



Developing Compassionate Workplaces in Europe for the digital and green work environment to protect employees' mental and physical health and wellbeing

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1 Introduction

The EU-CoWork website is one of the main **dissemination and communication tools** of the project and will function as a “digital business card” for other researchers. The website has been online since May 2024 and will be frequently updated by the DEC Team throughout the project.

Throughout the duration of the project, we will use the website to inform the general public as well as research communities and potential compassionate workplaces about the goals of the project and what we will be doing in the coming years.

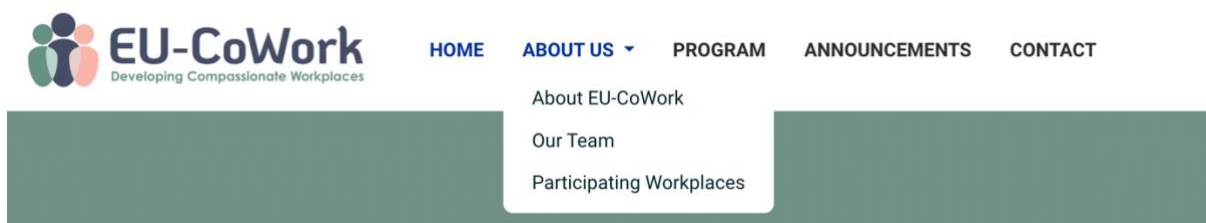
At the end of the project, the website will also include an online platform that gathers all the output of the EU-CoWork project, such as the inspiration guide, implementation guidelines for facilitators, scientific articles, etc.

We have linked the website with two URLs: www.compassionateworkplace.eu and www.eu-cowork.eu.

The EU-CoWork website is created with Paddle, a Belgian Content Management System, for non-profits, governmental organizations and universities and their projects. Paddle allows their users to manage their website without the need for any technical skills. They provide a hands-on support system, embed **Google Analytics** on the website and provide assistance for extracting and analyzing GA data.

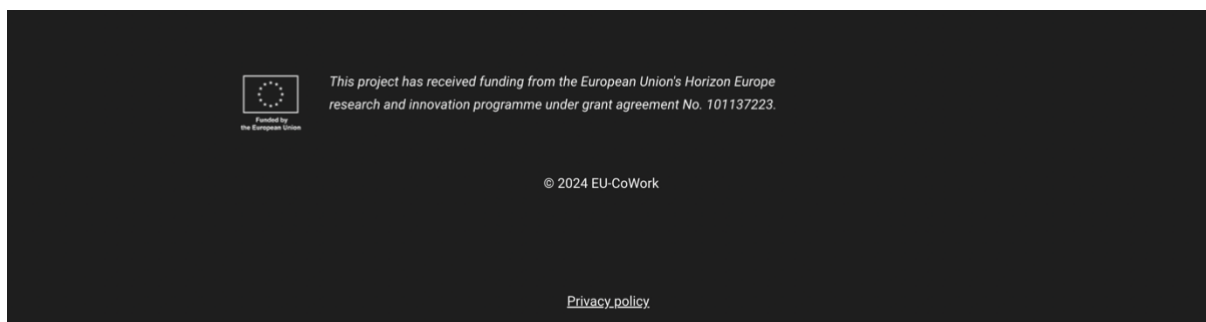
1.1 Menu

The **menu** of the website shows a horizontal version of the EU-CoWork logo and 5 primary buttons: **Home**, **About Us**, **Program**, **Announcements** and **Contact**. Under the **About Us** button are three secondary buttons, **About EU-CoWork**, **Our Team** & **Participating Workplaces**. The menu can be found on every page of the website.



1.2 Footer

The **footer** of the website displays the ‘Funded by the European Union’ logo, as well as the funding statement, the copyright notice and a link to the privacy policy, which links to the general privacy policy from the VUB.



1.3 Homepage

The homepage of the website has a small introduction to the project with a clickable read more button that brings the visitor to the **About EU-CoWork** webpage.

Underneath the short introduction to the project, is an overview of the latest news and announcements, which will be updated automatically whenever a new item is added to the announcements page.

WELCOME TO THE EU-COWORK WEBSITE

The EU-CoWork project is a collaboration between 5 academic and 3 dissemination partners from Belgium, Sweden, Austria, Greece and the United Kingdom, and is funded by Horizon Europe (2024-2028).

READ MORE

Recent news



📅 THURSDAY 21/03/2024

DEVELOPING COMPASSIONATE WORKPLACES IN EUROPE FOR THE DIGITAL AND GREEN WORK ENVIRONMENT TO PROTECT EMPLOYEES' MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

1.4 About us

The **About Us** button is the second item in the menu and has three secondary buttons.

1.4.1 About EU-CoWork

An overview of the project, the research objectives, our ambition and relevance, and the work packages with their leads can be found on the **About EU-CoWork** page.

