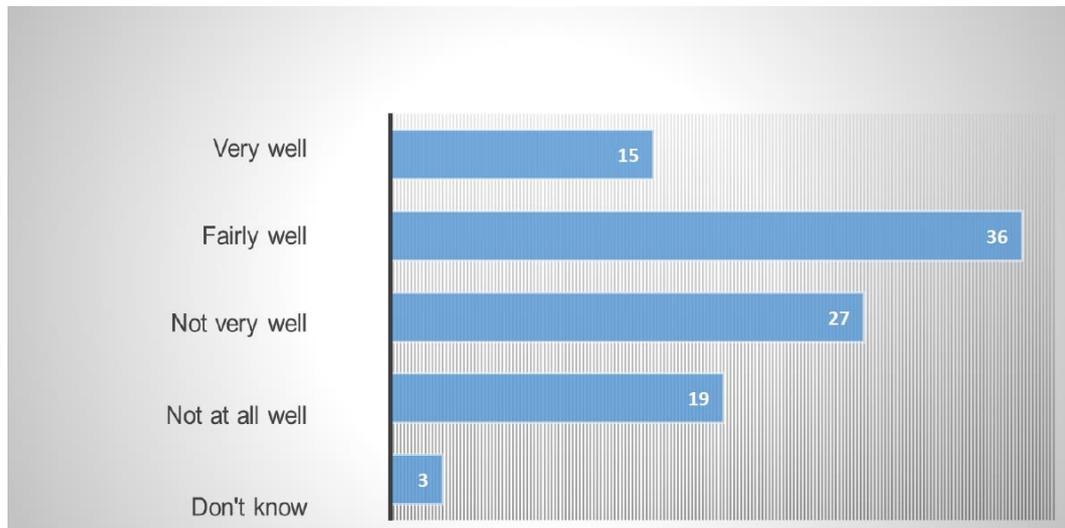
In the Commission for the Protection of Personal Data, the Office of the Commissioner for Administration and the Human Rights (Ombudsman) and the Office of the Commissioner for State Aid Control, the percentages of employees who were absent for up to 13 days were 37.50 %, 21.05 % and 42.86 %, respectively. In the Commission for the Protection of Personal Data, the Office of the Commissioner for Administration and the Office of the Commissioner for State Aid Control, the percentages of employees who were absent for up to 13 days were 37.50 %, 21.05 % and 42.86%, respectively. In the Ministry of Agriculture, the percentages of employees who took leave over 13 days were 62.50 % from the Mines Service and 30.70% from the Veterinary Services. At the Ministry of Interior, a percentage of employees higher than 30 % took leave over 13 days; 35.17 % from the Civil Registry Department and 33.33 % from the Civil Defense.

As indicated in a Pan-European opinion poll on occupational safety and health in 2013 (OSHA, 2013), the majority of participants in Cyprus stated that is very common to experience stress in their workplace (Figure 1) and it is being fairly well

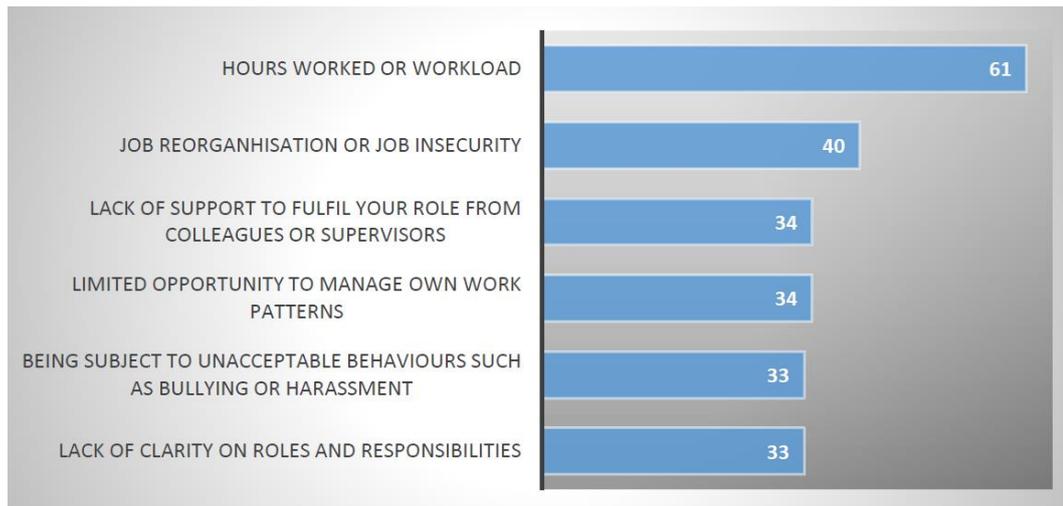
handled (Figure 2). In addition, workers listed the number of working hours or workload as the main cause of work-related stress (Figure 3).



**Figure 1.** Cases of work-related stress in the Republic of Cyprus.



**Figure 2.** Handling cases of work-related stress (Republic of Cyprus).



**Figure 3.** Common causes of work-related stress in the Republic of Cyprus.

Based on EU-OSHA's second Europe-wide establishment report regarding issues of safety, health and well-being of employees across Europe, a percentage of more than 50% of employees considered stress as the principal health and safety risk factor they encounter in their work setting whereas 27% of employees revealed that they have experienced 'stress, depression, anxiety' during the last 12 months (OSHA, 2016).

EU-OSHA's research data revealed that stress in the workplace is the most frequently reported factor of work-related illness, affecting more than 40 million individuals across the EU which consequently has an impact on from workers' functioning in and outside work. Acknowledging this problem, the European Commission developed the Framework on Health and Safety at Work 2014-2020 which contains the main challenges and strategic aims for health and safety at work; the extent to which changes in the work setting impacts physical and mental health and the need for developing and disseminating good practices on avoiding the development of mental health problems (ESENER, 2018).

An important issue investigated by ESENER-2 was the psychosocial risks and their management in the working environments. ESENER-2 showcased that Cyprus is below the EU-28 average regarding the development of an action plan to prevent work-related stress and procedures in place to deal with bullying or harassment and



cases of threats, abuse or assaults. On the one hand, the main reasons for addressing health and safety at the establishment included the maintaining of the organization's reputation and maintaining or increasing productivity, however, the lack of money, was the main factor discouraging establishments to address OSH and psychosocial risk management in Cyprus. In terms of the extent to which workplaces are regularly checked for safety and health as part of a risk assessment, Cyprus was ranked among the last places in comparison to other European countries (ESENER, 2018).

### **United Kingdom**

In the United Kingdom the public sector provides all public services such as education, health care, social care, housing, pensions, justice etc. The management of public sector services is broken down to national (central government), regional (regional government), and local levels (local government). Furthermore, it includes the National Healthcare Services (NHS), further and higher education, and criminal justice. (Oscar Research n.d.)

According to the latest statistics, in September 2017 5.592 million people worked in the public sector which is 17.1% of all people in work. The number of employees in the public sector increased from June to September 2017 by 19,000 employees (Office for National Statistics 2017). In the public sector the three largest areas are the NHS (1.62 million employees), the second is Education (1.52 million employees), and the third is Civil Service (420,000 employees) (Stevenson & Farmer 2017).

A recent independent review prepared by Stevenson and Farmer (2017) overviews the situation of mental wellbeing at work in the UK. Their research shows that every year around 300,000 people lose their jobs with long term mental health problems and around 15% of the working population show symptoms of a mental health condition. They reported that the “sickness absence rates are higher in the public sector compared to the private sector.” The cost of mental ill health per employee is higher in the public sector than in the private sector. ) (Stevenson & Farmer 2017).



According to the NHS Staff Survey 2016 edition, 37% of the NHS workers have experienced work-related stress. Respondents were somewhat positive about their organization's actions on health and wellbeing. 32% of the participants answered that their organization definitely takes positive action on health and wellbeing, and 58% think that there are positive actions to some extent. (NHS 2016)

The number of people experiencing stress is higher in the Education sector. Based on the Education and Support Partnership's Health Survey, 75% of staff working in education have suffered from stress in the last 2 years. When survey participants were asked about the help and guidance they receive from their organizations, almost half of them reported a lack of support from their organizations. Also 72% reported a lack of sufficient guidance about mental health and wellbeing at work. One of the causes of work-related stress is working overtime hours. Education professionals participating in the recent Health Survey reported that 32% of them work more than 51 hours a week. (Education Support Partnership 2017)

## **Finland**

In Finland the public sector includes the state and the municipalities. The state sector includes state administration, universities, the Social Insurance Institution, the Bank of Finland and state-owned enterprises. Municipalities and municipal federations include municipal administration, municipal school administration, service establishments and non-corporate establishments of municipalities and joint municipal boards, such as health centers, hospitals, kindergartens, and municipal enterprises and municipalities. (Statistics Finland)

In Finland, 42 100 people were employed in the municipalities and 72 984 by the state in 2016. The number of employees in the municipal sector has decreased slightly (6,1%), but the number of state employees has decreased dramatically (55,0%) over the past ten years. The major part of the reductions is due to the business administration, the incorporation of agencies and institutions as well as savings and efficiency measures. In addition, postal and telecommunications institutions and state railways were established as commercial enterprises and universities were transferred to the foundations.

The following table describes the situation at the turn of the millennium (Table 4). More than half of the executives in the state were men, while in municipalities and cities more than half of the leaders were women in 1995 and 2000. However, the proportion of female managers increased between study years. In Finland, women are most often employed in health care, commerce, education and other service sectors. Men, on the other hand, work the most in the field of technology, transportation and industry. (Statistics Finland 2016)

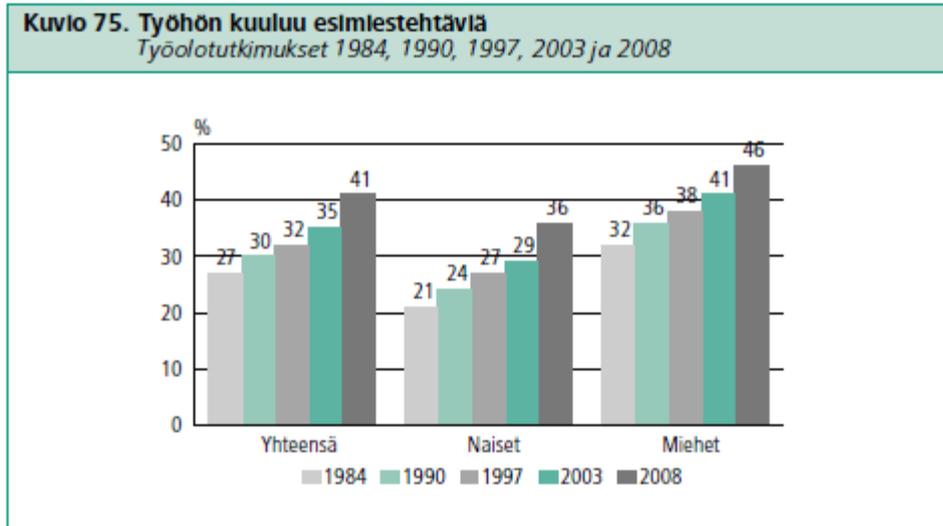
**Table 4.** Public sector managers in 1995 and 2000.

