

Il distretto della Felicità CASE STUDY

Country
Italy

City / Region
San Mauro Pascoli, Savignano
sul Rubicone and Gatteo –
Emilia-Romagna

No. of Employees
+2500

Description of the organisation

The “Distretto della Felicità” born in 2013 in Emilia-Romagna, to be precise in the area of the footwear district in the south of the Region, in Romagna, on the initiative of a Labour consultant with aims to promote the balance of work and life times. It is a valid and consolidated best practice, a new way of life.

Workplace Innovation practices implemented

The “Distretto della Felicità” born as a result of a personal experience of the owner of a Labour consultancy Firm that has always aimed to the work-life balance needs of his collaborator. Starting from this situation, considering that the company has several client companies, mainly in the heavy industry and footwear sector, knowing the local job market, begins a reflection that also extends to institutions.

The involvement of local stakeholders was fundamental to have all the actors at the same table: public institutions, companies, trade unions, private services.

A first survey was distributed in the 2014 to over 600 employees. It was structured in such a way as to highlight the preferences of the workers and their needs, in relation to the management of working and extra-working hours. The questions are aimed at analysing, in particular, the degree of satisfaction with the current working hours, the compatibility with the services offered and present in the area and with their private life needs. The majority of the workers were satisfied. However, this majority was represented by men and workers who were unwilling to change but the discontent expressed by the minority, female and young people, having difficulty in trade-off between work time with other activities, free time, housework, self and child care and social relationships.

In fact, it was very clear that the footwear sector was less appealing and therefore there was a lack of personnel, mainly female and young, with the risk of losing valuable know-how, considering that there are many family businesses with a long tradition in the footwear sector, some of them famous worldwide.

Most of people preferred to work in other sectors rather than in footwear due to problems of hourly incompatibility between work and family management. The Distretto della Felicità starts from here, as an initiative aimed at promoting the trade-off between of work and life times and a virtuous, sustainable and replicable social model.

Now, more than 15 companies are “members” of this Distretto, with more than 2.500 employees involved, and this means that they adopt working hours models aimed at conciliation, with ad hoc solutions around the real needs of workers, in cooperation with schools, doctors, retirement homes, banks, and other family services.

In order to have a scientific point of view on the project, monitoring tools have been introduced: The University of Bologna has analysed the effects that hourly changes can have on family life, in terms of well-being and reconciliation of time dedicated to family and leisure with work activities, as well as on company productivity.

A second survey was built in 2017 on the initiative of the owner of the Labour Consultancy Firm assisted by the CCIA Romagna to evaluate how the territorial welfare services involved had satisfied the needs of workers. The results were thrilling

It is a project open to any action that may benefit the person, some actions, such as an inter-company canteen, the purchase of products at km 0 from local companies and delivered to the company, etc. are currently on standby due to the pandemic.

Main Achievements

Summary of main achievements and results (topics)

- More than 15 companies directly involved;
- More than 2500 employees
- All actors identify themselves with the goals of the Sustainable Development Agenda, particularly:
 - Education (n.4)
 - Gender equality and women’s empowerment (n.5)
 - Economic growth (n.8)
 - Cities (n.11)