ABOUT EU-COWORK

AMBITION

EU-CoWork's ambition is to develop an evidence basis for and subsequently develop, test and evaluate tailored Compassionate Workplaces Program in Europe to leverage the positive impacts and existing assets of workplaces and mitigate the negative impacts and challenges of the new ways of working for the mental and physical health and wellbeing of employees faced with end-of-life experiences (such as loss, grief, dying, death, serious illness and care giving) and their colleagues.

RELEVANCE

A significant proportion of employees will experience serious illness, caregiving tasks, dying, loss, and grief during their professional life. Such End-of-life experiences affect both employees and their colleagues' health and wellbeing, but also the work environment in terms of absenteeism, decreased productivity, and occupational safety. EU-CoWork wants to develop 'Compassionate Workplaces' that recognize that supervisors and colleagues can play an active role in helping workers feel supported at work during such difficult life experiences.

WHAT IS THE EU-COWORK PROJECT?

The EU-CoWork project is a collaboration between 5 academic and 3 dissemination partners from Belgium, Sweden, Austria, Greece and the United Kingdom, and is funded by Horizon Europe (2024-2028). EU-CoWork wants to:

1. Better understand the influence of changing workplace organization due to the digital and green transitions on wellbeing, performance, job quality, and work culture for employees confronted with End-of-Life experiences and their colleagues, and to
2. Develop and evaluate tailored Compassionate Workplace Programs to support employee health and wellbeing in the work environment, across different national and occupational contexts in Europe.

We will work in partnership with 12 different workplaces in Belgium, Sweden, Austria and Greece to gain insight and develop tools to help create work environments that ensure adequate support to address End-of-Life experiences that may increase risks for poor mental health and wellbeing of employees, and loss of productivity for organizations.

In this project, the research team will collaborate closely with each of the 12 participating workplaces in developing Compassionate Workplace Programs tailored to the specific context, needs, and individual characteristics of each workplace. The researchers will also evaluate the program's effectiveness in individual workplaces.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

R01 To develop an evidence basis for understanding relationships between employee health and wellbeing, work organization, workplace culture, and other contextual aspects, for employees facing EoL experiences and their colleagues in digital and green workplaces:

- To explore what country-specific aspects influence the health and wellbeing of employees facing EoL experiences and their colleagues: healthcare policies, family caregiving policies, age structure of the country.
- To explore what aspects specific of the workplace influence the health and wellbeing of employees facing EoL experiences and their colleagues: organizational size, (compassionate) workplace culture, paid leave policies.
- To explore what subgroup characteristics influence the health and wellbeing of employees facing EoL experiences and their colleagues: gender, age, educational level.

R02 To develop tailored strategies, i.e., Compassionate Workplaces Programmes (CWPs), to create compassionate workplace cultures and improve health and wellbeing for employees working in digitized and green work environments in different national and work contexts in Europe.

R03 To describe and evaluate the process of co-creation and implementation of our CWPs and how these influence the programs' outcomes.

R04 To evaluate the impact of the CWPs (1) on the mental and physical health and wellbeing of employees facing EoL experiences and their colleagues, and (2) on workplace-level outcomes including workplace culture, interpersonal relationships, production loss, hours lost due to absence.

R05 To evaluate the economic value and cost-effectiveness of the CWPs and how the CWPs may help prevent financial losses due to the confrontation with serious illness, death or loss.

WORK PACKAGES

WP1 Coordination, management and progress monitoring (WP Lead: *Vrije Universiteit Brussel*)

WP2 Development and developmental evaluation of a tailored Compassionate Workplaces program (WP Lead: *Vrije Universiteit Brussel*)

WP3 Preparations for data collection. (WP Lead: *Vrije Universiteit Brussel*)

WP4 Impact and process evaluation of the tailored Compassionate Workplaces program (WP Lead: *University of Sheffield*)

WP5 Cross-sectional analysis of baseline observational data (WP Lead: *Luleå University of Technology*)

WP6 Longitudinal qualitative & quantitative subgroup and country comparative analyses (WP Lead: *Athens University of Economics and Business*)

WP7 Cost-effectiveness analysis (WP Lead: *Athens University of Economics and Business*)

WP8 Dissemination, Exploitation and communication (WP Lead: *Vrije Universiteit Brussel*)

1.4.2 Our Team

We have a page on the website dedicated to the consortium and the individual team members for every partner. This information can be found under the **Our Team** page.

EU-COWORK CONSORTIUM

The EU-CoWork project is a collaboration between 5 academic and 3 dissemination partners from Belgium, Sweden, Austria, Greece and the United Kingdom, and is funded by Horizon Europe (2024-2028).



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1.4.2.1 Personal webpage

Every team member has their **own personal webpage** that includes a profile picture, a short biography, contact details and links to external websites, such as their LinkedIn, ORCID or university website.