	Frequency			Distribution by gender, %		
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
<b>1995</b>						
<b>State</b>	1 377	2 910	4 287	32,1	67,9	100,0
<b>Municipalities and cities</b>	5 613	5 200	10 813	51,9	48,1	100,0
<b>Total</b>	6 990	8 110	15 100	46,3	53,7	100,0
<b>2000</b>						
<b>State</b>	1 742	3 223	4 965	35,1	64,9	100,0
<b>Municipalities and cities</b>	6 624	6 080	12 704	52,1	47,9	100,0
<b>Total</b>	8 366	9 303	17 669	47,3	52,7	100,0

**Standard classification of Occupations 2001**

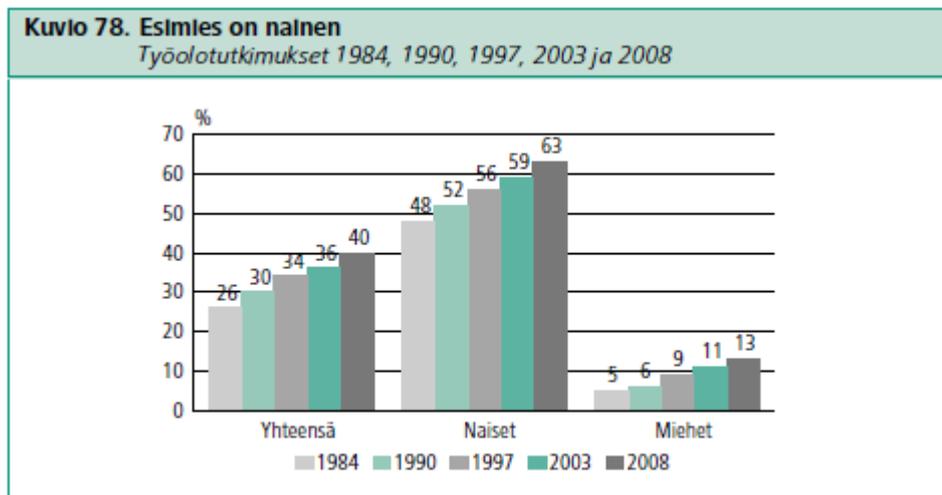
**Source: Employment Statistics**

Many of the wage earners' work involves supervisory tasks and the trend has steadily increased over the decades. There are now over 40 percent of all wage earners who work for another job or share jobs. Increasing has taken place especially for women (Figure 4). (Statistics Finland 2008)



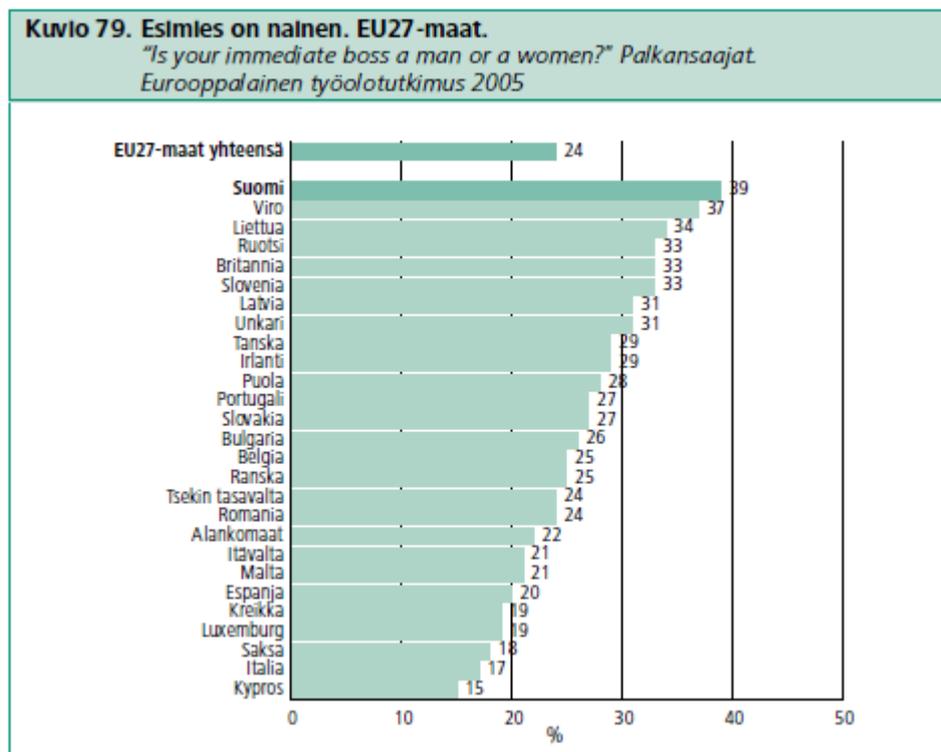
**Figure 4.** Statement: The job involves supervisory tasks (Total = Yhteensä, Women = Naiset, Men = Miehet). Working conditions Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997, 2003 and 2008. Source: Statistics Finland 2008.

Figure 5 shows how many employees have a woman as a supervisor. The number of women as a manager has increased steadily between 1984 and 2008 (Statistics Finland 2008)



**Figure 5.** Statement: The manager is a woman (Total = Yhteensä, Women = Naiset, Men = Miehet). Working conditions Surveys 1984, 1990, 1997, 2003 and 2008. Source: Statistics Finland 2008.

According to international surveys, women's performance in managerial positions is common in Finland. Figure 6 shows how many of the wage earners have a woman as a manager. Finland (39%) has the highest number of women as a supervisor when comparing the results with other EU-countries. Great Britain is ranked fifth (33%), Belgium 25% and Cyprus 15%. (Statistics Finland 2008)



**Figure 6.** Statement: The manager is a woman. EU27 countries. Wage earners. Working conditions Surveys from Europe 2005. Source: Statistics Finland 2008.

Sickness absences are the most common indicator of the economic significance of health and well-being in work-life research. However, studies are concentrated on municipal workers and there is little information in other areas (Laaksonen et al. 2008). Long-term illnesses confirmed by the doctors predict well the health of the staff, but short sickness leave has been found to be a weaker health indicator (Elo, Ervasti and Kuokkanen, 2010).



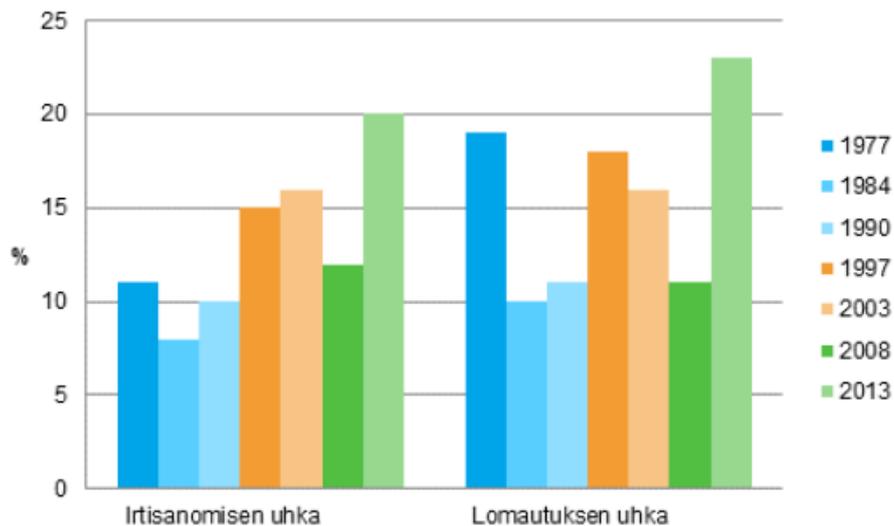
Sickness absences have declined in Finland in the 21st century. Sickness absences have generally been found more common in women than men. In the past year, 63% of women in employment and 60% of working men had been on sick leave. The average number of sick days during the year was 9 working days for women and 8 for men working day. Sickness absences have also decreased in 2005-2013 in women (from 20% to 17%) and in men (from 15% to 12%). In 2013, in women the most common illnesses for absenteeism were: musculoskeletal disorders (7%), mental disorders (2,5%) and circulatory diseases (2,5%), and in males: musculoskeletal disorders (5%), circulatory diseases (2,5%) and mental disorders (1,5%). The relationship between the occupational status and the gender gap in sick leave is limited. Long-term sickness absence are related to income, education, industry and the employer sector, as well as professional title, physical capacity and working conditions (Statistics Finland 2013, Laaksonen et al. 2008, Leinonen et al. 2017).

In recent years, long-term absenteeism has decreased in Finland, the number of sick-allowance recipients and their share of the working-age population. Getting sickness benefit is one of the long-term sickness absences. In 2016, 13,8 million sickness allowances were compensated and the costs accrued thereafter totaled 774 million euros. Most of the sickness allowance was paid (31 %) due to musculoskeletal disorders, which is the most common occupational illness in Finland. (Kela, Web pages, 2017)The absence of sickness is explained by the fairness of the payment of the manager and has been found to reduce the risk of absenteeism. Well-being factors, as work engagement and beneficial working ability, reduce the risk of absenteeism. Managers are less likely to have a sick leave and managerial position decreased the likelihood to have sick leave. (Elo, Ervasti and Kuokkanen, 2010)

Based on the 2005 European Job Survey, work stress in Finland is roughly as high as in the EU-27 average. The quality of Finnish working life compared to other EU countries is good on many criteria, but the Finnish workforce is hard. As many as 77% of Finnish labor work at a very high pace (EU27: 60%). (THL 2015) Mental health problems, especially depression, are common in Finland among workforce. Every fourth of sickness allowance days in Finland are based on mental health reasons. Annually there are more than four million days of sick leave due to mental

health problems. Every third invalidity pensions are granted on psychological grounds. However, the number of invalidity pensions granted for mental health reasons has decreased in the past ten years. In 2016, based on depression 2 900 people were transferred to invalidity pension. The costs of mental health problems are considerable and result in indirect costs due to lost work input and productivity drop. (THL 2015, Eläketurvakeskus 2017)

According to the Workplace Survey 2013, one fifth of employees have perceived the threat of being laid off and nearly one in four were afraid of layoffs (Figure 7). The threats of dismissal and layoff have increased since 1970s. Every fourth of respondents reports that in his / her workplace there has been employees' reductions over the previous three years.



