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Title

Impact of European legislation on the prevention of psychosocial risks at work on workers in Greece

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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to look into the impact of European legislation on the prevention of psychosocial risks for workers in small start-up enterprises in Greece. The study's goal is to determine whether the adoption of European legislation has resulted in changes in job demands and human resources. The study investigates the obstacles and potential of applying legislation to smaller businesses by focusing on a small start-up company. The study especially studies employees' impressions of the application of European legislation in a Greek start-up company, as well as the effects of the legislation on job needs and employee well-being. The study draws on a sample of seven people from diverse departments and hierarchical positions within the business. Several conclusions are drawn through theme analysis and connecting the findings with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model. According to the findings, the adoption of European legislation has a minor but favorable impact on the work environment in small start-up businesses, encouraging a positive and supportive work environment defined by open communication and mutual support, while the favorable working atmosphere in their workplaces was additionally impacted by various factors, including the company's culture and the disposition of the employer. Contextual factors influence the success of European legislation, underscoring the necessity for ongoing support and specific approaches in small start-up firms. The findings help to understand the impact of European legislation on worker well-being and offer practical implications for companies and governments looking to enhance working conditions and promote employee wellbeing. Further research on the interaction between legislative measures, organizational characteristics, and individual well-being in the field of occupational health and well-being is recommended.

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1. Introduction

Psychosocial hazards in the workplace are a major global concern (Schulte et al., 2020), with unfavorable working conditions such as high workloads, long hours, a lack of support and autonomy, and harassment being key factors (Leka et al., 2015). Theoretical models such as the Demands and Resources models (Demerouti et al., 2001) have been established to examine the impact of job demands, resources, and rewards on individual and organizational health outcomes.

Extensive research has demonstrated the relationship between psychosocial hazards and negative outcomes, such as work-related stress (e.g., Taouk et al., 2020; Tsutsumi et al., 2006), cardiovascular disease, depression, anxiety (e.g., Madsen et al., 2017), mortality, sickness absenteeism (e.g., Russo et al., 2021), and presenteeism. To address these difficulties, regulatory and voluntary policy measures at various levels, from international to national, have been implemented (ILO, International Labour Organization, 2016).

The European Union (EU) has acknowledged the need to tackle psychosocial risks in the workplace, also known as psychosocial risks, and has implemented a variety of initiatives to support workers' mental health and well-being. The framework directive on safety and health at work (Council Directive 89/391/EEC of June 12, 1989) is an example of EU policy for the protection of psychological dangers in the workplace. According to the regulation, companies must identify and manage all workplace risks, including psychosocial risks (Lekka, 2017). Despite the high levels of concern stated in European polls by both employees and employers, European businesses advise their employees about these hazards in only 20% of cases and take even less action to address them. This calls into question the directive's effectiveness, given the resources invested at the European level in raising awareness and providing tools to help employers prevent the negative impact of psychosocial risks on workers' health and well-being, as well as organizational survival and sustainability (Eurofound, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, 2017; EU-OSHA, European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2017).

Various stakeholders, such as the European Commission and European social partners, have urged for more specific legislation at the European Union and national levels to address psychosocial risks and work-related stress (Zoni& Lucini, 2012; Di Tecco, Persechino, &Iavicoli, 2023). This is because the current 1989 European Framework Directive lacks clear references to these terms. As a result, several EU member states have implemented more specific legislation to clarify employer responsibilities in this area. For instance, Belgium's Royal Decree of May 17, 2007, focuses on the prevention of psychosocial load caused by work, which includes violence, harassment, and sexual harassment at work. In Sweden, the organizational and social work environment provisions that came into effect on March 31, 2016, regulate knowledge requirements, goals, workloads, working hours, and victimization. On the other hand, some countries, such as the UK, adopt a soft law approach, relying on voluntary employer engagement through guidelines and standards, like the Management Standards for Work-related Stress introduced by the Health and Safety Executive in 2004. (Ertel et al., 2010; ETUC—European Trade Union Congress, 2020; Leka et al., 2015a,b; European Commission, 2019; MacKay et al., 2004).

The implementation of the legislation can lead to changes in the perception (Galbiati, Jacquemet, & Lobeck, 2021) of psychosocial risks and the demands and resources (Cerna, 2013). Individual behavior can be influenced by two main factors: psychological incentives, often enshrined in laws and social sanctions or rewards that arise from behavioral norms. Firstly, laws can impact behavioral norms by altering working conditions, leading to changes in how certain actions are perceived by society. When fewer people engage in condemned actions due to legal changes, the social stigma attached to these actions tends to increase. This creates a shift in the perceived social norm, as it genuinely changes in response to the implementation of the law. Secondly, laws can provide valuable

information about societal values, particularly when uncertainty exists regarding the prevailing social norm (Benabou, R., & Tirole, J., 2011). By clarifying acceptable behaviors, laws act as an informational channel that helps shape the perceived social norm (Bowles, 2008).

The intricate relationship between legal frameworks and societal behaviors is pivotal in determining the effectiveness of policies intended to foster cooperation. By examining the European laws concerning the prevention of psychosocial risks at the workplace, it becomes evident that there's an implied incentive structure akin to what's known in game theory. Bowles, Samuel, and Sandra Polania-Reyes (2012) hint at scenarios where mutual choices lead to collective advantages. In the context of these laws, when psychosocial risks are proactively addressed, the workplace becomes safer and healthier. Employees benefit by encountering reduced stress, avoiding instances of bullying, and generally experiencing an uplift in well-being and job satisfaction (Di Tecco, Persechino, & Iavicoli, 2023). Concurrently, employers reap the rewards of a motivated team, diminished turnover rates, and an enhanced organizational reputation.

In general, employment law plays a crucial role in shaping the relationship between employers and employees, influencing various aspects of the workplace and individual careers (Joseph & Norinsberg LLC, n.d.). By establishing a legal framework that governs employment contracts, working conditions, and employee rights, employment law ensures fair treatment, safeguards against discrimination and harassment, and provides mechanisms for resolving disputes. It creates a sense of security for workers, allowing them to better understand their rights and obligations within the professional realm. Moreover, employment law contributes to maintaining a harmonious work environment, as employers are compelled to adhere to regulations that promote safe working conditions and equitable treatment (Schipani, Milliken, & Dworkin, 2017). Ultimately, the impact of employment law extends beyond legal compliance, influencing workplace culture, organizational dynamics, and the overall well-being of the workforce.

Paul Edwards (2003) researched the influence of employment legislation on small businesses in the United Kingdom, focusing on labor costs, administrative difficulties, and general practices. The study, based on a qualitative investigation of 18 small businesses, revealed that the beneficial effects of employment laws are minimal and confirmed the market's influence. This means that in instances where conditions are not favorable, employment laws could become an additional issue to consider. However, in other cases, the negative effects of these regulations may be minimal. According to the research, the positive consequences are often modest, and increasing these benefits would require a broader range of supportive measures for enterprises (Edwards, 2003).

1.1. Aim

The purpose of this research project is to investigate the effect of European legislation on the prevention of psychosocial risks at work on the demands and resources of work among employees of small start-up companies in Greece. In its sub-objectives, the paper will investigate whether legislation has led to changes in the demands of workers and the resources available to them (Cerna, 2013).

The investigation of the purpose and individual objectives of work is particularly important as it concerns an issue faced by workers in Greece, where psychosocial risks at work are now increasingly recognized as a major problem (Belias et al., 2015). By investigating the impact of European legislation on the prevention of psychosocial risks at work, this research can provide insights into the effectiveness of legislation in improving working conditions and workers' well-being. Furthermore, by focusing on a small start-up, this research can provide valuable insights into the challenges and opportunities for implementing legislation in smaller organizations. Small start-ups often have limited

resources compared to larger businesses, struggle to navigate complex legal requirements and ensure compliance with European legislation, and may have unique work demands and pressures due to their business nature (Klotins et al., 2019). The findings of this research could be particularly useful for policymakers, employers, and workers as they seek to improve working conditions and promote the welfare of workers in small start-ups in Greece and other countries.

2. Theory and previous research

2.1. The Job Demands-Resources (JDR) and psychological hazards

The JD-R (job demands-resources) model is a highly influential model in the literature on work stress (Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner, & Schaufeli, 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2014, 2017). The model posits that all jobs have common features that can be classified as either 'demands' or 'resources' based on their impact on employees. Demands lead to a health impairment process that results in strain, exhaustion, burnout, and other negative work outcomes, while resources stimulate work engagement that leads to higher motivation and other positive work outcomes. Thus, job designers face the challenge of minimizing demands while maximizing resources to maintain the well-being and therefore the efficiency of the employees at optimal levels. Although it seems a bit of a paradox, as seeking efficiency is often one of the dynamics that put more stress on workers, in the last decade, tools from positive psychology could be useful to succeed it (Kour & Sriratanaviriyakul, 2019).

Over the last two decades, the JD-R model has gained immense popularity, inspiring hundreds of empirical studies and being used in thousands of organizations worldwide (Demerouti, Bakker, & Xanthopoulou, 2019). Its broad applicability across diverse professional environments is due to its ability to identify the common characteristics universally associated with work outcomes. A recent study has examined the relationship between national legislation on psychosocial risks and work-related stress and the presence of organizational action plans to prevent work-related stress, as well as their impact on psychosocial working conditions and reported work-related stress among European workers, using the Job and demand model (Jain et al., 2022). Specifically examined the relationship between job demands, job resources, and work-related stress among employees. Data were collected from the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (EWCS, 2017) with the choice of items informed by [Eurofound research \(2019\)](#). Job demands and individual-level job resources were assessed as latent factors. The findings suggest that job demands and job resources are essential factors influencing work-related stress among employees. Understanding the interplay between these factors can provide valuable insights for designing effective workplace interventions to improve employee well-being and performance (Jain et al., 2022).

