

Editorial

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The European Journal of Workplace Innovation (EJWI) was launched in a context of a European Commission initiative to create a new network across the EU, the European Workplace Innovation Network (EUWIN), with a focus on private sector companies. Funding did not support research, but an international co-ordinating consortium drew on long experience of previous research. There was a programme of activities and events over four years, with the final conference in Brussels on 10th October 2016.

A network had developed over the four years, but it was apparent, from presentations by senior officials of the European Commission, that decisions have not yet been made regarding the way forward from 2017. It is likely that the EUWIN Knowledge Bank will be maintained in some way, and EUWIN bulletins will continue to be published, for example raising awareness of EJWI.

The European Commission is very aware of the pace of change in many workplaces, and recognises the need for dissemination of good practice. Technological change, complicated by economic crisis and high levels of unemployment in many countries, will mean that a New Work Agenda, or Policy Framework, will emerge. This is likely to link several Directorates-General, and to encompass issues such as engagement, the collaborative economy, skills and learning. There is likely to be a significant role for the Social Partners, in a New Social Dialogue. No commitments have been made with regard to funding.

What does this mean for research in the field, and for EJWI? We cannot assume that there will be a major EU programme to serve as a locomotive for research. We need to reflect on our experience to date.

Issue 1 of EJWI enabled established research leaders to set the scene and present agendas. Established researchers were much in evidence at the first and last EUWIN events. Their agendas had changed little. Case study reports responded to particular developments at a company level. Conference facilitation enabled discussion of different company cases to be linked.

Issue 2.1 broadened the debate, with articles on research projects concerned with Workplace Innovation and related issues, such as Older Workers. There was no single agenda, and there were opportunities for new researchers to contribute.

Issue 2.2 may come to be seen as the early blooming of a hundred flowers. Each article has a focus related to the workplace, but the overall issue exemplifies the pluralism that was promised in the editorial for Issue 1.

Johnsen's article, from Norway, combines radical and conventional elements. He describes developments with a successful company network, the EYDE network. They have taken a collaborative approach to management development, in partnership with the University of Agder. This provides the basis for debate on company models.

Palin et al tackle a fresh issue which draws on new technology and changes in work organisation in Finland. Crowdsourcing is attracting increasing attention. Here, with

consideration of In House Crowdsourcing, it is added to the debate on Workplace Innovation.

Uusiautti is concerned with success at work in a medium-sized enterprise in Lapland, where working life is changing fast. With a general focus on motivation, she considers the importance of hope. Changes in work were a key factor.

Dessers et al concentrate on work in the care sector in Belgium, and offer a practical approach to Workplace Innovation, using a game based on Karasek's Job Demand / Control Model. The game lets participants experience differences between job characteristics and job quality in a setting that relates to their own field of work.

Gabathuler, from Switzerland, asks whether healthy workplaces are innovative. He notes the overlapping debates on Workplace Health Management and Workplace Innovation. The article suggests ways in which the two concepts can reinforce each other.

Pomares et al, from the Basque Region of Spain, consider Regional and Workplace Innovation. This means considering institutional, territorial and socio-organisation situations of companies. The article draws heavily on EU developments in Workplace Innovation, and sets out an ambitious agenda for the region.

Tutchell and Edmonds consider the problem of gender-based power inequality in the UK. Based on a large number of interviews, their book *Man-made*, with a campaigning flavour, poses stark challenges. Whether in the workplace or in public life, women continue to be second class citizens.

What can we expect from EJWI Issue 3.1, and subsequent issues? There is an opportunity for innovation in the knowledge workplace. This is all the more important because of current uncertainty regarding European Commission programmes.

EJWI is published by the University of Agder. It is free, open and online. As our collection of articles builds up, there will be scope for collaboration, online dialogue, joint projects, and conferences. There are opportunities for younger researchers to take leading roles.