**Figure 7.** The threat of dismissal (irtisanomisen uhka) and the threat of layoff (lomautuksen uhka) in 1977-2013. (Source: Statistics Finland, Työolotutkimus 2013)

According to the Workplace Survey 2013, every third employee was very satisfied with their current job in general, on the social relations of the workplace and on the content of their jobs. In the other study involving supervisors and employees in public sector, nearly 80 % agreed that they were feeling work pleasure and 60-70 % can affect work-related issues, but 30-50 % of respondents have enough time to get their work done. Also 50-70 % of managers and employees think their work is



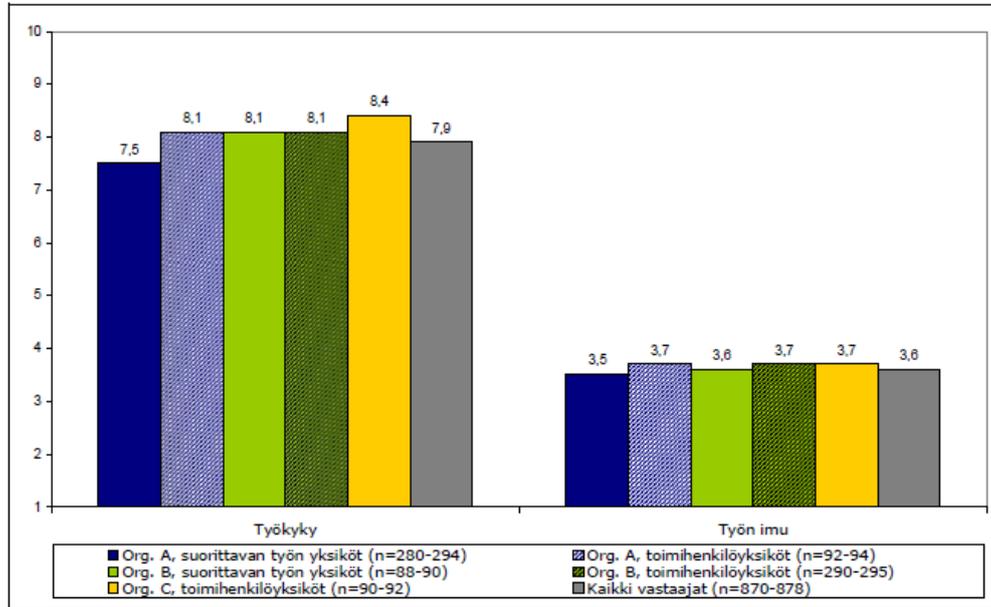
mentally loaded. (Pekkarinen & Pekka 2016) Even half of the employees have experienced mental violence, discrimination and bullying in public sector in 2017. Mental violence and bullying was experienced continually or sometimes mostly from clients or co-workers, but even every fourth has experienced that by the superiors. (Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö 2018)

In an international comparison, Finland is a top priority when employees have been asked about the application of information technology and the prevalence of teamwork. In addition, employees in Finland have the opportunity to train and develop in their work as in other European countries. (Statistics Finland, Working Conditions Survey 2013) In the public sector efforts have been made in the workplace to contribute to the development of know-how and skills. Employees (over 80%) have more opportunities to learn and participate in developing the activities at the workplace. New technology and the working methods are part of the daily routines at workplaces. (Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö 2018)

Work ability consists of the compatibility and balance between the physical and psychological resources and work of human being. The basis for work ability is the physical and mental capacity of human being. Work engagement means a positive emotional and motivational state at work. An experienced employee leaves in the morning usually happy to work, feels his work meaningful and enjoys it. There are three aspects of wellbeing associated with work engagement: energy, dedication and immersion. Figure 8 shows how in different organizations the self-assessed work ability and work engagement were experienced. The work ability varied between 7,5 and 8,4, and was the best seen in staffing units. Instead, the work engagement was relatively low and the results were between 3,5 and 3,7.

Working in public sector often involves expert work which has become more common due to digitalization. Expert work often involves a broad knowledge base and a high level of education. It also includes independence, which means that the employee has the opportunity to influence both the content of the work and the scheduling. Expert work provides flexibility through the use of mobile technology that

provides possibilities to work not only in offices but also while travelling or in public places. In turn flexibility may lead to blur of the boundaries between work and leisure-time and consequently to prolonged working hours.



**Figure 8.** Ability to work (työkyky, scale 0–10) and work engagement (työn imu, scale 1–5) by the organization and the nature of work. (Elo, Ervasti ja Kuokkanen, 2010).

Being in supervisor position was associated with longer working hours. Majority (79 %) of the experts reported that they should always be available for work, and 56% of them tried to react immediately on emails. The use of smartphone was associated with longer working hours and worse wellbeing. Working hours were associated with longer working hours in the following day. Longer working hours predict worse sleep quality and alertness in the following day. Possibility to influence starting and ending times of a work day was associated with better wellbeing. Prolonged working hours are systematically associated with various dimensions of worse wellbeing. (Ropponen et al. 2018)



## **2.2 The use of organizational or system based methods of promoting well-being at work at public sector**

The next chapter gives a picture of the use of organizational or system based methods of promoting well-being at work at public sector in partner countries.

### **2.2.1 National level: national strategies guidelines and programs**

All the partner countries have national level strategies concerning well-being at work. The strategies are based in government programs and mainly carried out through ministries. The ministries are f. ex The Ministry of Labour and Social Insurance with The Department of Labour Inspection (DLI) (Cyprus) or the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (MSAH)/ The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment with Institute for Occupational Health (FIOH)/ The Regional State Administrative Agency (AVI) (Finland). (See Table 5.)

The legislation is in accordance to EU legislation. F. ex. in United Kingdom there is Health and Social Care Act 2012 and in Finland there are several laws to guide well-being a work (MSAH 2016, 8–12):

- Finnish Constitution
- Occupational Safety and Health Act
- The Act on Occupational Safety and Health Enforcement and Cooperation on Occupational Safety and Health at Workplaces
- Employment Contracts Act
- Non-discrimination Act
- Act on the Protection of Privacy in Working Life
- Working Hours Act
- Annual Holidays Act
- Study Leave Act
- Act on Job Alternation Leave
- The Occupational Accidents, Injuries and Diseases Act
- Act on the Conformity of Certain Technical Devices to Relevant Requirements.

When looking at strategies and programs targeted specially to mental health or managers, there are some examples. In Cyprus in 2012, the EU Commission sponsored the Committee of Senior Labour Inspectors (SLIC) to execute a campaign regarding psychosocial risks. Research data in the Republic of Cyprus indicated that the vast majority of employees considered stress as a main risk factor which leads to accidents, sicknesses, damages and absence from work, poor performance and product,



low service quality and high costs to an organisation (SLIC, 2012). It should be noted that in June 2008, the Joint Policy Statement on the Framework Agreement on Work Related Stress was signed between the Social Partners and cosigned by the by the Minister of Labour and Social Insurance, thus, indicating their consensus on implementing the regulations of the Framework Agreement.

Within the framework of Safety and Health at Work Laws of 1996 to 2011, Inspectors in Cyprus are advised to request a risk evaluation on stress hazards during their inspections. However, it should be stressed that despite the fact, the number of Labour inspectors in Cyprus is 22, none of them who participated in the SLIC campaign (9 in total) had competence in psychosocial risks. The inspectors who actively participated in the campaign considered the campaign material and tools very useful not only for the success of the Campaign but also for their every day practices. Moreover, they regarded the campaign a useful means for training in order to further enhance their understanding regarding psychosocial risks. As it was stated by the Inspectors, employers did not seem to pay adequate attention on employees' mental health or take into consideration psychosocial matters in depth.

SLIC 2012 campaign was regarded important by the employees in terms of raising awareness on psychosocial risks in the organisations whereas employers regarded it as important in terms of employees' conceptualisation of how necessary consultation is with the employer when they face psychosocial problems. Additionally, research data revealed that the vast majority of employers readdressed the risk assessment process either to comprise psychosocial risks or to encompass more actions to assess these risks through the means of a questionnaire or through SLIC toolkit. After inspection of the management of psychological risks, the employers proceeded with the following actions: (a) Appointment of experts on psychosocial matters, (b) development of specific questionnaires, (c) train employees on psychosocial risks, (d) introduction of confidential hotline for the personnel, (e) promotion of equality and satisfaction amongst employees with the application of organisational measures i.e. arranging schedules, shifts and leaves and (f) discussion on relative matters during organisational meetings (SLIC, 2012).



In United Kingdom there are specified actions concerning mental health. There have been extensive discussions on mental health on national level. In 2014, the NHS issued a document, “Achieving Better Access to Mental Health Services by 2020” which outlines the vision of achieving equal priority between mental and physical health by 2020. (Williams 2014.) The idea is based on the Government’s Health and Social Care Act 2012, which mentioned the “parity of esteem” principal, which ensures that mental health must have similar priority as physical health (Centre for Mental Health 2018). The Mental Health Taskforce to the NHS in England (2016) issued a report in 2016 on “The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health” which sets priority actions that need to be implemented by the NHS by 2020–2021. There are several organisations, foundations, and charitable organisations dedicated to mental health and helping people who suffer from mental health issues.

In Finland Psychosocial risks or management are not pointed out, but the targets concerning them are integrated to other targets. In the programs there can be seen more stress to employee than manager.



Table 5. National level strategies, guidelines and programs

Belgium	Cyprus	United Kingdom	Finland
<p>Goals until 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promotion of safe and healthy work</li> <li>• strengthen participation in the labour market</li> <li>• strengthen prevention</li> <li>• strengthening the prevention culture</li> </ul>	<p>The Strategy of Cyprus for Safety and Health at Work 2013-2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the use and enhancement of the Organisational agenda</li> <li>• the development of an appropriate Legislative Framework in accordance with the European guidelines</li> <li>• the development of a suitable and adequate Labour Inspection System</li> <li>• the improvement of the functioning of suitable Supporting Institutions</li> <li>• the development of an appropriate Health Surveillance System of the workers</li> <li>• the development of accidents prevention and promotion of Health and Safety culture</li> <li>• the integration of Safety and Health at Work issues into other Policy Areas such as education</li> <li>• the investment in scientific research</li> <li>• meaningful collaboration with the Social Partners and other stakeholders</li> <li>• active engagement in the activities of the European Union (MLSI, 2013b).</li> </ul>	<p>NHS: Achieving Better Access to Mental Health Services by 2020</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• equal priority between mental and physical health by 2020 (Williams 2014)</li> </ul> <p>The Mental Health Taskforce to the NHS in England: The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• priority actions that need to be implemented by the NHS by 2020-2021 (Mental Health Taskforce to the NHS in England 2016).</li> </ul>	<p>Government's Programme 2015–2019</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promotion of health and wellbeing and reducing inequality</li> <li>• support the flexible renewal of Finnish society by a management culture based on trust, interaction and experimentation</li> <li>• with a determined management there will be user-based, one-stop-shop digital public services that improve productivity and efficiency</li> </ul> <p>The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (MSAH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting wellbeing whilst our working life is evolving</li> <li>• By 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the number of occupational diseases will decrease by 10 per cent</li> <li>• the frequency of workplace accidents will decrease by 25 per cent</li> <li>• physical stress caused by work will decrease by 20 per cent</li> <li>• mental stress caused by work will decrease by 20 per cent.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment (MEAE)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The National Working Life Development Strategy</li> </ul> <p>The Finnish Institute for Occupational Health (FIOH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• criterion for a health promotive workplace</li> </ul>



### **2.2.2 Well-being programs, strategies and plans in organizations**

In partner countries there are general national requirements to organisations concerning well-being at work, which set guidelines how the organisations should carry out in a systematic way (See Table 6). The requirements are in legislation or they are recommendations. They are set by government organs (f. ex. The Centre for Occupational Safety) or other actors in the field (f. ex. Local Government Employees).

In organisations the employer is responsible for a welfare policy at work both in Belgium and in Finland. The policy is a documented guide for every workplace in the organisation. In Finland, the psychosocial factors are also taken into account in those policies.

In Belgium Werk.Belgie.be (2017) states, the employers are responsible of a welfare policy at work in Belgium. It includes a risk analysis (an analysis of the presence of dangers and risk factors), recording prevention measures in a global prevention plan, and developing an annual action plan. The employer should also provide an emergency plan, based on procedures adapted to possible dangerous situations. Every employer must have an Internal Service for Prevention and Protection at work, with one or more prevention advisers, that assists the employer to apply the measures of well-being of the employees at work (FOD Werkgelegenheid, Arbeid en Sociaal Overleg 2017). If the company has fewer than 20 employees, the employer may perform the function of prevention advisor himself.