According to the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, work stress can result from the interaction between job demands and job resources. Job demands refer to the physical, psychological, social, and organizational aspects of work that require sustained effort and are associated with physiological and psychological costs, while job resources refer to the physical, psychological, social, and organizational aspects of work that can help individuals achieve their work goals, reduce job demands, and are associated with physiological and psychological gains (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014). In the context of psychosocial hazards at work, job demands can be excessive pressures or other types of demands placed on employees, while job resources can be the availability of support, autonomy, and opportunities for personal and professional growth.

According to the Job Demands-Resources Model by Bakker and Demerouti (2014), job demands are physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical or mental effort and are associated with certain physiological and psychological costs. On the other hand, job resources are those physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that can be functional in achieving work goals, reducing job demands and associated physiological and psychological costs, or stimulating personal development.

Job demands and resources impact various work outcomes through two mediating pathways. Firstly, high demands and few resources lead to exhaustion, while a lack of job resources leads to disengagement, eventually leading to burnout, which is associated with negative outcomes such as impaired physical and mental health and absenteeism (Salvagioni et al., 2017).

Secondly, the presence of job resources triggers work engagement, a state of mind characterized by high levels of energy, mental resilience, a sense of significance, enthusiasm, challenge, and absorption, which is associated with positive outcomes such as higher productivity and positive affect at work (Bauer et al., 2014; Hanaysha, 2016).

The JD-R model also highlights the role of job crafting, which refers to proactive strategies taken by employees to alter their relationships with colleagues and clients and/or their appraisal of their work. Employees can reduce perceived job demands and enhance job resources, thereby making their work more enjoyable and meaningful.

The JD-R model has received good empirical support in the literature. The results of a comprehensive meta-analytic review indicate that the JD-R model serves as a strong and effective theoretical framework for evaluating employee well-being across diverse organizational settings. (Lesener et al., 2019; Tong et al., 2019). Additionally, research supports the proposition that work engagement is positively associated with dedication and commitment, while burnout is negatively related. A meta-analysis including only longitudinal research also supports the causal relationship between the concepts (Knight et al., 2017).

Overall, the JD-R model is a straightforward and effective framework that highlights three ways to improve employee well-being and productivity: (i) through the mitigation of job demands, (ii) through the enhancement of job resources, and (iii) through the facilitation of job crafting.

2.2. Psychosocial risks at the workplace

The impact of psychosocial hazards at work on employee wellbeing has been acknowledged by both the UK Health and Safety Executive and the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work. Imbalances between job demands and resources can lead to work stress, negatively affecting employee performance, social health, and overall wellbeing (Lekka, 2016).

Psychosocial risks and factors refer to elements in the organization or management of work that can elevate the possibility of psychological injury. The People at Work (People at Work, n.d.) survey evaluates these hazards based on job demands (aspects that can cause stress) and job resources (factors that can guard against stress), which have been established by prior research. When not managed adequately, these hazards can lead to negative impacts on mental health, such as stress, job burnout, and mental illness (People at Work, n.d.).

According to recent research, the prevention of cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases (CVD) continues to be a significant public health challenge worldwide, despite modern medical advancements. The development and progression of cardiovascular disease, among others, is influenced by psychosocial factors at work and health behaviors (Kivimaki & Kawachi, 2015). Occupational hazards have also become a growing concern in the development of CVD. Studies have shown that long working hours (≥ 55 hours per week) were associated with a 13% increase in coronary heart disease risk and a 33% increase in stroke risk while rotating night shift work was associated with a 4% increased risk of ischemic stroke for every 5 years (Kivimaki, 2015). Additionally, job strain was found to be significantly associated with coronary heart disease among both men and women of all ages and socioeconomic status. In the transportation industry, several factors, including age, metabolic syndrome, smoking, sedentary work, unconventional and irregular hours, shift work, long working hours, a tight delivery schedule, and job strain, contributed to the cumulative CVD impact (Vyas, 2015). It was found that workers in the transportation, construction, and mining industries had the highest prevalence of metabolic syndrome. Metabolic syndrome (MetS) is a cluster of metabolic

abnormalities and is considered a multi-morbid condition that contributes to CVD development (Nagata, 2019).

Psychosocial risks associated with IT work are considered job demands in the JD-R model. Their work encompasses adverse working patterns, extended working hours (particularly with globalization), heightened workload, demanding pace of work, and interference with personal and family life (Rocha and Debert-Ribeiro, 2004; Hoonakker et al., 2005; Das, 2012; Nayak, 2014).

These factors have been linked to work-related stress, burnout, mental health issues, insomnia, and high workforce turnover (Rocha and Debert-Ribeiro, 2004; Darshan et al., 2013; Nayak, 2014; Padma et al., 2015). The rapid advancements and constant need to keep pace with changes and developments in IT also create additional pressure on employees (Nayak, 2014).

Stress and psychological issues rank among the top three work-related conditions commonly reported by IT workers (Pinto et al., 2004; Rocha and Debert-Ribeiro, 2004; Sharma et al., 2006). The prevalence and nature of these problems vary based on job profiles, with higher incidence rates reported among software developers (Rashidi and Jalbani, 2009; Das, 2012; Nayak, 2014). A 2019 survey conducted in the UK revealed that technology professionals experienced stress levels comparable to those of healthcare workers, with 66% reporting work-related stress (BIMA, 2019). While stress itself is not typically classified as a medical condition, if prolonged or excessive, it can lead to mental ill-health, including anxiety and depression (HSE, 2020).

3. Method and material

3.1. Aim and Research Questions

The core objective of this study is to delve deeper into the nuanced effects of European legislation concerning the prevention of psychosocial risks at work, particularly focusing on its influence over job demands and the resources available in an emerging Greek start-up company.

From this central aim, the research question that emerged was:

- How do employees of a small Greek start-up company perceive the implementation of European legislation for the prevention of psychosocial risks at work?

Subquestion :

- Is the legislation having a direct, indirect, or no impact on the perception of the employees?

3.2. Sample

The study examines a small start-up company specializing in marine integrated systems and IT services, offering solutions to the marine industry. This company, with its expertise in communications, IT, and networking for over 3,000 ships, boasts a workforce of 30 individuals.

While 'Maximum Variation Sampling' typically captures a diverse array of backgrounds (Nikolopoulou, 2023; Palinkas et al., 2015), in this research, the method was adapted to explore perceptions across hierarchical levels and departments within the company. Given the company's size, the scope of variation typically linked with this method might seem restricted. However, the emphasis was on ensuring representation across functional roles to derive nuanced insights (Mason, 2002). The researcher opted for this focused approach, aligning with qualitative research methodologies that prioritize depth over breadth (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Campbell et al., 2020). The strategic nature of the sampling was directed at engaging respondents most inclined to provide insightful and pertinent information, optimizing the use of available research resources (Kelly, 2010: 317; Palinkas et al., 2015).

Upon liaising with the company's HR department, the researcher secured access to employees spanning a spectrum of roles, from varied departments to distinct hierarchical positions. From the total workforce of 30, a subset of 7 individuals was chosen, aiming to encapsulate a cross-section of experiences and insights as delineated by Bachman et al. (2009). This subset, accounting for roughly 20% of the company's workforce, was deemed sufficiently representative, considering the organization's size (Morse, 2000).

A detailed examination of the sample reveals its composition: it includes the CEO, the CMO, the Project Manager from the Software Development department, two developers and a server engineer from the Information Developer (AT) department, and a systems developer from the Information Communication department. This amalgamation of roles ensures representation from both administrative and technical functions, yielding a comprehensive insight into how European legislation on psychosocial risks at work permeates through diverse job functions.

By focusing on a select yet representative sample within the company, the research endeavors to elucidate the intricate relationship between European legislation and job demands and resources, framed within the confines of this burgeoning start-up.

Reasons for Choosing a Greek Company

Greece was selected for this research for multiple reasons. As a member of the European Union, Greece is mandated to comply with European legislation regarding the prevention of psychosocial risks at work. Greece's current economic challenges and heightened unemployment rates also present a unique context that could influence employee well-being and job performance. A notable gap exists in the research concerning the application of European legislation on psychosocial risks at work within Greece, especially when seen through the lens of the Job Demands-Resources (JDR) model. This research thus aims to bridge this gap by offering novel insights into the effectiveness of such legislation in the Greek milieu.

Greece's healthcare system and health promotion policies were profoundly affected by the financial crisis and the subsequent austerity measures. These measures, marked by severe cuts in public spending, led to a shortage of medical staff, equipment, and supplies, resulting in the closure of numerous healthcare facilities (Ifanti, Argyriou, Kalofonou, & Kalofonos (2013). This crisis can be viewed through the lens of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, where austerity measures acted as increased job demands, elevating stress levels and workloads for healthcare workers (Markovits et al., 2014).

While cultural factors undeniably influence any society's workplace dynamics, what sets Greece apart is how these factors interact with its current socio-economic landscape. While Georgas et al. (2006) highlighted the importance of familial and social relationships in Greek culture, it is essential to recognize that every culture's manifestation of these values can differ. The research does not seek to generalize these observations but rather to explore if and how they interplay with the perceptions of job demands and resources in Greece.

The findings from this study have potential implications beyond Greece. Countries facing similar economic hardships and enacting analogous legislation might glean valuable insights from this research, highlighting its broader relevance. The researcher's fluency in the native language and residence in Greece also provide practical benefits, aiding in a deeper engagement with the subject matter.

