



### The ILO Turin Centre's facilities

Located in an attractive park on the banks of the River Po, the Centre's campus provides a congenial environment in which to live and study.

It contains 21 pavilions with fully equipped modern classrooms, conference halls and meeting rooms fitted out for multilingual simultaneous interpretation, a computer laboratory, and a computerized documentation centre linked to various data banks.

The campus has 287 study/bedrooms, all with private bathrooms, telephones and cable television. It also has:

- a reception desk open 24 hours a day;
- a restaurant, a self-service canteen and a coffee lounge, all catering for international dietary needs;

- a bank;
- a travel agency;
- a laundry service;
- a post office;
- an internet point;
- a recreation room;
- facilities for outdoor and indoor sports;
- an infirmary.

Social events are regularly held both on and off campus, so that participants from different cultural backgrounds can make the most of the stimulating international climate.

### For further information, please contact:

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## The New SOLVE: Addressing Psychosocial Factors through Health Promotion in the Workplace

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# SOLVE: Addressing psychosocial factors through health promotion in the workplace



## Background

The changing world of work is making increased demands on workers. Downsizing and outsourcing, greater need for flexibility both in functions and skills, increasing temporary contracts, greater job insecurity, higher workloads, long working hours, work intensification and poor work-life balance are all factors which place high emotional demands at work and contribute to work-related stress.

Stress is not a new phenomenon. Stress at work is becoming increasingly globalized and affects all occupations, all categories of workers and their families, both in developing and developed countries. It is now widely acknowledged that stress at work is a common problem and that it has a high cost in terms of workers' health, absenteeism, lower performance and productivity; however, not enough attention has been paid to the psychosocial factors that contribute to stress at workplace level. Working in a stressful environment, for instance, or being confronted with job insecurity can lead workers to smoke or drink more, and in some cases to start using drugs in order to cope with the problems; stress can also lead to violence in the workplace. The use of alcohol and drugs has an impact on sleep, performance and judgement, and can increase the risk of unprotected sex. The 'tension' some jobs impose also affects workers' eating and sleeping habits. The sedentary nature of other jobs, together with the lack of exercise, can cause problems such as obesity and high cholesterol levels.

Taken together, all these factors lead to health-related problems for the worker and lower productivity for the enterprise/organization. They also represent a major cause of accidents, fatal injuries and diseases at work. Stress also takes a heavy toll in terms of reduced productivity and efficiency by means of absenteeism, higher medical costs and staff turnover, as well as the associated cost of recruiting and training new workers.

Both employers and workers have the responsibility to address psychosocial hazards at the workplace and find innovative ways to deal with the consequences of the risks associated with psychosocial factors such as, stress, violence, abuse of alcohol and drug consumption at the workplace. Initiatives to improve working conditions by promoting occupational health contribute at the same time to workers' well-being and enterprise productivity.

How should those problems be tackled?

SOLVE is an interactive educational programme designed to assist in the development of policy and action to address health promotion issues at the workplace. It focuses on prevention by addressing the integration of health promotion into OSH policies and action at the enterprise level. It deals with the prevention of work-related stressors (both work-place stress and economic stressors), alcohol and drug abuse, violence (both physical and psychological), the prevention of

HIV/AIDS, as well as the promotion of tobacco-free workplaces and health lifestyles, including good eating, sleeping and exercise habits.

The ILO's SOLVE programme is based on the recognition of the interdependent relationships between psychosocial factors and other health-related behaviours and their underlying causes in the workplace (work organization, working conditions, labour relations). The programme promotes the design of enterprise level policies and intervention programmes to improve working conditions and reduce work-related stress from an occupational safety and health perspective by incorporating psychosocial hazards into the risk assessment and risk management strategy, involving both employers and workers through bipartite OSH committees at the workplace level.



## Objectives

The overall objective of this course is to develop knowledge and skills that will lead to the integration of the psychosocial and health promotion issues into a comprehensive enterprise policy and establish a framework for preventative action. Upon completion of this course, participants will be better able to:

- Describe the nature, the generation process and impact of the following problems: work-related stress, workplace violence, HIV/AIDS, as well as unhealthy habits and lifestyles related with alcohol and drug abuse, smoking, poor exercise, bad nutrition and inadequate sleeping.
- Explain the potential interrelationships among these health-related problems.
- Identify the measures to avoid the causes for those problems, to prevent the generation of unhealthy consequences and to mitigate their impact in both the workers and the enterprises.
- Describe the elements of a policy statement which will constitute the foundation of an organizational strategy allowing for a response to these problems.
- Apply a management model to address these problems through a common policy and coherent action.



## Participants

The course is designed for:

- Owner-managers, senior managers, human resource directors, occupational safety and health directors and social welfare administrators of organizations and enterprises.

- Policy makers and other senior officials of government departments and institutions responsible for safety and health promotion.
- Senior executives of employers' organizations and trade unions with an active interest in health promotion.
- Managers and senior staff of enterprise support organizations.
- Professionals operating in the field of health promotion.
- University professors and researchers dealing with psychosocial problems at work.



## Contents

The course will address the following topics:

- Managing psychosocial problems and health promotion at work
- Stress at work
- Economic stressors
- Stress and sleep deprivation
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Physical and psychological violence
- HIV/AIDS at work
- Tobacco free workplaces
- Nutrition, exercise and healthy lifestyles



## Methodology

An action-oriented, highly participative approach will be employed throughout the course. Much emphasis will be placed on sharing experience - both local and international - in the search for innovative and practical solutions to problems and challenges. Course participants are encouraged to prepare for the course by researching the latest trends in the relationship between psychosocial issues and health and safety issues at work in their workplaces.

Participants will also be presented with pertinent documentation as a follow-up to the presentations in order to expand their knowledge about the specified topics. The teaching team will be selected according to its professional experience and knowledge about the subjects.

A continuous monitoring and evaluation of the activity will take place during the activity. A formal evaluation will take place at the end of the first week in order to fully comprehend the participants' opinions about the development of the programme and thus take any necessary corrective measures regarding participants' needs and expectations.

At the completion of the course a final evaluation will be carried out by participants with the objective of understanding the interest and utility of the different issues and activities developed during the course as well as the presentations, didactic materials used and, above all, the accomplishment of the course objectives. Participants will also be able to evaluate the administrative and organizational aspects.

## Applications

The cost of participation, excluding international air travel, is **EUR 2,000** (course fees EUR 1,040, participant subsistence EUR 960) payable in advance by the participant or his or her sponsoring organization. This covers tuition fees; the use of training facilities and support services; training materials and books; accommodation and full board at the Centre's campus; a lump sum allowance for incidental expenses at the Turin Centre.

Applications to participate in the workshop should be addressed to:

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f.martin@itcilo.org

**no later than 10 April 2011.**

The filled-in application form should be accompanied by a nomination letter from the sponsoring institution indicating how the participant will be financed.

*As an organization dedicated to fundamental human rights and social justice, the ILO is taking a leading role in international efforts to promote and realize gender equality. In line with this ILO focus, women candidates are especially welcome.*