Every internal service must have knowledge about different subjects: occupational safety, occupational medicine, ergonomics, occupational hygiene and the psychosocial aspects of work. If the internal service is unable to meet all legal obligations itself, the employer must additionally call upon an external service for prevention and protection at work. Each company can then make the choice to set up a health surveillance department within the internal service or to call upon an external service for prevention and protection at work. The specific obligations and assignments that can be performed internally and externally depend on the number of employees and the risk employees have.



Tasks of prevention advisers include:

- identifying hazards in the context of the risk analysis, providing advice and formulating proposals for the preparation, implementation and adaptation of a global prevention plan and annual action plan;
- contribute to the analysis of occupational diseases;
- advise on the organization of the workshops and workstations;
- give advice in the context of occupational hygiene;
- elaborate internal emergency plans;
- cooperate with the organization of first aid and assistance to victims of industrial accidents

The presence of confidential advisers ('vertrouwenspersonen') is not mandatory, but strongly recommended, especially in companies where the prevention advisor belongs to the external service for prevention and protection at work (FOD Werkgelegenheid, Arbeid en Sociaal Overleg 2017). The task of the confidential adviser is to support the prevention advisor in the fight against violence, bullying and sexual harassment at work. The confidential adviser takes care of the reception of persons who claim to be a victim and helps them to look for solutions. For an internal employee to become confidential advisor in the organization, a 5-day training course is needed. The Government of Flanders developed a program to prevent work-related stress and burnout, existing of 10 elements (Informatie Vlaanderen 2017). (See Table 6.)

In Finland the municipalities have their own wellbeing programs or human resource strategies to promote wellbeing among the employees. The strategies are based on common values and overall vision of the future. It is a document to guide every workplace in the municipality. The purpose is to support and guide the employees and also the decision makers to fulfill the vision. These programs or strategies mainly treat all employees as one group, but there can be special guidelines for the managers. Although managers' wellbeing is usually not separated from the workers wellbeing. (Look f.ex. Mustasaari Strategy for personnel 2014–2017, The Espoo Story 2017–2021, The Most Functional City in the World: Helsinki City Strategy 2017–2021).



The State has its own Kaiku occupational services to support development of the wellbeing and smooth functioning of state administration organisations and working communities. Kaiku services are partner in developing organisational management, the efficiency and productivity of working community, and wellbeing and occupational health and safety. They provide procedures to aid those working for the state in promoting longer and less interrupted working careers and in preventing working community problems and occupational disability. (State Treasury 2018.)

In Cyprus in terms of evaluation, based on the Safety and Health at Work Laws of 1996 to 2011, a Safety Officer needs to be appointed for each establishment who employs more than two hundred people. The main duties of the safety officer can be seen on table X and they are parallel f. ex. the Finnish system, although in Finland the Occupational Safety and Health Administration concerns every workplace.



Table 6. Well-being programs, strategies and plans in organizations

	Belgium	Cyprus	Finland
General demands and recommendations for organisations	<p>Internal Service for Prevention and Protection at work at every workplace (20 employees or more)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one or more prevention advisers</li> <li>• assists the employer to apply the measures of well-being of the employees at work</li> <li>• &lt;20 employee: the employer may perform the function of prevention advisor himself</li> <li>• confidential advisers strongly recommended (FOD Werkgelegenheid, Arbeid en Sociaal Overleg, sd)</li> </ul>	<p>Safety Officer needs to be appointed for each establishment who employs more than two hundred people.</p>	<p>Occupational safety and health policy required according to Occupational Safety and Health Act (738/2002, Section 9)</p> <p>Acts concerning cooperation in municipalities (449/2007) and in state's offices and institutions (1233/2013)</p> <p>Recommendations from KT Local Government Employees</p> <p>The Centre for Occupational Safety (COS, 2015)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The employer has to monitor the healthiness and safety of the work environment and work methods, employees' wellbeing and safety and monitor sick leaves</li> <li>• The promotive actions for wellbeing are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proper orientation</li> <li>• Development discussion</li> <li>• Agreed working hours</li> <li>• Regular unit meetings</li> <li>• Cooperation with the occupational safety and health officers</li> <li>• Evaluation and management of risks</li> <li>• Functioning occupational health service</li> <li>• Investments in actions towards maintaining the working competence (COS 2015, 10.)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>



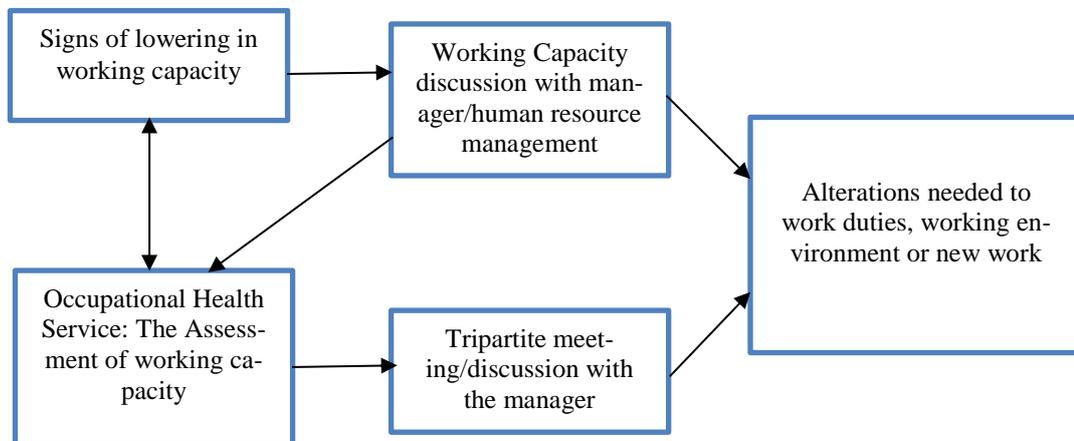
<p>Strategies and programs</p>	<p>The employers are responsible of a welfare policy at work in Belgium. Includes a risk analysis (an analysis of the presence of dangers and risk factors), recording prevention measures in a global prevention plan, and developing an annual action plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• www.beswic.be shows different programs and plans for improving well-being at work</li> <li>• a campaign for healthy workspaces, to handle dangerous substances, or a free seminar of good practices in ergonomics</li> </ul>	<p>Good practice competitions since 2005 Campaigns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting Health at Work in an Enlarged Europe (6th Initiative) 2005</li> <li>• Work in Harmony with Life - Europe in Movement 2009–2010</li> </ul> <p>Healthy Work for Patients With Chronic Illness 2013–2013, a good practice guide</p>	<p>Municipal or states well-being programs or human resource strategies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• based on common values and overall vision of the future</li> <li>• a document to guide every workplace in the organisation</li> <li>• The purpose is to support and guide the employees and also the decision makers to fulfil the vision</li> <li>• mainly treat all employees as one group, but there can be special guidelines for the managers</li> <li>• managers' wellbeing is usually not separated from the workers wellbeing.</li> </ul>
<p>Other</p>	<p>The Government of Flanders: <b>A program to prevent work-related stress and burnout</b> (InformatieVlaanderen, sd).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Addressing stress and burn-out as part of the welfare policy</li> <li>• Sensitizing, informing and supporting</li> <li>• An active presence policy</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Attention to health</li> <li>• Measuring and reporting</li> <li>• Offers of trainings</li> <li>• Encouraging internal mobility</li> <li>• Prevention at the organizational level</li> <li>• Individual assistance</li> </ul>	<p><b>Duties of the safety officer</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• encompass the investigation</li> <li>• of issues of safety and health</li> <li>• the inspection of workplace</li> <li>• identification and evaluation of the dangers and encountered in the working place</li> <li>• organisation and surveillance of the Risk and Management System</li> <li>• preparation of risk assessment reports</li> <li>• engagement in the meetings of the Safety Committee</li> <li>• train the enterprise's workers on health and safety at work.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Criterion for good management (FIOH 2014)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Trust and respect</li> <li>2. Cooperation and networks</li> <li>3. Variety (multiplicity) and individuality</li> <li>4. Skills and development</li> <li>5. Renewal and participation</li> </ol>

## 2.3 The use of training methods in mental and work related wellbeing for public sector managers

The next chapter gives a picture about the use of training methods in mental and work related wellbeing for public sector managers in partner countries.

### 2.3.1 Use of traditional methods (training programs, managerial supervision of work, mentoring, competence improving activities, well-being surveys, well-being programs in organizations)

As you can see in Table 7, the traditional training methods are training programs containing lectures, group activities and individual training. Training is mainly focused to all employees; managers are not necessarily pointed out. In Belgium and Finland there are quite similar traditional methods in use at workplaces like performance appraisals, mentoring, work competence improving or maintaining activities, well-being surveys and organizational well-being programs.



**Figure 9.** Early Support Process Model (COS 2015, 13).

One example of one type of well-being program in Finnish work places is Early Support/Caring Model. The model is taken to action when there are signs of lowering working capacity caused by some reason. Depending on the issue, the employer and employee agree on the actions and cooperating partners. The state has its own corresponding model for early caring (State Treasury 2018). (See Figure 9.)



In Cyprus, the training leans on Health and Safety Offices but also The Occupational Health and Safety Training Centre (OHST). During the period 2007–2012, the DLI developed or participated in a wide range of seminars, workshops, training programmes organised by social partners. Particularly, the DLI engaged in 500 events. In these events, approximately 18,000 people have participated. During 2007–2011, the Human Resource Development Authority and European Funds have sponsored around 2,350 programs on Safety and Health at Work involving more than 27,500 people.

In terms of Inspectors' training in Cyprus, the Strategy on safety and health at work 2007–2012 revealed the need for improving the quality of the inspections. Therefore, through the development of a systematic and more effective training scheme, inspectors engaged in training courses both in Cyprus and abroad and attended interdepartmental educational programs regarding the ways in which inspections could be improved and engaged in exchange visits with other Member countries of the European Union aiming at obtaining and enhancing their knowledge and experience on safety matters. The adequacy of the Labor inspection system is imperative for the more efficient implementation of the legislation regarding the protection of workers' wellness.