In summation, focusing on Greece provides an opportunity to explore the European legislation concerning psychosocial risks at work within a specific cultural and economic framework. This choice also augments the existing literature on the JDR model.

Reasons for Choosing a Small Start-Up Company

A "small start-up company" typically refers to a newly established business with a limited number of employees and relatively low annual revenue that seeks to address a particular market niche or develop a unique product or service. These companies are characterized by their agility, innovation-focused approach, and often lean operational models (Morse, 2000). Several motivating factors underscore the choice of such a small start-up as the research setting. Firstly, with their streamlined bureaucratic processes, small start-ups generally offer greater accessibility for research endeavors. This characteristic not only simplifies entry into the company but also ensures a more efficient data collection process within a condensed timeframe.

Moreover, examining the context of a small start-up elucidates the nuanced process of implementing legislation. By zooming in on this particular milieu, the study hopes to illuminate the distinct challenges and benefits tied to adopting European legislation on preventing psychosocial risks at work

within smaller corporate structures. Attributes inherent to small start-ups, such as a dynamic work atmosphere, constrained resources, and a pronounced sense of unpredictability, might profoundly shape both employee perceptions of job demands and resources and the company's approach to legislative compliance.

While the findings of this research may not be readily generalizable to all companies or sectors, they offer valuable insights into the experiences of employees in small start-up companies within Greece. Understanding the effects of implementing European legislation on preventing psychosocial risks at work in this particular context provides a foundation for comprehending the potential benefits and challenges of implementing such legislation on a broader scale.

Overall, the focus on a small start-up company with 30 employees in this research provides significant insights into the experiences of employees within a specific context. These insights can inform future research endeavors and policy initiatives aimed at enhancing working conditions and promoting employee well-being, not only in Greece but also in other countries.

3.3 Research and Data Collection

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews with employees, using a research tool tailored to the objectives of the study. The decision to employ semi-structured interviews stemmed from their inherent ability to obtain nuanced insights and viewpoints of participants on job demands, resources, and their perceptions regarding the enactment of European legislation on the prevention of psychosocial risks at work within the small start-up company setting (Isaris&Pourkos, 2015).

The semi-structured interview protocol was carefully designed to elicit rich and nuanced responses from participants. The interview questions were developed based on the theoretical framework of the Job Demands Resources (JDR) model, which served as a guiding framework for this research. The questions focused on employees' experiences of job demands and resources, as well as their perceptions of the implementation of European legislation on the prevention of psychosocial risks at work in the company. This approach allowed for an exploration of the specific effects and implications of the legislation on the work environment, employee well-being, and job performance.

The research followed the confidentiality of the information. Specifically, all data was stored with a code set by the participant. Simultaneously, the data were stored on the researcher's computer, with access restricted to only the researcher. The file containing the data will be retained for 3 years, after which it will be destroyed. Additionally, participants were given the right to withdraw from the research at any time they wished.

If a participant did not want their data to be included in the research, they were required to notify us of their wish within two weeks of the interview. Failure to do so resulted in the data being used in the research. Moreover, participants reserved the right not to answer any questions they felt uncomfortable with without needing to provide further explanation (EKT, 2010).

In particular, employees were fully informed about the study's purpose, methods, potential risks, and benefits. The research team emphasized that participation was voluntary, and individuals could withdraw at any time without any repercussions. Additionally, assurance was provided about the confidentiality of their data and their rights as participants. The team diligently protected employees' privacy and confidentiality throughout the study. All measures were taken to ensure that the collected data could not be linked to specific individuals and that the security of their information was maintained. The employees' right to autonomy was acknowledged and respected, allowing them to make their own decisions. At no point did the research team exert pressure or coerce employees into participating in the study or sharing information they might be uncomfortable with. Employees were

made aware of the researcher's purpose, any potential biases, and any conflicts of interest that could influence the research. Secure data storage methods were implemented, and data analysis was conducted in a manner that preserved employees' confidentiality (Orb et al., 2001).

The interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accuracy in capturing participants' responses. Following the interviews, the recordings were transcribed verbatim, allowing for detailed analysis and interpretation of the data. Transcription ensured that the researchers could thoroughly examine the participants' narratives and extract relevant themes and patterns.

3.4 Data analysis

The data collected from the semi-structured interviews was subjected to a rigorous and systematic process of analysis to derive meaningful insights and conclude. Thematic analysis, a widely used qualitative data analysis method, was employed to analyze the transcribed interview data (Braun & Clarke, 2006), and the abductive approach was used (Tavory & Timmermans, 2014). This approach entails a creative inferential process, allowing me to generate fresh hypotheses and theories based on surprising research evidence.

In the specific context of employing thematic analysis, a widely used qualitative data analysis method, I opted for an abductive approach. Rather than commencing with pre-existing themes or categories derived from a theoretical framework or existing literature, I decided to explore the data more openly. My strategy involved immersing myself in the data and repeatedly reviewing interview transcripts to develop a deep understanding of the participants' perspectives and experiences (Braun and Clarke, 2012). This immersion allowed for a thorough exploration of the intricacies and subtleties present in the responses, leading to the emergence of new and unexpected insights.

In my research, I adopted an abductive approach to coding in thematic analysis. This approach involved a more flexible and open-ended process of data analysis, allowing me to generate hypotheses and theories based on the evidence without imposing preconceived themes or categories. In particular, I first familiarized myself with the data, which consisted of transcribed interviews. I spent significant time reading and re-reading the data to gain a comprehensive understanding of the content. The initial Coding was made with an open mind and a focus on data-driven exploration. I began noting interesting and significant phrases, sentences, and patterns. I created initial codes that captured the essence of the data without trying to fit them into predefined categories. I continued the coding process, allowing themes or patterns to naturally emerge from the data. The goal was to let the data guide the process, avoiding any attempts to force it into preconceived categories. Engaging in abductive reasoning, I formulated preliminary hypotheses and theories based on the emerging themes. These hypotheses represented my best explanations for the observed patterns and phenomena in the data. Thematic analysis using an abductive approach is inherently iterative (Thompson, 2022). I constantly moved back and forth between the data, emerging themes, and hypotheses. As my understanding deepened, I refined both the hypotheses and the identified themes. New data and findings were compared with my evolving hypotheses and themes. This process allowed for necessary revisions and adjustments. Where possible, I sought feedback from the research participants to ensure that my interpretations aligned with their perspectives. I maintained a meticulous record of the coding process, including the evolution of themes and the development of hypotheses. In the final research report, I presented my findings in a narrative that reflected the abductive nature of the analysis. All the above demonstrated how I transitioned from data exploration to the emergence of themes and the formulation of hypotheses.

The abductive approach in thematic analysis proved to be invaluable in my research, especially when dealing with complex or ambiguous data. It allowed for the discovery of new insights and theories that

might not have been evident with a more deductive or pre-defined coding method, facilitating a deeper understanding of the phenomena under investigation (Thompson, 2022).

3.5 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations were of utmost importance throughout the research process, ensuring the protection of participants' rights, confidentiality, and adherence to ethical guidelines for research involving human participants (EKT, 2010). It is acknowledged that you have friendly ties with the head of the Human Resources department, who assisted in facilitating access to the company for the study.

To ensure integrity and minimize potential biases, several measures were implemented. Firstly, efforts were made to maintain objectivity and minimize any conflicts of interest that may arise from my affiliation with the company. Consequently, reflexivity was utilized as a technique or tool to evaluate the researcher's role in the research process, often to eliminate bias in research design and analysis, to maintain the researcher's objective position. This was achieved through self-reflection and a commitment to approach the study in an unbiased and impartial manner (Haynes, 2012).

In terms of participant recruitment, the involvement of the Human Resources department helped ensure a fair and transparent process. The head of HR provided access to the company, and steps were taken to ensure that participants were selected based on their willingness and the criteria of the research to participate rather than personal or professional connections. This helped mitigate any potential bias in participant selection.

Although, a personal relationship with the head of the HR department at the company I was studying, introduced the potential for bias into my research process. I was aware of several ways this relationship could influence my study. I had to be cautious not to focus excessively on the HR department due to my connection with its head, which could have resulted in neglecting other vital aspects of the company. Recognizing my relationship, I took care to remain open-minded during data collection and analysis to prevent any tendency to seek out or emphasize information that confirmed my existing beliefs or aligned with the HR head's opinions. I was aware that my association with the HR head might affect how employees or others within the organization responded during interviews or surveys. They might have been hesitant to provide candid feedback, thinking it could impact the HR department or my relationship with its head. I was mindful of the potential for preferential access to certain information or individuals within the company. To counter this, I ensured that I approached data collection in an unbiased and equitable manner I knew that my connection might influence my interpretation and analysis of the data. Therefore, I made a conscious effort to maintain objectivity and view the HR department and its practices impartially.

To address these challenges, I took steps to maintain transparency in my research. I openly acknowledged my relationship with the head of HR and highlighted any potential conflicts of interest. I also sought input from independent parties to ensure the research remained objective and unbiased. This approach was crucial to upholding the integrity and credibility of my research findings.

Additionally, informed consent was obtained from all participants, emphasizing their voluntary participation and their rights as research participants. They were informed about the purpose of the research, the procedures involved, and the confidentiality measures in place to protect their privacy. Participants were assured that their responses would be anonymized and that their involvement in the study would not have any impact on their employment status or performance evaluations.

To maintain confidentiality, data protection measures were strictly implemented. Identifiable information was carefully anonymized or removed from the collected data to ensure that participants'

privacy was safeguarded. Only the researchers directly involved in the study had access to the raw data, and the data was securely stored to prevent unauthorized access.

