

# Workplace Health Promotion - Lombardy WHP Network

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*on behalf of the Joint Action on Chronic Diseases*

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## BACKGROUND

There is evidence to support the use of health promotion activities in the workplaces and there are potential benefits to be gained by employers investing in workplace health programmes: reduced health care costs, saving on absence and stress reduction. The Lombardy Workplace Health Promotion (WHP) is the result of the joint efforts of employers, employees and society, with the aim of improving health and welfare in the workplaces. The development of this Italian pilot project started in 2011 in Bergamo .

## METHODS

The Lombardy WHP Network is a public-private network, carried out by building partnerships and collaboration with all workplace main stakeholders: associations of enterprises, trade unions and the regional health system. Member companies should implement good practice activities over three years and every year they should activate 2 areas of good practices. The areas of good practices are: nutrition, tobacco, physical activity, road safety, alcohol and substances and well-being. The pilot project identified and selected the good practices and experimented the feasibility and effectiveness in two mid-sized companies before extending the project to other companies. The health authority issued a regional decree and a manual to develop the WHP in whole regional territory



Corporate social responsibility

## RESULTS

In 2013 all the 15 Local Health Units in Lombardy activated the WHP network. At the end of 2014 the Lombardy WHP Network had involved 287 companies and a total of 139,186 workers. From 2013 to 2014 the regional increase was equal to 103% in relation to the number of companies (140 companies in 2013 and 287 companies in 2014) and 132% in relation to the number of workers. The WHP Network is made up of companies that recognize the value of corporate social responsibility and commit to be an "environment conducive to health. The companies systematize actions (evidence-based) of different nature with the scientific support of the Local Health Unit: informational (smoking cessation, healthy eating, etc.), organizational (snack vending machines, health programmes, walking/biking from/to the working place, smoke-free environment, etc.) and actions of collaboration with others in the local community.

The areas of good practice activated	Number of companies
Promotion of healthy nutrition	57% of companies
Tobacco control and smoking cessation	23%
Promotion of physical activity	35%
Road safety and sustainable mobility	11%
Prevention of alcohol and other addictions	9%
Personal and social welfare and work-life balance	29%

## CONCLUSIONS

WHP Network is not to award with a "certificate of excellence" to just a few leading companies but rather to extend the Network to as many companies as possible in order to promote self assessment and improvement regarding health promotion, welfare and sustainability.

The Programme is included in the Regional Prevention Plan for 2010-2013 and 2014-2018, in the National Prevention Plan 2014-2018 and fits into the strategies of the EUROPEAN INNOVATION PARTNERSHIP on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP -AHA).

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