**Table 7. The use of training methods**

	Belgium	Cyprus	Finland
Traditional methods	<p><b>Training programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Different training programs in the public sector are offered</li> <li>• Trainings offered to organizations by Obelisk are strengthening resilience, dealing with stress, how to guide my employees with stress, handling conflicts</li> <li>• Most of the trainings with subject of well-being are designed for employees, not for supervisors.</li> <li>• The focus is mostly on the well-being of the employees, and not on the well-being of the supervisors.</li> </ul> <p><b>Managerial supervision of work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In performance appraisals, also well-being is often discussed with the supervisor.</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• managers more often have individual coaching instead of training programs.</li> <li>• the job of prevention advisors and confidential advisers is to focus on well-being of employees at work, is a type of mentoring</li> </ul> <p><b>Work competence improving/maintaining activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• can be found especially for managers in the federal government</li> <li>• Top Management Program (OFO, 2013)</li> </ul>	<p><b>Presentations</b> given by Health and Safety Officers</p> <p>The Occupational Health and Safety Training Centre (OHST)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• dissemination of information, education and training of employers and employees</li> <li>• developing targeted training program and preparing material such as manuals and brochures</li> </ul> <p>Main activities OHST</p> <p>a) Development or co-development with other concerned parties of training and instructional programmes, seminars, lectures and other awareness raising activities.</p> <p>b) Diagnosis of personnel learning needs and enactment of training programmes of existing Officers / Inspectors of the Department within the framework of the developed Action Plan</p> <p>c) Training of newly appointed Officers / Inspectors of the Department of Labour Inspection</p> <p>d) Establishment of the European Week for Safety and Health at Work</p>	<p><b>Training programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• free training programs directed to all work-places</li> <li>• training programs in public sector organisations are mainly provided by occupational health services (group activities f. ex. quitting smoking, tackling obesity and managing stress)</li> </ul> <p><b>Managerial supervision of work</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• performance appraisals (development discussions) are very common in Finnish workplaces.</li> <li>• The evaluation of performance is common especially in public sector and in large organisations (state 93 % of employees are evaluated regularly, municipal sector 84 % evaluated. (TEM 2018, 72.)</li> </ul> <p><b>Mentoring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• used both in private and public organizations both for managers and employees</li> <li>• often combined with or next to orientation to new work</li> <li>• in formal mentoring process, there is an agreement how the process is meant to be.</li> </ul> <p><b>Work competence improving/maintaining activities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a Finnish concept and innovation</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With coaching, personal skills are improved, and people learn about new ideas and best practices.</li> </ul> <p><b>Well-being surveys</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Flemish workability monitor</li> <li>• Welzijnswijzer: screening, observation, analysis and expertise of the well-being at work and integration of the data and results</li> </ul> <p><b>Well-being programs in organizations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organizations have different programs on well-being</li> <li>• Organisations stimulate healthy habits by free offers</li> </ul>	<p>e) Organisation of Information and Inspection Campaigns developed within the framework of the Senior Labour Inspectors Committee of the European Union.</p> <p>f) Development, publication and dissemination of informative material for increasing awareness among employers and employees</p> <p>g) Addressing issues of safety and health into other Policy Areas, such as Education.</p> <p>h) Development or co-development of Competitions aiming to raise awareness on health and safety issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• means all actions with which the employer and the employee in cooperation with other organisations at the workplace try to promote and support every person's work and operating capability in working life in every stage of working career. (Perttinä 2006.)</li> <li>• If the employee's capability to work is in danger, employee can attend work related rehabilitation, there can be measurements to shape the work to fit the employee's capabilities better or part-time pension programs.</li> </ul> <p><b>Well-being surveys</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• national regular surveys (TEM/MEAE): <i>Working conditions barometer</i></li> <li>• In organisations well-being surveys are a common way to regularly (once a year or less frequently) scan the well-being situation</li> </ul> <p><b>Well-being programs in organizations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the common goals and strategies for well-being at work</li> <li>• the activities and services employees are entitled to or what kind of financial support they can get (f. ex. Organisation's own activities like field trips, get-togethers, festivals, bills for cultural events and sports activities, discounts, hours employees can spend in working capacity improving activities</li> <li>• Early Support/Caring Model</li> </ul>
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<p>Innovative methods</p>	<p><b>Innovative ways</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• text messages with reminders</li> <li>• innovative methods for coaching: joining a car drive, conversation by telephone</li> </ul> <p><b>E-learning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The website of work in Belgium shows a project to realise in 2018-2019, consisting of 5 e-learning modules of welfare at work</li> <li>• Webinars + a deepening traditional training program (f. ex. dealing with burn-out of employees)</li> </ul> <p><b>Gamification</b></p> <p>Online interactive Risk Assessment (OIRA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a tool on the web to make risk analyses of health and safety at work (EU-OSHA, sd).</li> </ul> <p>PreventieCoach Arbo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a tool for managers, prevention workers and more, to optimize working conditions, together with others (Burggraeve, 2016). Other apps exist for more specific health subjects</li> </ul>	<p>Digital Educational Material on Safety and Health at Work (free)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides information to the citizen, every employee and entrepreneur</li> <li>• issues related to safety and health at work in order to develop safety consciousness and ability to assess workplace risks</li> <li>• combination of text, image, sound, simulations and educational films</li> </ul> <p>DLI website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• guides for employers and employees regarding the creation of a mentally healthy workplace</li> </ul> <p>Inspectors' training courses</p>	<p><b>E-learning</b></p> <p>The Centre for Occupational Safety</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Several practical web-based programs or tools to develop working life</li> <li>• Contains webinars, digital publications, self-assessment tools, surveys</li> </ul> <p><b>Measurement tools</b></p> <p>National Institute for Health and Welfare (FIOH)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a list of 100 measurement tools (TOIMIA)</li> </ul> <p><b>Gamification</b></p> <p><b>Games</b> to coach managerial skills and skills in well-being at work (board games, digital games)</p> <p><b>Apps or computer programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to encourage to have motion brakes during the work day</li> <li>• for psychological well-being</li> <li>• to talk about drugs</li> </ul>
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### 2.3.2 Use of innovative methods (e-learning, gamification)

There are also innovative methods in use in partner countries. The summary can be seen in Table 7 in previous chapter.

#### **Belgium**

In Belgium many options with technology exist, but they are only used to a limited extent. For example, to prevent trainings to be forgotten, text messages with reminders from information of the training can be sent. Another example is personal coaching. Coaches mostly prefer to do this in real life. Due to a lack of time of the person being coached, it can be hard or impossible to meet up. Here, innovative methods can be used. For example, joining a car drive to have a coaching conversation, or having the conversation by telephone. Some coaches do this, but only when they already met before in real life.

**E-learning:** Engender asbl (2015) states in a summary of trainings of welfare at work that ‘Innovation can be stimulated more through E-learning’. The website of work in Belgium shows a project to realise in 2018-2019, consisting of 5 e-learningmodules of welfare at work (Federale Overheidsdienst Werkgelegenheid, Arbeid en Sociaal Overleg, 2018). Webinars are seminars on the internet. It is an easy method, because it can be looked at while in a break or at a quiet moment, and in parts. These webinars work well as starting points. After watching the webinar, those interested can follow a deepening traditional training program. An example of a webinar is one of (preventive) dealing with burn-out of employees (Inom Bedienden Vlaanderen, 2017). Kluwer offers a training on how to create e-learning and deploy it in the well-being policy (Wolters Kluwer België, 2018). This shows that the use of e-learning will probably increase in the future.

**Gamification:** OiRA is an Online interactive Risk Assessment offered by an agency of the European Union. It is a tool on the web to make risk analyses of health and safety at work (EU-OSHA, sd). It is hard to find Belgian applications, which shows the necessity. A Dutch app however was found, called ‘PreventieCoach Arbo’. The app is a tool for managers, prevention workers and more, to optimize working conditions, together with others (Burggraeve, 2016). The app has information, e-learning, some models, movies, checklists and more. Other apps exist



for more specific health subjects, like Twilight, an app that protects eyes of employees when working at the computer, or Move, an app that makes employees move more often (AXA, 2018).

### **Cyprus**

In Cyprus In terms of informative material, the Digital Educational Material on Safety and Health at Work has been developed to provide information to the citizen, every employee and entrepreneur on the important issues related to safety and health at work in order to develop safety consciousness and ability to assess workplace risks. This Digital Educational Material on Safety and Health at Work is called "e-gnosis". This educational material, which is available for free use and can be used at a time and place that suits everyone, is accessible through the e-Gnosis Productivity Center e-learning system. The combination of text, image, sound, simulations and educational films ensures easy and quick understanding and assimilation of the subject. In addition, the system offers self-assessment with exercises and other essays.

In the DLI website interested parties can find guides for employers and employees regarding the creation of a mentally healthy workplace. Amongst those guides, is the guide referring to Economic Implications of Mental Health which was developed by the ENWHP (2013) and translated into Greek Language. What is more, within the framework of the strategy on safety and health at work 2007-2012, issues of safety and Health at Work in the Public Sector were addressed through the development of a Guide on Organization and Management of Health as well as through the training of Safety Representatives and Safety Officers in the Cyprus Academy of Public Administration and Productivity Centre.

## Finland

The Centre for Occupational Safety offers several practical web based programs or tools to develop working life (See Figure 10).



Figure 10. Practical programs or tools provided by COS (2018).



The THL (National Institute for Health and Welfare, FIOH 2018) has a list of 100 measurement tools (TOIMIA) to measure competence. To mention some examples: AHA Assisting Hand Assessment, AMPS, Assessment of Motor and Process Skills, Bergen Burnout Indicator 15, Elderly Mobility Scale, EMS GHQ-12, 12-item General Health Questionnaire, SOFAS - Social and Occupational Functioning Assessment Scale. All the measuring instruments and their operating instructions are available on web page to print (<http://www.thl.fi/toimia/tietokanta/mit-tari/tulokset/>).

There are some commercial products available, which aim to support well-being at work. Muutostaito (Changeskills Games) is an organisation, which offers mainly board games to coach managers and employees. They have f.ex. game for coaching the managers managerial skills (Leadership Game) and skills in well-being at work (Well-being at Work Game). (<http://changeskillsgames.com/>). There are also other service providers with the same coaching-game idea ([www.ahaavision.com](http://www.ahaavision.com), [www.propeia.fi](http://www.propeia.fi), [www.rehtipeli.fi](http://www.rehtipeli.fi)).

The companies, which offer digital games are f.ex. PlayGain with the game suitable also for public sector: Productive Leadership (<http://playgain.eu/en/game/>). Smart Moves offers health related mobile games ([www.smartmoves.fi](http://www.smartmoves.fi)).

There are web programs or apps to encourage to have motion breaks during the work day. These are quite broadly used in public sector workplaces. Examples for these are Cuckoo Workout (<https://www.cuckooworkout.com/en/>) and Break Pro by Ergo Pro (<https://www.ergopro.fi/ergopro/break-pro-break-exercise-program>).

There are also some applications or computer programs for psychological well-being. Oiva is available for both mobile and computer use to ease stress, uplift the mood and find more meaningfulness to life (<https://oivamieli.fi/>). For young people to talk about drugs there is a free web game at [www.nuortenlinkki.fi/hukkaputki](http://www.nuortenlinkki.fi/hukkaputki). Finnish Association for Mental Health offers several different kinds of games for all age groups (<https://www.mielenterveysseura.fi/en>).



### 3 FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW RESULTS

The focus group interviews were conducted as follows:

**Table 8.** Focus Group Interviews.

Partner country	Date	Time	Number of participants
Belgium	?	?	?
Cyprus	31st January, 2018	12.00–16.00	12
United Kingdom	9 <sup>th</sup> March 2018	9.00–11.00	9
Finland	13 <sup>th</sup> & 15 <sup>th</sup> February 2018	14.00-16.00	3 + 3

The focus group interviews were described that there was a friendly atmosphere; participants were open and curious to hear each other’s examples. Participants were quite talkative, enthusiastic and interested in the topic, and contributed to each other’s comments. In some cases, there were couple of participants who dominated the discussions, others were more in the background, however, and everyone contributed to the discussion with their own experiences.

#### 3.1 Managers wellbeing in work

The participants were asked to describe wellbeing at work. They mainly described wellbeing at work with positive indicators (e.g., communication, and ways of achieving them positively, good work-life balance). There was one participant who also mentioned some negative indicators (staff absence, stress level).

The thoughts can also be categorized in three: *shared values at the work place, person-related issues and sense of community*. The shared values were sincerity/openness f.ex. as open handling of conflicts, communication, trust among coworkers, balance between objectives, fairness, engaged workforce with their tasks and ways of achieving them positively and possibilities to influence. The personal issues were a good feeling at work, a feeling of success, a feeling of coping, happiness level, a good recovery from work and a good balance between work and free time. The sense of community was shown by supporting others and the whole



work place acted in the same direction. There were humor, same spirit, and getting along with others.