Transparency, rigorous data collection, and analysis methods were employed to minimize any potential bias and ensure the credibility of the study's findings. By adhering to ethical guidelines and implementing measures to mitigate bias, the study maintains a high level of ethical conduct, protects the rights and privacy of participants, and upholds the integrity of the research process.

3.6 Contributions to the academic field

This research offers empirical insights into the implementation of European legislation aimed at reducing psychosocial risks at work within the Greek context, specifically its influence on job demands and resources among employees in a small start-up company. These findings serve as a valuable addition to the existing corpus of literature on the Job Demands Resources (JDR) model and workplace well-being. They highlight the unique challenges and prospects associated with enforcing this legislation in nascent corporate settings, such as small start-ups. Moreover, this study underscores the utility and adaptability of qualitative research methods when investigating intricate matters such as the practical application of European legislation in niche environments. By navigating this specific context using qualitative methods, the research exemplifies how nuanced, in-depth insights can be extracted, which can be instrumental for future inquiries grounded in the JDR model framework.

The practical implications of this research are significant for policymakers, employers, and employees. By identifying the challenges and opportunities in implementing the legislation, the findings can inform policy initiatives aimed at enhancing working conditions and promoting employee well-being. Moreover, employers can gain insights on how to support employee well-being within the context of the legislation. Additionally, this research opens up new avenues for future investigations on the implementation of European legislation on preventing psychosocial risks at work. The findings highlight potential areas for further exploration, such as examining the role of leadership and organizational culture in supporting employee well-being within a small start-up company.

Overall, this research contributes empirical evidence, practical implications, and future research directions for understanding the implementation of European legislation on preventing psychosocial risks at work in Greece. It adds to the knowledge base on the JDR model and workplace well-being while providing valuable insights for policymakers, employers, and future researchers.

3.7 Limitations

The study was constrained by a small sample size, comprising only 30 employees from a single start-up company. Consequently, the generalizability of the findings to other companies or industries should be approached with caution, as broad conclusions based solely on this data may not be warranted. Another limitation is the reliance on self-reported data, which may be influenced by biases such as social desirability or recall bias. These biases could potentially affect the accuracy and validity of the findings, as they are based on the participants' subjective perceptions and experiences. The cross-sectional design employed in this study also poses limitations, as it prevents the establishment of causal relationships between the implementation of European legislation on preventing psychosocial risks at work and job demands and resources. Longitudinal or experimental designs would be necessary for drawing definitive causal inferences (Farrington, Loeber, & Welsh, 2010).

The findings of this research are specific to the particular context of the small start-up company and the implementation of European legislation on preventing psychosocial risks at work in Greece. Generalizing the findings to other countries or contexts should be done cautiously, taking into account the unique factors and circumstances of each setting. Additionally, it is important to acknowledge that

the interpretation of the Job Demands Resources (JDR) model may vary, potentially influencing the findings of the study.

Different interpretations of the model could introduce variations in the understanding and application of job demands and resources within the research.

Despite these limitations, the research provides valuable insights into the perception of employees of a small Greek start-up company of European legislation on preventing psychosocial risks at work in Greece. It contributes to the existing body of knowledge in this area and serves as a basis for further investigation and policy considerations.

3.8 Validity and Reliability

Ensuring the validity and reliability of qualitative research will be achieved through the satisfaction of specific research consistency criteria and the thorough description of the research process followed. Qualitative research, perhaps more so than quantitative research, has been and continues to be highly criticized for its validity and reliability (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

To address this criticism, methodological strategies will be applied that will strengthen the consistency of the methodological design and the very conduct of qualitative research (Eisenhart & Howe, 1992). To do this, a full description of the strategy used in all phases of the research process will be provided, strengthening the quality of the research and its overall integrity. To ensure the quality and integrity of this study, meticulous strategies were employed. These strategies aimed not only to adhere to the established criteria, ensuring research consistency, but also to present a transparent research process. This transparency allows readers to independently assess the study's validity and reliability. There exist various terminologies in the literature that address the notion of research quality, such as 'legitimacy' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000), 'standards' (Eisenhart & Howe, 1992), and 'varieties' (Lincoln, 2001). In this study, the benchmarks put forth by Guba and Lincoln (1982, in Lincoln, 2001) were adopted: research reliability, transferability/generalizability, reliability, and confirmability. 'Confirmability', in particular, refers to the degree to which the results of the research can be corroborated or substantiated by other researchers. It emphasizes the neutrality and objective nature of the data and analysis. In essence, it ensures that the findings, conclusions, and interpretations are rooted in the data and not merely figments of the researcher's imagination or bias (Guba & Lincoln, 1982). This aligns with the overarching goal of transparency, permitting other scholars to trace the research path taken and validate its credibility.

The integration of confirmability into qualitative research, particularly in the realm of interviews, enhanced the credibility of findings (Nyirenda, Kumar, Theobald et al., 2020). To promote confirmability, several steps were taken in interview-based qualitative research: maintaining detailed records of the research process, engaging in discussions with colleagues for bias identification and interpretation refinement, establishing rapport with participants over an extended period, validating interpretations with participants, employing triangulation for data corroboration, practicing reflexivity to address personal biases, adhering to systematic coding processes, ensuring transparent reporting, and seeking external audits for unbiased perspectives. This iterative process bolstered the dependability and validity of research outcomes (Moon, Brewer, Januchowski-Hartley, Adams, & Blackman, 2016).

To bolster the reliability of this research, member checks have been employed as a rigorous strategy. Throughout the research process, both the raw data (i.e., recorded interviews) and the derived interpretations of the research findings will be presented to the participating employees. This is executed to validate their accuracy, ensuring that the interpretations align with the participants' intended meanings and experiences. By obtaining the affirmation of the research findings directly

from the participants, we achieve a level of participant validation that enhances the credibility of the study. The concept of transferability, often equated with generalizability in qualitative studies, is another criterion addressed. Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other contexts or groups. To enhance this aspect, a rich and detailed description of the research data and findings has been provided. According to Denzin (1994a), the depth and thoroughness of such descriptions should allow readers to recognize similarities between the presented context and their own unique experiences. This level of detailed description serves a twofold purpose: Firstly, it enables readers to evaluate the extent to which the research context matches their own, aiding in their judgment of transferability. Secondly, it is pivotal in establishing the researcher's claims and assertions, allowing the audience to gauge the resonance of the study's conclusions with their own experiences and perspectives.

4 Results and analysis

4.1. Perception of European legislation on the prevention of psychosocial risks at work by employees

The following thematic analysis explores employees' perceptions in a small start-up company, established in Greece, regarding the implementation of European legislation to prevent psychosocial risks at work. Seven interviewees, employees of a small start-up company operating in the marine integrated systems and IT services sectors, provided their insights. Through a qualitative analysis of their responses, key themes emerged, shedding light on how these employees perceive the impact of European legislation on their work environment regarding demands and resources. The aim was to explore the perception of European legislation on the prevention of psychosocial risks at work by employees through the Job and Demand model. The analysis encompasses the interviewees' responses to questions related to the work environment, coping with work demands, company policies and procedures, training and support, the resources that contribute to the well-being of employees as well as suggestions for further improvement. By identifying key themes from these responses, an understanding of the perception of the employees of the European Legislation is obtained. The thematic analysis presented below sheds light on the significance of the resources in promoting employee well-being and the demands that employees face in the context of a small start-up company.

Table 1. Table of thematic analysis regarding the 1st research question.

Themes	Representative Answers from Interviewees
<p style="text-align: center;">Awareness of Legislation:</p>	<p>Interviewee 1: “I know about the abuse at work being illegal, so in my company, I could say that the legislation is implemented absolutely as behaviors such as mobbing or extreme stress are not tolerated by anyone in the company”</p> <p>Interviewee 2: “I don't know exactly, but I believe that harassment and any kind of violence in the workplace is illegal. in my company, we don't tolerate such behavior, and I as a person in general”</p> <p>Interviewee 3: “ I don't know exactly, just on a more general level that you prohibit mobbing”</p>

	<p>Interviewee 4: “I know there is legislation but I don't believe it has been applied to very large companies”</p> <p>Interviewee 5: “I know it but I think it sounds more specific as far as stress and mobbing are concerned”</p> <p>Interviewee 6: “I know that it exists in a larger context that the employer should care for the wellbeing of the employees and reduce psychological hazards”</p>
Positive Alignment:	<p>Interviewee 1: “I believe that European rules and guidelines make sure everyone follows certain standards for safe and healthy work conditions.”</p> <p>Interviewee 3: “Even if I don't know all the details, I believe these laws are important.”</p>
Importance of Addressing Issues:	<p>Interviewee 1: “This is why European laws are mostly about dealing with problems that affect people's feelings and thoughts at work.”</p> <p>Interviewee 2: “I think it's really, really important to handle issues that can make people feel bad while working.”</p>
Employee Rights:	<p>Interviewee 2: “I don't know exactly, but I believe that harassment and any kind of violence in the workplace is illegal.”</p> <p>Interviewee 4: “I know there is legislation but I'm not entirely certain, my understanding is that harassment and all forms of violence within the workplace are against the law”</p>
Empowerment and Standards:	<p>Interviewee 4: “The rules also show that things like tools and stuff you need for work are important.”</p> <p>Interviewee 6: “They might make bosses make sure the workplace is good for workers' feelings, by thinking about things like time, control, help from others, and balancing work with personal life”</p>

<p>Improvement and Compliance:</p>	<p>Interviewee 7: “Policies and procedures although delimiting risks are based on the enforcement of rules and procedures. They might be quite effective, but I don't have the necessary experience to judge that”</p> <p>Interviewee 6: “maybe an organizational psychologist that you can make an appointment with once a month”</p>
<p>Need for Guidelines:</p>	<p>Interviewee 7: “The closer the company is to its partners, the easier it will be to prevent potential problems”</p> <p>Interviewee 6: “There should be an official policy”</p>
<p>Demands related to work requirements and deadlines</p>	<p>Interviewee 1: “My position has a hunt to reach the goals due to the new technology that is demanding in my field... strict deadlines”</p> <p>Interviewee 2: “The requirements are the deadlines that the nature of my work has”</p> <p>Interviewee 3: “When we have critical requests from clients that must be done immediately... many repeated messages with requests... in a short period of time.”</p> <p>Interviewee 4: “As requirements are that I have to find products that are in short supply... Timing is the most difficult in my workplace.”</p>
<p>Responsibility and workload</p>	<p>Interviewee 5: “My position has a lot of responsibility... I have to be constantly alert and sometimes outside of office hours.”</p> <p>Interviewee 6: “To follow all the related deadlines... I have to communicate with a lot of people and negotiate at the same time.”</p> <p>Interviewee 7: “Effort to cover many work roles by fewer people... It takes daily painstaking effort to maintain this.”</p>

The thematic analysis provides valuable insights into how employees in a small, newly established Greek company perceive the implementation of European legislation for the prevention of psychosocial risks at work. By examining the representative answers of the interviewees, several key themes emerged.

