

WORKPLACE PREVENTION
Friday 18 June 2004
Room: Mazurska

Moderator: Lucie Paus Falck, director of AKAN, Norway

Rapporteur: Ewa Osiatynska, Poland

The purpose of the workshop was to present an overview of the present status of development of the idea of the HEALTHY WORKPLACE in different European countries.

I. Joannah Caborn, Safework, ILO (Geneva)

The presenter addressed psychosocial problems at work focusing on the various mental health issues such as stress, tobacco or violence, and not only alcohol. It was emphasized that the research indicates that the majority of recovering alcoholics belong to the active work force. The ILO approach to prevention is based on the paradigm shift reflected in the upside-down pyramid where most attention should be given to the “green zone”, i.e. the untroubled employees, a little less to the “amber zone” – that is people who manifest an occasional dysfunction, and the decisive intervention toward the “red zone” employees who are clearly addicted.

Questions from the audience suggested appreciation to the presented approach and inquiry about other mental health issues like depression or suicide. The explanation made it clear that those problems belong to the category of “stress” and related consequences.

II. Paolo Deluca, Cooperativa Marcella, Euridice (Italy)

In a very articulate overview of the workplace prevention of addiction (internet, drugs, alcohol, gambling, etc.) it was described how the Program Euridice is implemented in practice. 140 companies in Italy and several countries of Europe have adopted the methods and strategies of the Euridice. The program offers to the workplace organizations the multi-dimensional activities, including information, training, research, feasibility studies and assessment of needs, and linking with the local services.

Questions were related to the nature and organization of the training at the new companies, and also how the Euridice staff motivates the companies to participate in the program. Emphasis was put on the long experience and the guidelines referring to good economy in the healthy workplace.

III. Ewa Osiatynska, Batory Foundation, Regional A&D Program (Poland)

The Polish experience indicates that over 10 years of attempts to implement a solid base for development of the workplace prevention programs can be unsuccessful solely because of economic difficulties of the enterprises

Undergoing the severe upheaval related to political, economic and social transition. In this situation not only Poland, but most East European countries have been since the collapse of the Soviet system.

Nevertheless, the efforts of education and raising awareness of the business organizations in Poland have resulted in a better understanding of problems connected with alcohol abuse. More and more alcoholics seek treatment upon recommendation of the workplace supervisors.

In the joint venture companies with the western partners regular services of employee assistance have been increasingly established. Two EAP consultants working for Polish-American or Polish-German companies were present at the workshop and were ready to share their experience.

IV. Annette Paul, AKAN (Norway)

The Employee Assistance in Norway is based on the model disseminated by

AKAN, which starts the programs in all kinds of enterprises with setting up the Tripartite Committees. The history of such programs goes back as early as 1963. The long tradition and the well established renown results in the good position of AKAN as provider of this service to the workplaces.

V. Claude Riviere, European advisor, ANPA (France)

The program presented is based on collecting data on the statistics related to the harmful results of alcohol abuse by the employees. Based on the research, 15% of workplace accidents result directly or indirectly from irresponsible drinking; 40% of accidents of accidents which occurred on the way to or from the work are also linked to alcohol consumption. The methods used by the ANPA program include information and training campaigns offered to the employees and managers. An example of one work organization was presented: the RATP (subway and bus lines in Paris) – which employs 43 thousand people, has observed a major decrease of alcohol-related problems after the implementation of the prevention program.