The participants described the state of managers' wellbeing by *personal reaction*, *gender-related issues and situational factors*. The managers work was seen hard and the workload increasing. They suffered of constant interruptions. The managers were tended to hide their own situation although there were unpleasant situations, harassment and bullying. They thought that it was a part of the deal. In Cyprus many of managers die soon after retirement, because they have been released from the psychological stress and the tension that comes with it. There were also a lack of professional satisfaction. There were different ways to cope depending on whether the manager was male or female (come up in Finland). Female managers were seen conscientious foot soldiers, who lengthen the day, are flexible and do not delegate. When the situation escalates, the female manager takes authoritative methods in use. The male manager delegates, stays cool and goes home at normal hours. The situational factors were connected to outside pressures like patients' relatives, long distances, public accountability and legislation, bureaucracy, difficulties to reward the employees, constant changes, lack of evaluation, increased competition for secondment (C) uncertainty in connection to the social and health care reform (F). On the other hand there were also a sense of satisfaction and feeling of good wellbeing at work.

The challenges for managers in Cyprus were that there is no control in the public sector. An important problem is the lack of support from above. Many times the manager must manage a crisis that is not his/her responsibility. For anything that happens, the manager has to act and if something goes wrong, it is the manager's fault. It was also mentioned: "We are captured in the image of the public worker, the system pressures us, there is significant competition and people can't escape this situation." In Cyprus there needs to be a better structure for promotions. According to participants, the law makers do not create laws for protecting the managers. The positions are permanent and there is no removing a person if they are not fit for the job. The decisions are taken without consideration of the needs of the managers. Many managers do secretarial work instead of what they are meant to do. Many times there is no fixed set of rules about how things should be operated.



Respect is not often found in many sectors. In many cases, the qualifications of a person are not considered or exploited for the better of a tasks. In combination with the constant changes in policy, and educational policy, there is no budget to help the managers and workers in the working space. The managers are required to do a vast amount of things that are not required to do, it is not in their job. This created additional stress. Collaboration is lacking at all levels of public sector. It is important to acknowledge peoples multiple identities and in order to be able to express these multiple identities, there needs to be training. There is a lot of judgment because workers and managers need to behave in particular ways. For example, “If one day I go to work and I am not ok, I have to keep a good face so that I am politically correct.”

### **3.2 Straining/stress factors in work**

The stress factors in managers’ work had similar features in all partner countries but also differences. The similar straining factors were budget pressures and saving, which did not always allow delivering high quality. There was increasing load of work and responsibilities, difficulties or lack of communication, and time pressures with tight deadlines. (See Table 9.)

In Belgium there were also mentioned that a managers’ function is dependent of political decisions: managers in the public sector have a lower sense of control. There is also a need to define jobs because of multitasking.

In Cyprus there come up quite serious questions like deadlines. There was lack of training for more effective management at work (time management, crisis management, etc.). New tasks, that needed training, but the employee needed to handle independently, because there were no time for managers to properly guide their employees. Competition among managers and employees within the same work place was common.

In United Kingdom the focus group participants brought up as straining factors conflicting priorities, supporting others and protecting yourself, being a good listener but managing to be productive and external influences and family relationships.



Table 9. Straining factors in managerial work

Belgium	Cyprus	United Kingdom	Finland
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fixed government budgets: f. ex. Schools are ‘punished’ for growing, work has to be done by less employees</li> <li>• Quality assurance: tight budgets don’t always allow them to deliver high quality</li> <li>• A managers’ function is dependant of political decisions: managers in the public sector have a lower sense of control</li> <li>• There is a need to define jobs: multitasking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deadlines</li> <li>• Increasing load of work and responsibilities</li> <li>• Lack of training for more effective management at work (time management, crisis management, etc.)</li> <li>• New tasks that need training but the employee needs to handle independently</li> <li>• No time for managers to properly guide their employees</li> <li>• Competition among managers and employees within the same work place</li> <li>• Lack of communication in some cases</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conflicting priorities</li> <li>• Tight deadlines</li> <li>• Budget pressure</li> <li>• Supporting others and protecting yourself</li> <li>• Being a good listener but managing to be productive</li> <li>• External influences, family relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Day-to-day management straining factors:</b> tight schedules, human resource management, information technology problems, constant interruptions, long distances, increasing workload and saving. Human resource management was seen very time consuming. Some of the employees did not have their focus in work or they did not understand the authority position of the manager. There were troublesome situations, gossips, lack of information, cultural differences and exaggeration of situations</li> <li>• <b>Structural straining factors:</b> linked to difficulties in communication, bureaucracy, unnecessary and overlapping duties, lack of the total view, lack of possibilities to influence, outside threats and ongoing changes. Working time went to writing reports (partly seen unnecessary). Difficult to see how different actions were connected to the wholeness of the service. In social and health care there were also threat coming from the clients and their relatives.</li> <li>• <b>Factors connected to managers’ personal situation:</b> the tendency to take work at home, flexibility with work hours and lack of time with tight schedules. There was no time to stop to evaluate or develop the operations.</li> </ul>



In Finland, the participants' views can be seen in Table 9. The discussion could be categorized in *day-to-day management straining factors*, *structural straining factors* and *factors connected to managers' personal situation*. Especially the human resource management was seen very time consuming. There were troublesome situations, gossips, lack of information, cultural differences and exaggeration of situations. In structural straining factors it was difficult to see how different actions were connected to the wholeness of the service.

The straining factors had impact on *the contents of managers' duties and also on manager him/herself*. The impact on the duties were constant saving, tight frames of the actors and increasing concern about the wellbeing of the personnel. The managers had to broaden their duties outside their own expertise, which caused multi-tasking and problems with the quality of work. Personally, the managers suffered problems in their own wellbeing, which reflected also to the coworkers. Saving caused practices, which were experienced as degrading. The managers felt also uncertainty because of the large future reform. Mentally stress can contribute to burn-out, absence, low productivity, poor communication. Stress also manifests itself in the body physically by having migraines, back pain, being run down, getting colds.

### 3.3 Resource factors in work

The participants named supportive directions at work. Organisations' and managers' practices to promote wellbeing at work are:

In **Belgium**, the participants mentioned a shift to a horizontal organisational structure and job rotation. These will create a common responsibility. During busy times, colleagues will be able to help others. It also causes a higher participation rate and a sense of control. According to most managers, this is related to the competence policy: put the right people in the right jobs. They therefore engage in career guidance and talent support.

Job rotation causes extra stress for managers, though. For ex. when someone needs to be replaced, when – consequently – someone else has to do the other person's job, when someone new needs to be trained. Wellbeing does seem to be approached



systematically: for ex. year plan CPBW. Furthermore, managers bring up risk analyses: questionnaires and surveys that reveal points of improvement. These points are calls for action. A third method is classic education and training: for ex. a training coaching leadership style, recognizing symptoms of burn-out, mindfulness. More generally, they also mention a cultural switch and the importance of an open communication during stressful times. Informal moments go along with that (for ex. after work activity).

In **Cyprus** there were not many, as there are significant obstacles. Participants did not mention any actions taken by their organizations for wellbeing. The only thing mentioned was trainings in different subjects, but nothing related to wellbeing.

In strategic level there wasn't any comments regarding actions at the strategic level. In practical level, collaboration is encouraged among colleagues. However, whether this will be done or not, is a different thing, as one participant had mentioned.

In **United Kingdom** participants discussed that money has an important role in this question. They reported that there is not enough money in the public sector to spend on stress management and mindfulness. Although, other participants argued that the private sector is tightening its budget and at least there is budget for staff development in the public sector. Participants agreed that it could be difficult to access help through workplaces. One participant mentioned that if someone needs support, they have to go through HR and that they need to be able to recognize the need of support they have.

In **Finland** managers got support from *their work community, from management system and from work itself*. The work community support was support from the supervisor. It was humor, peer support, respect and openness. The management system supported mainly in official meetings, although it was not experienced very effective. The work itself gave satisfaction being versatile, interesting, independent and free. They got to know new people and had inspiring cooperation outside their own unit.



The things regarded as promotive in mental wellbeing and health were *analyzing person's own issues, actions on free time and factors concerning working*. The participants brought into discussion how important it is for a person to examine and analyze his/her own actions. It is important to have a dialog with coworkers and supervisors, to think in a positive and merciful way and be thankful for things that are fine. It was also seen important that people take care of their health with healthy habits. Peoples' actions on their free time can support their work. They can have a hobby they like and get their mind out of work. Especially at continuous work is important to have hobbies, which start and end. By that, you can get a feeling, that something is finished and complete.

The factors, which are supportive at work, are possibilities to divide the work in parts e.g. doing one thing at a time, to read the email in certain moments and make conscious choices to do nothing. The work gave them interesting things to do, independent planning possibilities, flexibility and freedom and quite certain living.

The main practical efforts in the organization to promote mental health and wellbeing were *development actions, maintenance of personnel's wellbeing and maintenance of sense of community*. Developing actions were traditional education, common development days and conducting surveys and reports like work wellbeing surveys or reports to the local authorities. Education itself was regarded as sign of respect and meaning. Personnel's wellbeing was taken care by working capacity maintaining programs. As a part of those programs, the personnel had different services they could use like notes to buy exercise services or culture events, free food, free swimming possibilities and gym. There were possibilities for personal discussions with supervisor or occupational health professionals and group activities. As a part of safety at work, there were risk evaluations.

The workplaces maintained the sense of community by organizing common celebrations and summer parties although the problem was how everyone had the possibility to take part. In addition, the open-plan office with common coffee room was a good experience. The sense of community was also built with inside humor and weekly meetings with brunch.



For the managers the situation was not so good when looking at the activities they got from their workplace. The change in working life has affected the managers' situation most. Their own means to promote their wellbeing were *free time activities, examining their own attitudes, family and work itself*. At free time, they spend their time with hobbies like knitting, enjoying the nature, doing joinery, physical exercise and forest work and taking care of their pets. They were convinced that everyone can make right choices for themselves by examining their own actions, being thankful and exploring other aspects of life than work. They also spent time with their family members. The work itself gave them interesting problems to solve.

### **3.4 Training needs and methods of mental wellbeing**

#### **Training needs**

The participants gave their ideas about training needs in mental wellbeing (See table 10).

In Belgium, exercise at work may be promoted (based on mindfulness). Managers also underline the importance of a good implementation of this kind of matters. Knowing the techniques and knowing what to do, is one thing. Really applying them is another. A training should focus on how to transfer the techniques as good as possible.

In United Kingdom, some participants mentioned that the process of realising the importance of being mindful needs to be internal because that is how real commitment happens. A few managers emphasised the importance of getting outside and being practical, rather than explaining it in an office environment.

In Finland they suggested *training in time management, skills to meet people, self-knowledge, coping at work*. They also wanted *management education* and *new pedagogic approach* like problem based learning. Time management included system thinking, proper use of the email, grouping the work tasks and concentrating in one task at the time. Skills needed to meet people were psychological knowledge of human behavior, how to solve the conflicts without interfering own feelings to the subject, how to meet aggressive people and how to remain the distance.