Awareness of Legislation: Some interviewees are generally aware of the existence of European legislation regarding the prevention of psychosocial risks at work. However, their knowledge about the specific details of the legislation is limited.

Positive Alignment: Interviewees perceive that European legislation is aligned with the goals of promoting a safe and healthy work environment. They believe that the legislation sets standards for employers to follow to ensure the well-being of employees.

Importance of Addressing Issues: Interviewees acknowledge the importance of addressing issues related to psychological hazards at work. They believe that the legislation focuses on handling problems that can negatively impact employees' feelings and mental states while working.

Employee Rights: The legislation is seen as a means to provide workers with certain rights and protections. Interviewees mentioned that the legislation helps ensure that employees are not subjected to harassment, violence, or extreme stress in the workplace.

Empowerment and Standards: European legislation is perceived to empower employees by outlining clear rules and guidelines for employers to follow. It is believed that these standards contribute to creating a work environment that prioritizes employees' mental health and well-being.

Improvement and Compliance: Some interviewees suggest that the legislation could be improved by providing more specific guidelines for preventing psychological hazards. They also express the idea that adherence to the legislation could lead to better management of work-related stressors.

Need for Guidelines: Interviewees recommend that official guidelines based on European legislation should be established to ensure that all companies have specific procedures and practices in place to prevent psychosocial risks at work.

Demands related to work requirements and deadlines: Interviewees acknowledged the existence of demanding work requirements and strict deadlines in their roles. They highlighted the need to reach goals and handle new technologies, which can be challenging. The pressure to respond to critical client requests within a short period of time was also mentioned. Interviewee 4 specifically mentioned the difficulties of finding products in short supply, which adds complexity to their workload. These findings align with the theory that employees in IT companies face significant work demands and time pressures.

Responsibility and workload: Interviewees recognized the high level of responsibility associated with their positions. They mentioned the need to be constantly alert, even outside of office hours, and the importance of meeting deadlines. The role often involves managing multiple responsibilities, communicating with various stakeholders, and negotiating tasks. Interviewee 7 highlighted the daily effort required to cover multiple work roles with fewer staff members. This indicates that employees in small start-up companies shoulder substantial responsibilities and workloads.

Supportive work environment: The interviewees consistently highlighted the positive work environment in their company. They described it as friendly, people-oriented, and characterized by good communication and relationships between colleagues and higher-ups. The presence of a supportive work environment contributes to employee well-being by fostering a sense of belonging, positive social interactions, and open communication channels. Interviewee 7 specifically emphasized the importance of creating a climate of balance, equality, and cooperation, further highlighting the significance of a supportive work environment in a small start-up company. This work environment is under European regulations, which might be slightly influenced by a general awareness of the legal framework. However, since there isn't a direct correlation with the law, other elements, like the company's culture, could play a role in shaping this alignment.

Mutual help and support: The interviewees acknowledged the presence of mutual help and support within their organizations. They emphasized the value of being mutually supportive rather than impersonal, particularly in contrast to larger companies. The culture of mutual help and support was attributed to both company policies and the personalities of the owners who cultivated this climate. This resource plays a crucial role in promoting employee well-being by creating a sense of solidarity, teamwork, and assistance during challenging times. This supportive work environment aligns with

European legislation, which encourages employers to create supportive work environments that consider factors like workload, control, and social support. This resource contributes to employees' well-being by fostering a balanced and less stressful atmosphere. However, there is no strong caution as the employees don't directly state examples from European legislation.

Proper organization and clear roles: The interviewees noted the importance of proper organization and clear roles within their company. Having well-defined roles and job descriptions provides employees with clarity and a sense of direction in their work. This resource contributes to employee well-being by reducing ambiguity, promoting efficiency, and facilitating effective collaboration within the organization. By implementing proper organization and clearly defined roles, the company is effectively addressing one of the key factors that contribute to psychosocial risks at work. Ambiguity and role confusion can lead to stress, burnout, and a sense of insecurity among employees. Therefore, the practice of establishing well-defined roles not only enhances operational efficiency and collaboration, as mentioned by the interviewees but also directly supports the goals of European legislation by reducing job demands that can negatively impact employees' mental well-being. This alignment underscores the significance of fostering a work environment that is conducive to employee health and safety, which is a fundamental principle of European legislation regarding the prevention of psychosocial risks at work. While a direct impact of the legislation is not evident, there appears to be an indirect influence stemming from the CEO's overall understanding of the law. This understanding prompts proactive measures aimed at fostering a positive working environment.

Communication and teamwork: Effective communication and teamwork were emphasized as essential resources for employee well-being. The interviewee highlighted the significance of open channels of communication between everyone in the company. Clear and open communication channels enable effective collaboration, enhance trust among team members, and foster a positive work environment. These resources contribute to employee well-being by promoting transparency, cooperation, and a sense of collective purpose. European legislation emphasizes the importance of fostering a positive and inclusive work environment that prioritizes employees' well-being. The interviewees' recognition of effective communication as a resource aligns with the legislative goal of promoting a safe and mentally healthy workplace. Open communication channels, as highlighted by the interviewees, not only facilitate collaboration and teamwork but also contribute to reducing the potential for misunderstandings, conflicts, and job demands that can lead to stress and mental strain. By nurturing a work environment where communication is transparent and cooperation is valued, the company aligns with the aims of European legislation to create a conducive atmosphere that safeguards employees' mental health. While we can see an alignment that underscores the interconnectedness between effective communication, teamwork, and the broader objectives of promoting psychological well-being within the framework of European legislation, there is no direct link to the legislation. It can be inferred that a modest yet favorable impact is attributed to a broad comprehension of legislation related to well-being in the work environment.

The demands related to work and the responsibility and workload state that the challenges described by the interviewees regarding demanding work requirements, strict deadlines, and time pressures align with the objectives of European legislation aimed at preventing psychosocial risks in the workplace. The acknowledgment of these challenges highlights the potential for elevated stress levels and mental strain among employees. European legislation, in its focus on creating safe and healthy work environments, directly addresses such demands by encouraging companies to assess and manage psychological hazards associated with high workloads and time constraints. In addition, the findings underscore the crucial significance of resources in driving employee satisfaction, engagement, and holistic well-being, which aligns with the philosophy of European legislation, but there is no evidence that this is due to the direct impact of the legislation.

Overall, the perception of European legislation on the prevention of psychosocial risks at work is that it serves as a valuable framework for creating a workplace culture that promotes employees' mental health and well-being. While some interviewees may not have in-depth knowledge of the specifics of the legislation, they recognize its importance in shaping positive work environments and supporting workers' rights. In summary, a general understanding of the law's relevance to workplace well-being and job demands can empower employees, foster a culture of respect and accountability, and encourage open communication. It's important to note that while general knowledge of the law can have positive effects on behavior, it may not fully substitute for a comprehensive understanding of how the law specifically addresses job demands and psychosocial risks. Therefore, organizations should prioritize educating employees about the direct connections between the legislation and their unique work contexts to maximize the positive impact on behavior and well-being.

4.2 Assessing the Legislative Impact on the Employees' Perceptions

The following thematic analysis delves into the specific effects of European legislation on the prevention of psychosocial risks at work and its impact on work requirements in a small Greek start-up company. It specifically explores whether there is a direct, indirect, or no impact of European legislation on the perceptions of employees. Through qualitative interviews conducted with seven employees from various small start-ups, valuable insights were gained regarding the impact on their perceptions of the implementation of European legislation. By examining the interviewees' responses, distinct themes emerged, shedding light on the perceptions of employees regarding the European legislation in this company. The thematic analysis presented below provides a representative overview of these findings.

Table 2. Table of thematic analysis regarding the subquestion.

