

Press release: Launch project

An example of a press release was sent to all consortium partners to facilitate the press release (see below). These press releases were adapted to the context and translated to the language of the participating country.

Based on this example, the following press messages have been published:

In Belgium (in Dutch):

- [HR magazine: https://hrmagazine.be/nl/posts/medewerkers-steunen-bij-verlies-mantelzorg-rouw-en-ernstige-ziekte](https://hrmagazine.be/nl/posts/medewerkers-steunen-bij-verlies-mantelzorg-rouw-en-ernstige-ziekte)
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- [PeopleSphere: https://peoplesphere.be/nl/idewe-en-vub-lanceren-onderzoeksproject-voor-ondersteuning-van-werknemers-bij-verlies-mantelzorg-en-ernstige-ziekte/](https://peoplesphere.be/nl/idewe-en-vub-lanceren-onderzoeksproject-voor-ondersteuning-van-werknemers-bij-verlies-mantelzorg-en-ernstige-ziekte/)
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- [ZigZag HR: https://zigzaghr.be/hoe-medewerkers-beter-ondersteunen-op-het-werk-bij-rouw-of-verlies/](https://zigzaghr.be/hoe-medewerkers-beter-ondersteunen-op-het-werk-bij-rouw-of-verlies/)
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- [DVO: https://www.dvo.be/artikel/idewe-en-vub-lanceren-onderzoeksproject-voor-ondersteuning-werknemers-tijdens-crisissituaties?x-craft-preview=3QdFwXtbOo&token=tdV4uMNZ1TTPxdmHI8ISLjEZc8MtLUK5](https://www.dvo.be/artikel/idewe-en-vub-lanceren-onderzoeksproject-voor-ondersteuning-werknemers-tijdens-crisissituaties?x-craft-preview=3QdFwXtbOo&token=tdV4uMNZ1TTPxdmHI8ISLjEZc8MtLUK5)

In Sweden:

- <https://www.ltu.se/aktuellt/nyheter/nyhetsarkiv/2024-01-31-hur-kan-arbetsplatsen-stodja-vid-svara-livshandelser>

All the other partners (HSE, Sorgenetz, and the University of Athens) have send out their press release to their media contacts and are waiting for the publication of the article. All published press is collected on the Sharepoint of the project.

We also made publications on LinkedIn:

In Sweden:

- <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7158368573277511681/>

In Belgium:

- <https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7152947606820712448/>

Partners from each participating country have been sharing (reposting) these posts to further spread the information.

PEOPLE DIE IN A COMMUNITY, THE WORKPLACE IS ONE OF THEM

Loss, family care, serious illness and grief are integral aspects of everyday life, but often remain taboo topics in the workplace. The Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) is joining forces with the External Service for Prevention and Protection at Work IDEWE to research how employers and employees can support colleagues during difficult moments.

Because people spend a significant proportion of their time at work, it is crucial that there is adequate support when faced with loss, family care, serious illness or bereavement. An understanding employer, supervisor(s) and colleagues can make a big difference in an individual's well-being and resilience. In contrast, lack of support can cause deep emotional wounds and impact on well-being, absenteeism and productivity in the workplace. The VUB and IDEWE will work with some organisations to develop interventions to provide the right support and will then monitor their impact.

In Flanders, almost 500,000 people are active in the labour market while at the same time being a carer for a sick partner, parent, child, etc. The ageing population is expected to further increase the demand for informal care. Moreover, nearly 600,000 Flemish people each year are faced with the death of a grandparent, parent, partner or child, which brings with it grief experiences, each in a unique way. Add to this the multitude of people grieving for friends, neighbours, colleagues or distant relatives, and the number of people dealing with grief is actually much higher **in Flanders**. Moreover, some people with serious illnesses choose to still participate in working life, despite the obstacles they face.

Xx from IDEWE: "Experiences of illness, loss, bereavement and informal care cause quiet grief in the workplace and can have a significant impact on employee wellbeing (and productivity). A supportive workplace can help bear these negative experiences. By creating an understanding and caring environment, where emotional and practical support are central, an employer ensures not only a healthy but also a resilient work environment. Supporting employers in setting up their wellbeing policies is in **IDEWE's DNA**, which is why we think it is important to focus on this as well."

Joachim Cohen, professor at the VUB: "Places where everyone contributes to well-being around serious illness, grief and loss are called Compassionate Communities. In this research project, we want to evaluate how such caring workplaces can alleviate suffering. By developing concrete support in doing so, we create impact on employees' mental and physical health and well-being. Grief, for example, does not always have to be complex. International research showed that 60% of all mourners do not need professional or formal forms of support but rather a supportive environment in their daily lives. However, a workplace and colleagues can also take on a meaningful role here."

The research project started in January 2024 and will run until December 2028. It is an international study running simultaneously in Austria, Sweden, the UK, Greece and Flanders.

Contact details YOUR ORGANISATION: xxx

Contact details DISSEMENTATION PARTNER: xx

Website: <http://eu-cowork.eu/>