Self-knowledge was regarded as knowing one’s weaknesses and strengths and accepting them. This was seen as a prerequisite to meet other people. Capability to be present at situations was also important. Coping at work was sometimes hard when there were worker-related problems. There was a danger to go too deep in those problems.

In Cyprus the focus group participants had the opinion that training needs to be deeper and not rather shallow and horizontal. Change does not take place in 1–2 years. It takes time. Training/education and society need to be aligned. Needs education for social issues, needs to be training for parents, etc.

Table 10. Training needs in partner countries

Belgium	Cyprus	United Kingdom	Finland
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exercise at work may be promoted (based on mindfulness)</li> <li>• A good implementation of this kind of matters</li> <li>• A common responsibility should be created when dealing with wellbeing.</li> <li>• A need for guidance paths that deal with ‘how to let go’, ‘dare to delegate’ and ‘learn to say no’.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training for social issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The process needs to be seen internal</li> <li>• Practical things outside the organisation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training in time management</li> <li>• Skills to meet people</li> <li>• Self-knowledge</li> <li>• Coping at work</li> <li>• Management education</li> <li>• New pedagogic approach</li> </ul>

The opinions on training methods or the quality of training can be seen in Figure 11.

In United Kingdom the participants expressed, that face to face training can probably work better because if it is online, it can be the first thing to get dropped when managers are busy. If it is online, it needs to be interactive and engaging. Some participants preferred a blended course. Regarding the length of the training, participants had different preferences. One mentioned that a day or half day is better than an hour. Others preferred frequent short sessions.



**Figure 11.** The focus group participants' thoughts about training methods

In Finland the participants saw, that the quality of the training or application needs to be good usability, easy to use, interesting and visual. There should not be lots of clicking and it should addict the user. The contents should be stimulating, useful, bring new knowledge, offer peer support and help to cope in work. The training should be conducted in accordance with the contents. It should offer the possibility to discuss, it could be a game although face-to-face could be the best.

### **Thoughts about e-learning or phone applications to promote managers' well-being at work**

The participants could express their thought about the idea of e-learning or phone applications to promote well-being at work. The attitudes were quite positive in all partner countries, and the participant gave new ideas and elements to an online environment to be successful. The main reactions can be read in Table 11.

In Belgium the participants suggested that the app should make people reflect on their activities, that holds up a mirror to themselves: an app they can consult when needed, to check what they have been working on, check the actions taken to enhance wellbeing. It would be useful to have an app that gives custom made advice

and tips. For example: who to address with what kind of problems/questions, how to discuss a problem. GAMification can be useful in trainings, to engage managers during busy times. Also bearing in mind digitalisation. Create a virtual world: meet other managers who encounter similar problems, get in touch through the app.

**Table 11.** Thoughts about e-learning or phone applications to promote managers' well-being at work

Belgium	Cyprus	Finland
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An app that makes people reflect on their activities</li> <li>• They can consult when needed</li> <li>• Check what they have been working on</li> <li>• Check the actions taken to enhance wellbeing</li> <li>• An app that gives custom made advice and tips.</li> <li>• GAMification can be useful in trainings</li> <li>• Create a virtual world, meet other managers who encounter similar problems</li> <li>• All things concerning bio-data</li> <li>• Get a reminder, but choose contact moment</li> <li>• Personal profile: get support at times of mental decompression</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Could be a useful tool</li> <li>• Mobile application</li> <li>• e-learning platform or phone application for tips exercises, and in general tasks for improving wellbeing at work</li> <li>• General information about improving wellbeing at work but at the same time provides opportunities for improving wellbeing in any situation</li> <li>• Hands-on activities</li> <li>• Case studies that describe problematic situations and present solutions. This was important, as participants mentioned it can help people reflect on their own situations.</li> <li>• Characters that talk to the users and with each other.</li> <li>• Communication tools, e.g. forums and chat</li> <li>• Mini games</li> <li>• Frequently asked questions section</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good usability, easy to use, interesting and visual</li> <li>• Not be lots of clicking and it should addict the user</li> <li>• Contents should be stimulating, useful, bring new knowledge, offer peer support and help to cope in work.</li> <li>• Offer the possibility to discuss,</li> </ul>

In Cyprus All participants thought that the idea of a mobile application for wellbeing at work would be a very useful tool for the managers. All participants agreed that having an e-learning platform or phone application for tips, exercises, and in general tasks for improving wellbeing at work would be very useful. They also



agreed that there are common challenges and common wellbeing issues that managers can struggle with and at the same time, there are issues that are tied to specific situations. Therefore, they expressed the need for an application that has general information about improving wellbeing at work but at the same time provides opportunities for improving wellbeing in any situation.

In Finland the participants saw, that the quality of the training or application needs to be good usability, easy to use, interesting and visual. There should not be lots of clicking and it should addict the user. The contents should be stimulating, useful, bring new knowledge, offer peer support and help to cope in work. The training should be conducted in accordance with the contents. It should offer the possibility to discuss, it could be a game although face-to-face could be the best.



## 4 QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS RESULTS

Qualitative interviews have been conducted in all four partner countries in April and in May 2018 and three interviews were conducted. The relevant results are described in the following paragraphs.

### 4.1 The current situation regarding managers' wellbeing at work

The interviewees were asked what thoughts they have about managers' well-being at work raises what kind of challenges they face. Based on the interviews it can be concluded that the challenges of wellbeing are multidisciplinary. The managers have a lot of different demands in their work and in particular, middle-class leaders were seen to be burdened. The results can be divided into *organizational demands*, *personnel management*, and *personnel wellbeing* at work. In addition, *managing change and managing an organization* are challenges to managers. The interviewees also mentioned that ensuring *customer and patient safety* is a bigger challenge today than before. On the other hand, legislation supports basic employment in many workplaces.

There are ongoing structural and personnel-related changes in the organizations, changes in government regulation. In addition, government budgets and funding are reflecting in the quality of operations. Organizations have tremendous cost-cutting measures that put pressure on especially middle-class leaders. Budgets are cut annually and less money has to serve customers and provide service. Organizations are hierarchical and there are huge differences in the organization's cultures.

The main challenge for managers is that mental health is not taken seriously at workplaces. The managers' wellbeing at work is very important factor for the productivity and performance of employees. Listening to staff's opinions, knowing their basic work, provide them opportunities to grow and develop their skills. In addition daily communication are the key factors to improving wellbeing at work. Personnel should be involved in the discussions and the managers should listen to their subordinates and not make decisions alone. Managers' duty is to reinforce and



maintain a good, healthy and productive environment for the employees that will help them also have a better work-life balance.

Changes are happening in the workplace constantly, which may cause confusion about leadership, information flow and the working atmosphere. The future is unknown and information may not always be available. Workloads have also increased and schedules are busy. Human values are at risk in the workplaces and there is not enough time to discuss values with the staff.

#### **4.2 The actions in organizations to promote wellbeing at work**

The participants gave their ideas about the actions promote wellbeing at work. At the practical level, employees had the opportunity to participate in sporting activities, cultural activities and other recreational activities that can support workplace wellbeing. Occupational health care, ergonomics and rehabilitation promoted wellbeing. The working environment and the work community played an important role in the wellbeing of employees. Wellbeing at work can also be enhanced through the reorganization of work tasks, job rotation, education and training. Participants bring up risk analyses, questionnaires and surveys that reveal points of improvement. In addition, the support of supervisor and co-workers increased the level of wellbeing among the interviewees.

At the strategic level, interventions were focused professional development, promote collaboration and equal treatment of employees. However, the organizational measures to increase wellbeing at work were partly invisible. There was a lot of information on wellbeing at the Internet, but the information was superficial and employees did not have time to search for information. In the other hand, organizations do not have any actions to promote wellbeing at work in strategic nor in practical level.

#### **4.3 Thoughts about the training needs and methods expressed in focus group**

The participants agreed that there is a need to have new methods of learning and operational methods. New generations have come to work and we need new ways to develop and educate our staff. Training on communication and wellbeing, team



building, group dynamics and soft skills are also important training needs. New innovativeness is needed as well as new functional methods (online courses). However, we also need a genuine interaction (face to face, workshops, practical examples, real life examples) that does not happen through the web. Participation opportunities must be versatile and mentors should be offered to participants.

#### **4.4 Ideas about e-learning or phone application to promote managers' wellbeing at work**

Participants were asked what they thought of the idea that via e-learning or phone application the mental wellbeing of the managers can be improved at work. The participants were also asked what factors would ensure that this type of application would be good. An application makes people reflect on their activities, they can consult colleagues when needed and check the actions taken to enhance wellbeing. An application could bring new different opportunities for growth and development in work, for example, if it could install different tests and exercises (heart rate monitor, psychological tests, measuring stress level, breathing exercise) and advice/tips (e.g. go for a walk, something brief at the start of the day, how to discuss a problem) that would allow the personal growth and development. The manager could have a chance to monitor his/her own development. In addition, the manager would have the opportunity to get support and meet other colleagues who encounter similar problems, even globally. The application could work well if the manager works alone or is teleworking.

On the other hand, interruption of work could increase and manager's attitudes and higher age might be a barrier to the application. In addition, the organization's benefit from the use of application was unclear.

To achieve a high degree of popularity, the application should be easy to use, enjoyable, timing (get a reminder, but choose contact moment), contains a personal profile, and should be able to download your own personal content. In addition, it should be possible to follow the personal development and growth.



## **5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Basic situation in partner countries**

The first aim of the desk research was to describe the basic situation in partner countries. Public sector, public sector workers and number of civil servants were defined in each partner country. There were differences in definition of public sector due to history, culture and various administrative structures of partner countries.

In each partner country sickness absences or absence from workplaces were common and absentees influenced the work community in many different ways. However, well-being factors, as work suction and beneficial working ability, have found to reduce the risk of absenteeism. The managerial position has been found to reduce the risk of absenteeism and managers are less likely to be away from work than employees. Workers in every partner country experienced work-related stress and the causes of stress are multi-disciplinary.

The findings show that the costs of mental health problems are considerable and the number of people suffering from mental health conditions in partner countries. Because of the great challenges of working life, there is a significant need for improving wellbeing at work.

### **The use of organizational or system based methods of promoting well-being at work at public sector**

All the partner countries have national level strategies concerning well-being at work. The strategies were based in government programs and mainly carried out through ministries. When looking at strategies and programs targeted specially to mental health or managers, there were some examples in all partner countries. However the target group was mainly all employees rather than only managers.

### **Well-being programs, strategies and plans in organizations**

In partner countries there were general national requirements to organisations concerning well-being at work, which set guidelines how the organisations should carry out in a systematic way. The requirements were in legislation or they were recom-



mentations. They were set by Government organs. In Finland and Belgium the employer was responsible for setting the welfare policy to the organisation. It includes a risk analysis (an analysis of the presence of dangers and risk factors), recording prevention measures in a global prevention plan, and developing an annual action plan. The employer should also provide an emergency plan, based on procedures adapted to possible dangerous situations. In Cyprus Safety Officer needs to be appointed for each establishment who employs more than two hundred people.

Programs focused on mental issues Government of Flanders has a program to prevent work-related stress and burnout and in Finland the Centre for Occupational Safety has made guidelines how to manage the psychosocial load factors at work. In United Kingdom NHS has outlined the vision of achieving equal priority between mental and physical health by 2020. The Mental Health Taskforce to the NHS in England has set five year view for mental health. In Finland FIOH has also set criterion for good management.