Themes	Representative Answers from Interviewees
Ensuring safe and healthy work conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewee 1: “I believe that European rules and guidelines make sure everyone follows certain standards for safe and healthy work conditions...” • Interviewee 4: “The rules also show that things like tools and stuff you need for work are important. They also say that the things you have to do at work should not be too hard on you.” • Interviewee 7: “These rules are super important, especially where things are really tough and people feel stressed a lot. They should be part of the laws for workplaces.”
Protecting workers' mental health and well-being	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewee 2: “I think it's really, really important to handle issues that can make people feel bad while working.” • Interviewee 3: “This stuff helps make the laws better, so employers have clearer rules to find and manage problems that might make workers feel stressed or upset.” • Interviewee 6: “Even if I don't know all the details, I believe these laws are important. They might make bosses make sure the workplace is good for workers' feelings, by thinking about things like time, control, help from others, and balancing work with personal life. This could keep workers happier and help them work better.”
Empowering workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewee 5: “Workers need to know their rights and not be

	<p>afraid if something bad happens at work. I'm not sure exactly how to fix things if there's a problem, though. I think workers need more information to help them.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewee 7: “Basically, these laws create a clear plan that puts workers' mental health first, which makes sure everyone feels good in general. This plan makes sure work is safe and nice for everyone.”
Employee Awareness and Information	<p>Interviewee 5: “Workers need to know their rights and not be afraid if something bad happens at work. I'm not sure exactly how to fix things if there's a problem, though. I think workers need more information to help them.”</p> <p>Interviewee 6: “Even if I don't know all the details, I believe these laws are important. They might make bosses make sure the workplace is good for workers' feelings, by thinking about things like time, control, help from others, and balancing work with personal life</p>
Absence of psychosocial risks	<p>Interviewee 1: “The environment is very friendly, very people-oriented, the employer is very open to discussion”</p> <p>Interviewee 2: “I am very happy with the atmosphere of the company, something that for me is one of the most necessary things to have, the working environment is very good”</p> <p>Interviewee 3: “It's a nice atmosphere, we're just a few people. My job is creative, not like a chore.”</p> <p>Interviewee 4:”The environment is very good and I will discuss what concerns me and I will also set my limits, what I can do and what I cannot do and it will be accepted.”</p> <p>Interviewee 5: “the work environment is positive and we can get along. The climate is very good because I have people who get along, which for me is very important.”</p> <p>Interviewee 6: “my work environment is very good”</p> <p>Interviewee 7: “to give the right for everyone to participate (in their way) in the course of the company, to always have an open channel of communication between everyone, to create a climate of balance, equality, and cooperation.On a personal level, as one of the managers of the company, I try to gain the respect of my team, purely on the level of knowledge and guidance without trying to impose, although this is not always possible.”</p>
Supportive work environment	<p>Interviewee 1: “The environment is very friendly, very people-oriented...”</p> <p>Interviewee 2: “The working environment is very good. We all have very good communication with each other and with the higher-ups.”</p>

	<p>Interviewee 5: “The work environment is positive and we can get along... which for me is very important.”</p> <p>Interviewee 7: “Create a climate of balance, equality, and cooperation... always have an open channel of communication between everyone.”</p>
Mutual help and support	<p>Interviewee 1: “We are mutually supportive and not impersonal like in a large company... there is also immediacy which is positive.”</p> <p>Interviewee 3: “There is a team spirit, and if someone needs help, we rely on mutual help.”</p> <p>Interviewee 4: “The company promotes mutual help and mutual support... through the personality of the owners who have cultivated this climate.”</p> <p>Interviewee 5: “The company's climate is projected as policy indirectly... mutual help and mutual support.”</p> <p>Interviewee 6: “There is mutual help and support... the general climate fosters these aspects.”</p>
Proper organization and clear roles	<p>Interviewee 1: “Everyone has a clear role in the company with a job description which helps a lot.”</p> <p>Interviewee 4: “There is proper organization in terms of time... everyone has a clear role.”</p>
Communication and teamwork	<p>Interviewee 7: “Always have an open channel of communication between everyone... create a climate of balance, equality, and cooperation.”</p>
Opportunities for personal development and training	<p>Interviewee 4: “The owners give you the opportunity for further development... support lifelong learning and personal development.”</p> <p>Interviewee 7: “Emphasize extra-professional activities (bonding, coaching, etc.) and the existence of consulting services.”</p>
Awareness of Legislation (Resource):	<p>Interviewee 1: I know about the abuse at work being illegal, so in my company, I could say that the legislation is implemented absolutely as behaviors such as mobbing or extreme stress are not tolerated by anyone in the company.</p> <p>Interviewee 2: I don't know exactly, but I believe that harassment and any kind of violence in the workplace is illegal. in my company, we don't tolerate such behavior, and I as a person in general</p> <p>Interviewee 3: I don't know exactly, just on a more general level that you prohibit mobbing</p> <p>Interviewee 4: I know there is legislation but I don't believe it has been applied to very large companies</p> <p>Interviewee 5: I know it but I think it sounds more specific as far as stress and mobbing are concerned</p> <p>Interviewee 6: I know it exists in a larger context that the employer should care for the wellbeing of the employees and reduce psychological hazards</p> <p>.</p>

The thematic analysis provides insights into the specific effects of European legislation on the prevention of psychosocial risks at work and their impact on work requirements in a small Greek start-up company. By examining the representative answers of the interviewees, several key themes emerge.

Ensuring safe and healthy work conditions: The interviewees emphasized the importance of European legislation in ensuring safe and healthy work conditions. This includes things like ensuring that workplaces are physically safe, that employees are not exposed to excessive noise or hazardous chemicals, and that they have adequate breaks and rest periods. It also includes ensuring that employees have access to the resources they need to protect their mental health, such as training on stress management or counseling services.

Protecting workers' mental health and well-being: The interviewees also acknowledged the importance of European legislation in protecting workers' mental health and well-being. This includes things like ensuring that employees have a sense of control over their work, that they are not subjected to bullying or harassment, and that they have access to support if they are struggling. European legislation can also help to reduce stress levels in the workplace by requiring employers to implement certain policies, such as flexible working arrangements or regular breaks.

Empowering workers: The interviewees also discussed the importance of European legislation for empowering workers. This includes things like ensuring that employees are aware of their rights and that they have access to support if they are experiencing problems at work. European legislation can also help to empower workers by giving them a voice in the workplace and by requiring employers to consider their views when making decisions.

Employee Awareness and Information: The interviewees emphasized the importance of employees being aware of their rights and responsibilities under European legislation. This includes things like knowing what constitutes a safe and healthy work environment, understanding the signs of stress and burnout, and knowing where to get help if they are struggling. The interviewees also highlighted the need for clear communication from employers about European legislation. This includes things like providing employees with information about their rights and responsibilities, explaining how the legislation applies to their workplace, and making sure that employees have access to information in a language they understand. The interviewees also discussed the importance of training for employees under European legislation. This includes things like training on how to identify and manage stress, training on how to deal with bullying and harassment, and training on how to access support services. Some interviewees also expressed a need for more information about European legislation. They felt that the available information was often too technical or difficult to understand. They also felt that there was a lack of information about how the legislation applied to their specific workplace. Overall, the thematic analysis suggests that employee awareness and information are essential for the effective implementation of European legislation. Employers need to make sure that employees are aware of their rights and responsibilities under the legislation, and they need to provide employees with clear communication about how the legislation applies to their workplace. Training for employees on European legislation can also help ensure that employees can understand and apply the legislation in their work. This suggests that the law has raised awareness of the importance of psychosocial risks in the workplace and encouraged employers to take steps to prevent them. Even if the employees did not specifically mention specific examples of implementation of the law, the fact that they were aware of the law suggests that it has had a positive impact on their work environment. This is because knowledge of the law can empower employees to speak up about problems they are facing at work and to demand a safe and healthy work environment. These are some ways in which general knowledge of the law can be seen as an effect:

- It can help employees identify potential problems in their work environment.

- It can help employees to know their rights and to demand a safe and healthy work environment.
- It can help employees feel more empowered to speak up about problems they are facing at work.

Absence of psychosocial risks: The interviewees reported a general absence of psychological hazards in their work environments. They did not mention facing bullying, harassment, or excessive workload, so there was an absence of demands. Additionally, the interviewees in the study all mentioned that their workplace had a positive work environment, open communication, a balanced work-life balance, and respect, which can be seen as resources. The above findings align with European legislation. However, it is important to note that the interviewees did not specifically mention the European legislation. It is possible that the positive work environments of their workplaces were also influenced by other factors, such as the culture of the company or the personality of the employer.

In summary, the thematic analysis suggests that European legislation has had little positive impact on the welfare and working conditions of workers in small Greek start-ups. Participants recognized the role of legislation in creating safe environments, addressing psychosocial risks, and improving legal frameworks. They also saw the legislation's emphasis on mental health and general well-being as a positive step towards promoting a supportive and protective work environment. However, they were unable to provide concrete examples of the legislation's application in the workplace and also called for increased awareness, support, and resources to effectively navigate workplace challenges. While both the employers and employees in the small startup company demonstrated a fundamental grasp of the law, their comprehension of the complete extent of this legal asset remained constrained. We could conclude that their positive work environment was also due to other factors, such as the company culture or the employer's personality.

5 Discussion

The analysis revealed that the impact of European legislation on the prevention of psychosocial risks at work may not be as substantial as anticipated. Participants recognized the role of legislation in creating safe environments, addressing psychosocial risks, and improving legal frameworks. They also saw the legislation's emphasis on mental health and general well-being as a positive step toward promoting a supportive and protective work environment. However, they were unable to provide concrete examples of the legislation's application in the workplace and called for increased awareness, support, and resources to navigate workplace challenges.

This inability to correlate the positive environment with the legislation might also imply the existence of a legislative gap. The above finding could align with the fact that, during this research, and specifically on April 27, 2023, the EESC presented an opinion entitled “Precarious work and mental health”, stressing the need to adopt binding legislation at the EU level and to extend and update the framework directive on health and safety at work (89/391/EEC). “We need a quality working environment that is not a source of physical or psychological suffering. To achieve this, **“we need a European directive dealing specifically with psychosocial risks”**”, said the opinion's rapporteur, José Antonio Moreno Díaz (etui, 2023).