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🔗 [Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Aging and Care \(CIRAC\)](#)

🔗 [Institute of Pastoral Theology / Public Care](#)

🔗 [SORGENETZ - Association for the promotion of societal care culture](#)

🔗 [ORCID](#)

BIOGRAPHY

As an Associate Professor (Public Health & End-of-Life-Care) he is Vice Director of the Center for Interdisciplinary Research on Aging and Care (CIRAC), head of the working area "Public Care" at the Institute of Pastoral Theology at the University of Graz (Austria) and chairperson of "SORGENETZ - Association for the promotion of societal care culture. Life, old age, dementia and dying" in Vienna. His research interests are addressing the need for developing and transforming health care systems and societal care networks in elderly and End-of-life care, interlinking palliative care and public health perspectives, care ethics, questions about social justice and the democratization of care. A major aspect of his research and consulting is to promote and develop Caring/Compassionate Organizations and Communities.

1.4.3 Participating workplaces

The **Participating Workplaces** page is still a work in progress and now shows only a 'Coming Soon' segment and a call for workplaces that could be interested in the development of a Compassionate Workplace program.

PARTICIPATING WORKPLACES

**STAY TUNED TO FIND OUT WHICH WORKPLACES WILL BE
DEVELOPING COMPASSIONATE WORKPLACE PROGRAMS!**

Interested in the development of a Compassionate Workplace program? Reach out to chiara.versaeren@vub.be or check out our [LinkedIn group](#).

1.5 Program

The **Program** page has an overview of the core components of the compassionate workplace program, the key elements of the project program and a graphic model of what a compassionate workplace can entail.

PROGRAM

CORE COMPONENTS OF THE COMPASSIONATE WORKPLACE PROGRAMS

The key elements of the Compassionate Workplace Programs (CWP) are the fundamental steps we take when creating any CWP. These steps are essential for adapting the program to meet the specific needs and situations of workplaces. Here they are:

0. Preparation
1. Identifying assets and needs
2. Collaboratively creating program outputs (with a facilitator and core development group)
3. Workshops for exchanging knowledge in a facilitated setting
4. Communities of practice or learning networks
5. A guide to provide inspiration

KEY ELEMENT 0: PREPARATION

KEY ELEMENT 2: COLLABORATIVELY CREATING PROGRAM OUTPUTS (WITH A FACILITATOR AND CORE DEVELOPMENT GROUP)

Goal: Developing the Compassionate Workplace within each organization involved.

We'll have an (external) facilitator on board to make sure we meet the needs of both

KEY ELEMENT 4: COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE OR LEARNING NETWORKS

Goal: bring the participating workplaces together and share knowledge beyond them.

EU-CoWork will create a learning network connecting all the countries involved in developing Compassionate Workplace programmes (Belgium, Greece, Austria, and Sweden). All core development groups from these workplaces are invited to join and share their experiences, knowledge, and ideas. The network will aim to meet every 6 months. All workplaces involved in EU-CoWork are welcome to participate.

KEY ELEMENT 1: IDENTIFYING ASSETS AND NEEDS

KEY ELEMENT 3: WORKSHOPS TO EXCHANGING KNOWLEDGE

Goal: To involve the entire workplace community and build momentum for change throughout the workplace.

The facilitator and the core development group will set up at least 2 workshops or

KEY ELEMENT 5: A GUIDE TO PROVIDE INSPIRATION

Goal: Provide a source of inspiration for workplaces looking to develop compassionate workplace activities, with facilitators available for support.

We'll create a collection of existing resources from various settings to inspire workplaces with ideas for different activities. This compilation will help workplaces decide on their own activities. Facilitators will be there to offer support in using these resources effectively.



1.6 Announcements

The **Announcements** page is one of the updateable webpages. The goal is to frequently share news about the project or relevant information that aligns with the project.



📅 THURSDAY 21/03/2024

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1.6.1 News or information page

Every item on the **Announcements** page is clickable and links to a full article webpage which also shows contact details about the author, when relevant.

DEVELOPING COMPASSIONATE WORKPLACES IN EUROPE FOR THE DIGITAL AND GREEN WORK ENVIRONMENT TO PROTECT EMPLOYEES' MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

THURSDAY 21/03/2024



From 5-7 March 2024, the first in-person consortium meeting of the EU CoWork project took place at Luleå University of Technology (LTU). Professor Joachim Cohen opened the meeting, followed by Professor Pär Wehred who highlighted the green transition challenge for LTU. European Commission adviser Sara Brazys also took the floor, after which Professor Sarah Dury gave a session on compassionate communities. Furthermore, topics related to general management and workshops on data analysis, theoretical programme model, and dissemination were also covered. The consortium meeting closed with a beautiful northern lights display; a sign of good fortune for the project, according to some!



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1.7 Contact

On the **Contact** page, we have a Social Media segment that links to the project's official LinkedIn page. Visitors can also find the general contact information for the project's management assistant.

CONTACT

Social Media



General Contact



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