### **The use of training methods in mental and work related wellbeing for public sector managers**

The traditional training methods in mental and work related wellbeing were training programs containing lectures, group activities and individual training. Training is mainly focused to all employees; managers are not necessarily pointed out. In Belgium and Finland there are quite similar traditional methods in use at workplaces like performance appraisals, mentoring, work competence improving or maintaining activities, well-being surveys and organizational well-being programs. In Cyprus there is the Health and Safety Training Centre, which is responsible for the dissemination of information, education and training employers and employees. It also develops training programs and prepares material.

Partner countries have various e-learning materials or programs for well-being at work available for free use or for purchase. There were web-based programs, webinars, self-assessment tools, surveys, measurement tools, etc. They produced information or possibilities to evaluate and develop organisations' actions. The tools



could be used collectively or for personal use. There were also applications or programs for mobile devices or computers. There were games to coach managerial skills, skills in well-being at work or for coaching.

### **Managers wellbeing in work**

In focus group interviews the participants were asked to describe wellbeing at work. They mainly described wellbeing at work with positive indicators. The thoughts could be categorized as shared values at the work place, person-related issues and sense of community. The participants described the state of managers' wellbeing by personal reaction, gender-related issues and situational factors. The managers work was seen hard and the workload increasing. They suffered of constant interruptions. They had the feeling of public accountability, bureaucracy, and constant change. On the other hand there were also a sense of satisfaction and feeling of good wellbeing at work. Especially in Cyprus there were many challenging factors for public sector managers.

Qualitative interviews showed that the factors influenced managers' wellbeing are multidisciplinary. Results can be divided into organizational demands, personnel management, and personnel wellbeing at work. In addition, managing change and managing an organization are challenges to managers. Also customer safety is a bigger challenge today than before.

In the public sector, the services are mainly financed by public funds and the financial situation has been unstable in each partner country. Organizations have tremendous cost-cutting measures that put pressure on managers. The economic situation has a major negative impact on the well-being of the leaders.

The findings of the research show that the interaction between supervisors and employees should be promoted. Personnel should be involved in the discussions and the managers should listen to their subordinates and not make decisions alone.

### **Straining/stress and resource factors in work**

The stress factors in managers' work had similar features in all partner countries but also differences. The similar straining factors were budget pressures and saving



especially in middle management, which did not always allow delivering high quality. There was increasing load of work and responsibilities, difficulties or lack of communication, and time pressures with tight deadlines. As differences there were mentioned manager' functions' dependency of political decisions in Belgium and a serious question about deadlines in Cyprus. In United Kingdom the straining factors were conflicting priorities, supporting others and protecting yourself, being a good listener but managing to be productive and external influences and family relationships. In Finland, the discussion could be categorized in day-to-day management straining factors, structural straining factors and factors connected to managers' personal situation. Especially the human resource management was seen very time consuming. In practice, mental stress can contribute to burnout, absence, low productivity, poor communication. Stress also manifests itself in the body physically by having migraines, back pain, being run down, getting colds.

Managers got support from their work community, from management system and from work itself. The things regarded as preventive in mental wellbeing and health were analyzing person's own issues, their actions on free time and factors concerning working. The main practical efforts in the organization to promote mental health and wellbeing were development actions, maintenance of personnel's wellbeing and maintenance of sense of community. For the managers the situation was not so good when looking at the activities they got from their workplace. The change in working life has affected the managers' situation most. Their own means to promote their wellbeing were free time activities, examining their own attitudes, family and work itself. Good practices to support well-being at work were work rotation, different kinds of training, investment in stress management and open dialog.

At the practical level there were wide range of activities that employees and managers can take part to improve their wellbeing thus there were differences in supply between partner countries. Occupational health care, ergonomics and rehabilitation promoted wellbeing. Regular questionnaires and surveys reveal points of improvement concerning working environment, daily working and management gives the employee the opportunity to highlight the disadvantages. However, the measures to remove or reduce these disadvantages were partly incomplete. At the strategic level, a lot of information exists at the Internet concerning wellbeing but employees have



not time to search. In the other hand, organizations do not have any actions to promote wellbeing at work in strategic nor in a practical level.

### **Training needs and methods of mental wellbeing**

The suggested training subjects concerned mindfulness and its techniques, time management, skills to meet people, self-knowledge and coping at work. There is also need for training in communication skills, team building, group dynamics and soft skills. The training could happen outside the workplace, and for the most, it should be face to face. However, there were positive thoughts about virtual methods too. The participants agreed that there is a need to have new, innovative methods of learning and operational methods. On the other hand, genuine interaction between participants is still important.

There were suggestions for new ideas and elements to successful online environment. The requirements for an app were:

- Virtual world with communication with other managers, peer support
- Reminders and check-ups, tests and exercises
- Advice and tips, case studies
- Personal profiles, personal content and development follow-up
- Opportunities for growth and development
- Enjoyable, easy to use, visual
- Mini-games

An application could bring new different opportunities for growth and development in work, for example, if it could install different tests and exercises (heart rate monitor, psychological tests, measuring stress level, breathing exercise) and advice/tips (e.g. go for a walk, something brief at the start of the day, how to discuss a problem) that would allow the personal growth and development. Manager have a chance to follow his/her personal development and growth. In addition, the manager would have the opportunity to get support and meet other colleagues who encounter similar problems, even globally.



To achieve a high degree of popularity, the application should be easy to use, enjoyable, timing (get a reminder, but choose contact moment), contains a personal profile, and should be able to download your own personal content.

In the future, a significant impact on the working life and working environment is increasing acceleration of technological progress, robotics and advances in information and communication technology (ICT). These trends have both positive and negative effects on working conditions. An increasing proportion of work and employees are easily and continuously in contact with each other around the world. Work is flexible and work environment can be changed easily.

In University of Turku there has been a research project called Digital game playing promoting well-being at work, where the researchers have made a broad research about game playing at work places. The researchers conclude that the field for games or gamified applications planned to improve well-being at work has not yet formed, but it has remarkable growth possibilities in the future. However they mention, that in 2015 there were already 100 000 application for health and well-being. (Vahlo, Ollila & Koponen 2015, 19.) More information about the situation worldwide is available at an analyst and strategy consulting company for the digital health industry Research 2 Guidance's web pages: <https://research2guidance.com/>

In conclusion, we can say that there is still a lot of unutilized virtual possibilities for managers in public sector to promote mental well-being at work.



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## ANNEX 1

### Introduction in the beginning of the focus group interviews

- Thank the participants for attending the focus group.
- Introduce the participants
- Introduce the project Mindful Managers team, facilitator and observer
- Present the goals and objectives of the Mindful Managers project.
  - To gain a full understanding of the training needs of Public Sector Managers in Mental Health and Wellbeing.
  - To develop the 'Mindful Managers' training programme
  - To develop an e-learning game/App with the training materials and a number of other resources to meet the needs of target groups across Europe
  - To develop and pilot Reflection Rounds for Public Sector Managers
  - To develop the Guide: "Developing Mindful Managers: A Guide for Improving Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Public Sector"
  - Eight Multiplier Events will be held during the project to ensure wide group of members of the target groups are given opportunities to participate and feedback into the project and benefit from project results.
  
- Define and explain the goal of this focus group meeting, and ground rules. The overall aim of the Needs analysis on the training needs of Public Sector Managers is to establish the current situation of the target group in partner countries, which the project can be founded on.
  - To research the **current situation** of public sector managers well-being.
  - To research the **current state of training methods** of mental well-being among public sector managers
  - To analyse **education** among of public sector managers.
  - To analyse the **training needs** of public sector managers concerning their wellbeing.
  - To share **knowledge and understanding** among partner countries regarding the current situation and challenges of public sector managers wellbeing.
  
- Inform the attendees about the following:
  - The interview session will be recorded, if everyone agrees with it. The recording will be destroyed after the analysis. The attendees sign the consent form.
  - All data gathered in the focus group interview will be handled according to the rules of research ethics.
  - The attendees will stay anonymous, only initials will be kept, if Erasmus+ administration wants to verify attendees.
  - Everything told in this group is shared in confidence.



## ANNEX 2

### Questionnaire, focus group interviews

Themes	Exploration	
Introduction (Collected with the Separate Form in the end of this Annex)	<b>Managers</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Age</li> <li>2. Gender</li> <li>3. Education</li> <li>4. Level of Management</li> <li>5. Years of work experience as a manager</li> <li>6. Working duties</li> <li>7. Number on employees</li> <li>8. Branch of Public Sector</li> </ol>	<b>Workers</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Age</li> <li>2. Gender</li> <li>3. Education</li> <li>4. Years of work experience</li> <li>5. Working duties</li> <li>6. Number of managers you have had</li> <li>7. Branch of Public Sector</li> </ol>
Outcome 1: Managers wellbeing in work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How would you describe or define wellbeing at work (parts of wellbeing)?</li> <li>2. How would you describe the mental wellbeing of managers at work?</li> </ol>	
Outcome 2: Straining/stress factors in work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What are the factors that burden managers at work?</li> <li>2. Are there some specific characteristics regarding the issue?</li> <li>3. How does this affect your work as a public sector worker?</li> </ol>	
Outcome 3: Resource factors in work	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What factors/elements promote mental wellbeing at work in your work place?</li> <li>2. How does your organizations support mental wellbeing?</li> <li>3. What do you personally do to support/strengthen your mental wellbeing?</li> </ol>	
Outcome 4 & 5: Training needs and methods of mental wellbeing	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What kind of training is needed in the public management sector regarding mental wellbeing?</li> <li>2. What does your organization do in practice concerning wellbeing at work?</li> <li>3. What kind of training would you be willing to participate in?               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Digital/virtual (applications, platforms, other?)</li> <li>➤ Face-to-face?</li> <li>➤ The length of the training period?</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Digital literacy? (do you feel confident in using IT?)</li> </ol>	



### ANNEX 3

## Questionnaires to be gathered at the beginning of the Focus Group

### Questions for the managers

1. Age \_\_\_\_\_
2. Gender  
 Female  
 Male
3. Education \_\_\_\_\_
4. Level of Management  
 First/front line  
 Middle management  
 Top management
5. Years of work experience as a manager \_\_\_\_\_
6. Working duties \_\_\_\_\_
7. Number of employees you manage \_\_\_\_\_
8. Branch of Public Sector  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Questions for the public sector employees

1. Age \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Gender  
 Female  
 Male
  3. Education \_\_\_\_\_
  4. Years of work experience \_\_\_\_\_
  5. Working duties \_\_\_\_\_
  6. Number of managers you have had \_\_\_\_\_
- Branch of Public Sector \_\_\_\_\_



## ANNEX 4

### Reporting sheet, qualitative interviews

Method of interview	Interviewee's details	Areas of specialisation
<i>Electronically, phone call, face to face</i>		

Themes and discussion summary
<p>What are your thoughts about the current situation regarding managers' wellbeing at work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the challenges?</li> <li>• What are the demands?</li> </ul>
<p>What are the actions, if any, in your organization to promote wellbeing at work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In strategic level?</li> <li>• In practical level?</li> </ul>
<p>What are your thoughts about training needs expressed during our focus group?</p>
<p>What are your thoughts about training methods expressed during our focus group?</p>
<p>What do you think of the idea of e-learning or phone application to promote managers' wellbeing at work?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would you consider it useful? How?</li> <li>• What elements do you think this online environment should contain to be successful?</li> </ul>
<p>Other thoughts about the theme?</p>