A noteworthy finding is the role of company culture in shaping the impact of European legislation. While employees acknowledged the importance of legislation, the positive work environment in this small start-up company was influenced by other factors, such as the company's culture and the employer's personality. This suggests that even with a legal framework in place, the organizational culture and leadership style play a significant role in determining the well-being and job satisfaction of employees.

Despite the lack of in-depth knowledge of specific legal details, employees recognized the importance of European legislation in shaping positive work environments. A general understanding of the law's relevance to workplace well-being and job demands empowered employees, fostered a culture of respect and accountability, and encouraged open communication. While general knowledge of the law can positively impact behavior, it may not fully substitute for a comprehensive understanding of how the law specifically addresses job demands and psychosocial risks.

These findings hold several implications for both policymakers and a small start-up company. Firstly, it underscores the need for increased awareness and education about the specific applications of European legislation in the workplace. Organizations should prioritize educating employees about the direct connections between the legislation and their unique work contexts to maximize the positive impact on behavior and well-being.

Moreover, the small start-up company seems to recognize the significance of fostering a positive work environment and supporting their employees through various resources, such as a supportive culture, training, and growth opportunities. While legislation provides a framework, the actual implementation depends on the company's commitment to employee well-being.

Policymakers can use these findings to fine-tune legislation and ensure that it is not only comprehensive but also accessible and understandable for both employers and employees. The legislation should emphasize the role of a supportive work environment and provide guidelines for its implementation.

This study has certain limitations. The sample size is relatively small, focusing on the specific context of a small Greek start-up company. Therefore, the findings may not be fully generalizable to larger organizations or different cultural settings. Additionally, self-reported data may be subject to response bias, and more objective measures could enhance the study's robustness. It is important to note that not all respondents were equally represented by each of the identified themes. This variation in theme coverage could be attributed to the unstructured nature of our qualitative interviews. During the interview process, participants naturally gravitated towards themes that resonated most with their experiences and perspectives. This phenomenon reflected the organic and participant-driven approach inherent in qualitative research. To provide greater clarity on this matter, we explicitly outlined the distribution of themes among our participants in our final report. We emphasized themes discussed by all participants and those specific to subgroups, thus enhancing the transparency of our research findings and facilitating a clearer understanding of the variability in theme coverage.

In conclusion, this discussion chapter highlights the nuanced relationship between European legislation and employee well-being in a small Greek start-up company. While the legislation provides a legal framework, other factors, such as company culture, play a pivotal role in shaping the work environment. However, even a foundational understanding of the legislation serves as a valuable tool, leading to positive outcomes. This study calls for increased awareness and a comprehensive understanding of the legislation's application to foster a supportive and healthy work environment, emphasizing the importance of the Job Demands-Resources model in understanding this relationship.

6 Conclusions

This study aimed to explore the perceptions and effects of European legislation for the prevention of psychosocial risks at work in a small Greek start-up company. Through thematic analysis and aligning the findings with the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, several important conclusions can be drawn.

The impact of European legislation on the well-being of employees in a small start-up Greek company, given their basic knowledge of the legislation, can be understood through the lens of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory. While the direct effects may not be immediately apparent, the legislation operates as a set of resources and influences that indirectly interact with the work environment and employees' well-being in alignment with the JD-R theory.

Firstly, the results indicate that the implementation of European legislation introduces specific resources aimed at fostering a positive work environment. While employees might not overtly attribute these changes to the legislation, **their general knowledge** indirectly influences the allocation of resources within the organization. The presence of a positive and supportive work environment, characterized by open communication, mutual help, and support, emerged as a key theme. These factors contribute to employee well-being, satisfaction, and engagement, mitigate the impact of job demands on well-being, and align with the principles of the JD-R model. The findings are consistent with the theory's emphasis on the importance of job resources in promoting positive work outcomes. In this context, legislative resources play a small but important role in buffering the potential negative effects of job demands and promoting employees' well-being.

Secondly, through the study, we gained a basic knowledge of the legislation as far as awareness and their rights are concerned. The above empowers individuals to voice concerns and assert their rights. This empowerment acts as a psychological resource, enabling employees to cope with job demands more effectively. Even though employees might not fully comprehend the legislation's intricacies, the sense of empowerment aligns with the JD-R theory's notion that personal resources mitigate the influence of job demands on well-being.

Thirdly, the study highlights the work demands and pressures faced by employees in a small start-up company. Strict deadlines, workload stress, and high levels of responsibility were identified as significant challenges. These findings correspond to the JD-R model's notion of job demands, which can lead to negative outcomes such as burnout and exhaustion. Organizations need to address these demands and provide adequate resources and support to mitigate their negative impact. This indicates that their limited knowledge of the law indirectly influences the allocation of resources within the organization.

Fourthly, the study also identifies areas for improvement. The lack of specific training and support for psychological hazards suggests the need for further development and implementation of comprehensive preventative measures. Enhancing training programs and support systems can help employees better cope with work demands and promote their well-being. This aligns with the JD-R model's emphasis on the importance of resources in fostering work engagement and positive work outcomes.

Fifthly, the study findings indicate that the positive work environment, which is under European regulations according to the Job and Demand theory, is also influenced by other factors such as the company's culture and the personality of the employer.

Sixthly, the employees within the small startup company exhibited a basic understanding of the law, yet their awareness of the full scope of this legal resource was limited. This lack of ability to connect the positive environment to the legislation could also suggest the presence of a gap in the legislation.

Additionally, the study reveals that the effectiveness of European legislation is influenced by contextual factors. The findings should be interpreted within the specific context of a small Greek start-up and may not be directly generalizable to other settings. Organizations should consider their unique characteristics and adapt policies and practices accordingly to ensure ongoing support for employee well-being.

In conclusion, the study illuminates that European legislation's impact on preventing psychosocial risks at work is aligned with the principles of the JD-R theory. Although it becomes evident that the influence of European legislation concerning the mitigation of psychosocial risks in the workplace may not be as profound as initially expected, instead, the analysis highlights that even a foundational comprehension of this legislation holds considerable value, yielding favorable outcomes. Particularly within the context of a small Greek start-up, the enactment of such legislation operates as a resource according to the Job and Demand theory, contributing to the overall well-being of employees. While participants' understanding of the legislation may be basic, the resources it introduces act as buffers against job demands, empower individuals to address concerns and enhance overall well-being. The legislation's influence on resource allocation and communication-related resources further contributes to a positive work environment. Therefore, organizations should continue prioritizing educating employees about the legislation's direct connection to their unique work contexts to optimize its positive impact on employee behavior and well-being. This synthesis of legislative influence and JD-R theory underscores the interplay between job demands, resources, and well-being within the context of European legislation's implementation in a small Greek start-up company. In addition, policymakers must give greater attention and dedication to tackling the issue of psychosocial risks in the workplace. Intensified efforts and a more comprehensive approach are needed to ensure the well-being of employees and the overall health of work environments. Also, further research on the interaction between legislative measures, organizational characteristics, and individual well-being in the field of occupational health and well-being is recommended.

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Appendix

Interview Questions

1. How would you describe your work environment? What are the most common job demands you experience in your role?
2. How do you cope with job demands? What resources do you rely on to manage your work-related stress?
3. Have you ever experienced any psychosocial risks at work, such as workplace bullying or harassment, job insecurity, or excessive workload? Can you describe the impact that it had on your well-being and job performance?
4. What policies and procedures does the company have in place to prevent psychosocial risks at work? How effective do you think they are?
5. Are you aware of the European legislation on preventing psychosocial risks at work? How has it been implemented within the company?
6. How do you think the company could improve the prevention of psychosocial risks at work and support employees' well-being by applying the European legislation?
7. How has it affected European legislation (which has also been incorporated into Greek law) regarding the prevention of psychological risks, your perception of the demands, and resources in the workplace?

Interviews

Question 1. How would you describe your work environment? What are the most common demands you experience within your work role?

Interviewee 1: The environment is very friendly and very people-oriented, and the employer is very open to discussion, my position has a hunt to reach the goals due to the new technology that is demanding in my field. with strict deadlines, my position, and speed and you have to be constantly alert due to technology

Interviewee 2: I am very happy with the atmosphere of the company, something that for me is one of the most necessary things to have, the working environment is very good. also, we all have very good communication with each other and with the higher-ups. the requirements are the deadlines that the nature of my work has

Interviewee 3: It's a nice atmosphere, we're just a few people. My job is creative, not like a chore. As for requirements, I can mention that when we have critical requests from clients that must be done immediately I may receive too many repeated messages with requests that I will have to process at the same time and in a short period. It's rare for sure but it happens to be the hardest.

Interviewee 4: The environment is very good and I will discuss what concerns me I will also set my limits, what I can do and what I cannot do and it will be accepted. As requirements are that I have to find products that are in short supply, especially after the corona. You can never know if the product you ordered will be delivered, this is a general matter of shipping. Timing is the most difficult in my workplace because if a product, for example, must be immediately in Indonesia, you may find it difficult to find it and not know if it will be sent immediately. The biggest stress is to be able to find the product at the right time. And to talk with distributors and manufacturers, find global products, and negotiate.

