

WORKING LIFE AND WORK ARE CHANGING – GROWING EMPHASIS ON THE WELL-BEING OF COMMUNITIES AND INDIVIDUALS AT WORK

Changing work and working life are characterised by, for example, technological development and the rapid pace of change as well as fragmented, project-based and multi-location work. Increasing attention is being paid to ecological aspects and sustainable development. The operating environment is more unstable, uncertain and complex. This makes it difficult, or even impossible, to see the big picture, combined effects and cause-and-effect relationships.

Work is becoming more international, and work communities are more diverse. Organisations outsource tasks and focus on their core competencies. Employees engage in networks and may work for several employers at the same time. Changes can also manifest themselves as an intensified pace of work and overlapping tasks.

Work requires constant learning and unlearning. The workplace is simultaneously a learning environment where practices for developing and sharing competence are needed.

Along with changes in work, management is also changing. Supervisors are expected to be interactive, to have a coaching leadership style and to allow individuals and teams to be self-directed. In addition, they are expected to strengthen psychological



safety in the work community, to have emotional skills, to appreciate employees and to make visible and utilise employees' strengths at work.

Changes in work have introduced the psychosocial, cognitive, ethical and emotional strain of work alongside its physical strain. The importance of well-being at work and total workload management is gaining even more emphasis.

This material presents trends of change related to work and ways of working. The first section contains streams of change that have an ex-

tensive impact on Finnish working life. The second section focuses on changes that affect workplaces, work communities and individuals. The last section provides examples of issues that workplaces should pay attention to in their activities promoting occupational safety, health and well-being. The material aims to help workplaces identify factors that should be addressed in the context of cooperation in occupational safety and health matters.

The key sources that influenced the content of the material are presented at the end of the material.

Trends of change related to work and ways of working – focus on the perspectives of working life and industries



Select the trends that are relevant to your workplace.

combined effect and unexpectedness of operating environment factors

climate change, natural disasters

international conflicts, prolonged crises

development of technologies, such as

compatibility of technologies

augmented and virtual reality

artificial intelligence

machine learning

robotics

automation

digitalisation

green economy

ecologically sustainable solutions

global economy

data economy*

cyber security

increasing dominance of services in the economy

change in the role of the public sector

focus on core business and core competencies, outsourcing of services

growing emphasis on values, ethics and social responsibility

non-standard forms of working and employment, such as

temporary work and subcontracting

fixed-term employment

part-time work

shift work

mobile and remote work

hybrid work

combination of self-employment and paid employment**

platform work

time- or place-independence of work

fragmentation of work and chaining of fixed-term contracts

* *The business model is based on different ways of exploring and exploiting information.*

** *Earnings consist of income from paid employment and entrepreneurial activity.*

Trends of change and challenges related to work and ways of working – focus on the perspectives of the workplace, the work community and the individual



Select the issues that are relevant to your workplace or work community.

changes in structures or procedures

workplace as a learning environment

learning management

sharing of competence

continuous learning and renewal

identification and utilisation of strengths

transferability of skills

competence identity*

workforce diversity**

consideration of individual needs

work ability management

career management

coaching, serving, motivational and development-supportive leadership

psychological safety

sense of community

contactability

virtual interaction

asynchronous*** work

total workload management

recovery

strengthening of resources

resilience****

overflow in work and personal life,
work-life balance

decrease in workplace loyalty and commitment

self-direction in individuals

self-direction in teams

meaningfulness of work

privacy protection

* *Competence identity means an individual's understanding of how their competence has developed, what they are capable of, what they can apply their competence to and what areas of competence they need to increase in order to move on to new tasks (Huttula 2022).*

** *The dimensions of workforce diversity in a work community include employees' age, nationality, language, education and training, experience, skills and values.*

*** *The members of a group or team work at different times.*

**** *Resilience means the ability to adapt to and learn from change and to cope no matter what has happened.*

Which issues should the workplace pay attention to in its activities promoting occupational safety, health and well-being?



Select the issues that your workplace should pay attention to.

new and unexpected health risks

post-pandemic backlog in well-being at work

range of workload factors, disadvantages and hazards;
diversity of risks

broad understanding of ergonomics

growing emphasis on psychosocial risks

support for mental health

support for recovery and resilience

emotional strain

ethical strain

cognitive strain

exposure to stimuli

brain health

technostress and techno-work engagement

physical underload or strain caused by repetitive work

ethical use of analytics and information

data privacy

smart technology

project- or network-based work

time- or location-independent work

joint workplace safety management, development of
practices across organisational boundaries

blurred concept of workplace

cooperation and well-being at work in non-standard
forms of employment

cooperation with occupational health care

Which issues should the workplace pay attention to in its activities promoting occupational safety, health and well-being?



Sources



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In addition, the following persons were interviewed in August–September 2022:

- The Confederation of Unions for Professional and Managerial Staff in Finland (Akava): Senior Specialist Elina Sojonen
- Confederation of Finnish Industries (EK): Chief Policy Adviser Mirja Hannula
- Commission for Church Employers (KiT): Labour Market Specialist Meri Westerberg
- Local Government and County Employers (KT): Competence and Education Policy Specialist Mertzi Bergman
- The Central Organisation of Finnish Trade Unions (SAK): Education and Labour Policy Specialist Kirsi Rasinaho
- The Finnish Confederation of Professionals (STTK): Senior Adviser Riina Nousiainen

The interviews focused on trends of change and their implications on the skills required at work.

Further information

The Centre for Occupational Safety
Senior Specialist Seija Moilanen
firstname.lastname@ttk.fi
Tel. 050 331 0719

-  ttk.fi/psykososiaalinen-kuormitus
-  @tyoturvallisuus
-  #psykososiaalinenkuormitus
-  The Centre for Occupational Safety

Text: Senior Specialist Seija Moilanen, the Centre for Occupational Safety

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