Interviewee 5: the work environment is positive and we can get along. The climate is very good because I have people who get along, which for me is very important. My position has a lot of responsibility and I have to be constantly alert and sometimes outside of office hours. and my deadline

Interviewee 6: my work environment is very good, and to follow all the related deadlines. everything must be on time. I have to communicate with a lot of people and negotiate at the same time

Interviewee 7: The requirements that exist in a “small” company are mainly found in the effort to cover many work roles by fewer people, to define procedures that, while delimiting each work, will not create bureaucracy (as far as this is possible), to give the right for everyone to participate (in their way) in the course of the company, to always have an open channel of communication between everyone, to create a climate of balance, equality, and cooperation. Although (theoretically) this is a problem of larger organizations, in small companies any behavior creates a climate that develops throughout the company and not in one part of it. It is easily compared to a sports team. On a personal level, a person may have much more “potential” but if they cannot integrate and think collectively, then the whole group does not have a good result. On a purely corporate level, small companies rely on being able to move faster to market. This is also the privilege that has given them an advantage over the last 10 years over the big organizations. It takes daily painstaking effort to maintain this. On a personal level, as one of the managers of the company, I try to gain the respect of my team, purely on the level of knowledge and guidance without trying to impose, although this is not always possible. There will certainly be moments of reward and moments of rebuke.

Question 2. How do you deal with work demands? What resources do you rely on to manage work-related stress?

Interviewee 1: By adjusting the delivery time, we are given the possibility through a company. I will cope with stubbornness, but if necessary I will ask for the help of my colleagues, the work environment is mutually supportive and not impersonal like in a large company. there is also positive immediacy

Interviewee 2: In case of stress due to a deadline, we ask for help and the deadline can even be modified. and there is mutual help and it is eliminated with the right management there is also very good prevention and care so that we do not have stressful situations.

Interviewee 3: I rely on mutual help, there is a team spirit if someone needs help

Interviewee 4: there is a lot of mutual help and the boss of our company is very good, there is proper organization in terms of time as well. Also, mutual support and we use teams and ask for help

Interviewee 5: the bosses are also interested in the employee as a person, there is love and understanding between colleagues as well.

Interviewee 6:in mutual help, I will ask for help from either my colleagues or one of my employers and I will also ask for help through teams. We have created special communication channels to support each other. There is also the possibility of substantial communication with employers. Also, if I get stuck somewhere, my employer will help me and support me without criticism. We have 3 employers and depending on what you need, you can refer to the competence of each one.

Interviewee 7: The recipe for managing stress is one and only. Separating the urgent from the important. This is unfortunately misunderstanding and often exploitable, so care needs to be taken in separating them.

Question 3. Have you ever faced any psychosocial risks at work, such as bullying or harassment, job insecurity, or excessive workload? Can you describe the impact it had on your well-being and work performance?

Interviewee 1: No, I have not faced, only pressure from a deadline without anything excessive, when there is a lot of pressure, the boss of the company manages it smoothly. And I feel a creative stress to get work done doesn't affect my overall well-being

Interviewee 2: no, I have not faced any situation and in general I am a person who if I am not happy will change companies and one reason I stay in this company is the good atmosphere

Interviewee 3: No I have not faced, a rare workload but it is fixed. but not to an excessive point that it stresses me out

Interviewee 4: no . there is no problem and if something goes wrong at work we will find a solution

Interviewee 5: I have not faced. But as a person, I have high-stress levels and find it difficult to sleep for long hours

Interviewee 6: no I haven't faced. I also don't have job insecurity as a worker in an IT technology environment because it is like other jobs and also those who work in IT is their passion.

Interviewee 7: Due to my work position (I was lucky enough not to work as an employee for more than 2 years, at a very young age) I have never had a personal experience with bullying or harassment. Job insecurity or workload, I think are synonymous with anyone's decision to start their own company. You live with them and learn to like them and pursue them.

Question 4. What policies and procedures does the company have in place to prevent psychosocial risks at work? How effective do you think they are?

Interviewee 1: It has no specific political procedure. those in charge have a lot of experience in crisis management. the team is self-regulated and there is always a third party who will take on the role of mediator - firefighter. The positivity of the whole team contributes to smooth operation. and everyone has a clear role in the company with a job description which helps a lot.

Interviewee 2: does not apply specific political policies, but we do recreational outings to bond as a group

Interviewee 3: As a clear policy no and no process, but there is mutual help and support in general

Interviewee 4: not as a specific process but as a more general policy is mutual help and mutual support. This has been achieved through the personality of the owners who have cultivated this climate. Also, the owners give you the opportunity for further development and the owners pay you for your training. they pay you for training, it supports lifelong learning and personal development. they also provide us with autonomy and support the initiative. we are not in boxes in this company.

Interviewee 5: I rely on my stubbornness that I will do it and if I don't succeed in something, I won't have a problem. there is a margin of autonomy and initiative. It is a family atmosphere and that with help. They are tolerant because they appreciate that I do a lot of work and good work. There is no predetermined procedure but the company's climate is projected as policy indirectly. That is, mutual help and mutual support

Interviewee 6: not as an institutionalized procedure and policy because we do not have a human resources department but it is the general climate that has passed that there is mutual help and support

Interviewee 7: Policies and procedures although delimiting risks are based on the enforcement of rules and procedures. They might be quite effective, but I don't have the necessary experience to judge that. In a small company, the daily and continuous contact with your colleagues, a humane working environment, and the possibility for everyone to express their opinion at least some times a year anonymously and what they say to be taken into account, is superior.

Question 5. Do you know the European legislation regarding the prevention of psychosocial risks at work?

Interviewee 1: I know about the abuse at work being illegal, so in my company, I could say that the legislation is implemented as behaviors such as mobbing or extreme stress are not tolerated by anyone in the company.

Interviewee 2: I don't know her exactly, but I believe that harassment and any kind of violence in the workplace is illegal. in my company, we don't tolerate such behavior, and I as a person in general

Interviewee 3: I don't know exactly, just on a more general level that you prohibit mobbing

Interviewee 4: I know there is legislation but I'm not entirely certain, my understanding is that harassment and all forms of violence within the workplace are against the law, but I don't believe it has been applied to very large companies

Interviewee 5: I know it but I think it sounds more specific as far as stress and mobbing are concerned

Interviewee 6: I know it exists in a larger context that the employer should care for the well-being of the employees and reduce psychological hazards.. yes, it has been implemented in the company I work for. In the company, one-to-one meetings are implemented every month when things are difficult these reduce the stress we have. Also in the company we often have entertainment outings for the team to connect this helps bonding as a team, so we can work in a friendly environment. And employers also show interest in your personal life if you have a need. For example, if you tell them you need money for an operation, they will support you. So I think that all the above is active in a preventing way for the psychosocial risks.

Interviewee 7: I have not been informed about it officially. The way I govern is developed (with many mistakes) through personal study of the legislation and daily friction. So I think that there should be official guidelines for the prevention of psychological hazards at work so all companies would have specific guidelines.

Question 7. How do you think the company could improve the prevention of psychosocial risks at work? And employee support? by applying the European legislation?

Interviewee 1: A team bonding type event would help more, and an organized type of intervention to connect the team would be something positive. The supervisor could be trained on how to handle when an employee malfunctions or does not look well. The nature of our work is such as web developers (all day we see boxes on the computer, so we are already not well, laugh here) that we need more empathy and well-being conditions in the workplace.

Interviewee 2: I can't think of anything because there hasn't been much of a need because it's a very good climate. Programs where you can stay away for some time to recharge your batteries

Interviewee 3: There should be an official policy

Interviewee 4: I don't have a specific proposal, we could hold a meeting with the bosses and ask them what complaints the employees have, especially the lowest ranks. The compared company does not need anything special because it already works as a team

Interviewee 5: To go to a training without working at the same time something like that would relax me. To do training, but not on a weekend, but to have a week's training leave. And since we are many people in the same space, there would need to be more quiet and not many people working in the same space. This is annoying because I can't unclog. I would like to suggest that there should be up to two people working in the same space otherwise it causes stress. Also, more ergonomic and comfortable chairs because we sit for a long time.

Interviewee 6: maybe an organizational psychologist that you can make an appointment with once a month

Interviewee 7: The closer the company is to its partners, the easier it will be to prevent potential problems. In an ideal world, every company should emphasize extra-professional activities (bonding, coaching, etc.) and the existence of consulting services. However, as long as a company grows, I believe that there should be an external partner that everyone can talk to privately about any problem that concerns them. The partner in a very discreet way and anonymously should inform about the issues with a view to their resolution. If a behavior issue arises it should be resolved immediately even by removing people.

Question 8. How has it affected European legislation (which has also been incorporated into Greek law) regarding the prevention of psychosocial risks, your perception of the demands, and resources in the workplace?

1. I believe that European rules and guidelines make sure everyone follows certain standards for safe and healthy work conditions. This is why European laws are mostly about dealing with problems that affect people's feelings and thoughts at work.
2. I think it's really, really important to handle issues that can make people feel bad while working.
3. This stuff helps make the laws better, so employers have clearer rules to find and manage problems that might make workers feel stressed or upset.
4. The rules also show that things like tools and stuff you need for work are important. They also say that the things you have to do at work should not be too hard on you.
5. Workers need to know their rights and not be afraid if something bad happens at work. I'm not sure exactly how to fix things if there's a problem, though. I think workers need more information to help them.
6. Even if I don't know all the details, I believe these laws are important. They might make bosses make sure the workplace is good for workers' feelings, by thinking about things like time, control, help from others, and balancing work with personal life. This could keep workers happier and help them work better.
7. These rules are super important, especially when things are really tough and people feel stressed a lot. They should be part of the laws for workplaces. Basically, these laws create a clear plan that puts workers' mental health first, which makes sure everyone feels good in general. This plan makes sure work is safe and nice for everyone.

EXTRA QUESTIONS

As a tech worker, what could make your work life better?

Interviewer 2: Those of us who work in technology have the same stress as in all jobs and we also do what we like.

Would you find useful programs aimed at strengthening the team or positive psychology?

Interviewer3: yes I would find it interesting and I would also like to go out as a group (food, drink) more often as we did before the corona (COVID).