

FACTS AND FIGURES on workplace health promotion in Switzerland, focusing on stress:

- According to the European Working Conditions Surveys (EWCS), Switzerland has an above-average level of job satisfaction (91%); 88% of Swiss employees believe that they can combine their working hours with their family or social responsibilities in a generally positive or absolutely positive way (EWCS 2007, cited on www.news.admin.ch).
- According to the Swiss Health Survey (compiled every five years, last survey from 2007), the majority of employees in Switzerland (93%) take a positive view of their own health status. Despite employees' overall state of health, work-related risks, stresses and strains exist (SECO 2009).
- 41% of all employees report mental stress at the workplace, and 23% physical stress. Regarding psychosocial risks, two thirds report stress and time pressure, strains at the workplace (36%) and nervousness (33%). About 10% feel anxiety at their workplaces. Sectors such as transport and communications, banking and insurance, as well as healthcare and social work, are associated with high psychosocial risks (SECO 2009).
- 22% of Swiss employees believe that their job poses risks to their own personal health and 31% believe that their health is influenced by their job, most frequently reporting back pain (18%), stress (17%), muscle pain in the shoulder and neck area (13%) and general exhaustion (EWCS 2007, cited on www.news.admin.ch).
- 25% of Swiss employees believe that it is difficult to stay healthy at work, 10% complain of sleep disorders, while for 21% lack of appreciation is one of the main causes of illness, followed by a poor working climate and psychological pressure (20%) and long working hours (14%) (Kelly Services 2008, cited on www.kmu.admin.ch).
- The costs of stress for the working population amount to CHF 4.2 billion or 1.2% of GDP (medical costs CHF 1.4 billion; self-medication for stress CHF 348 million; costs related to absence from work and loss of production CHF 2.4 billion) (SECO 2003).
- If the costs of work-related accidents and illness are added to the costs of stress, the economic cost of work-related health problems amounts to CHF 8 billion, or 2.3% of GDP (SECO 2003).
- Other estimates assume the costs of work-related accidents and illness to be even higher, at CHF 15 billion (UNIA 2008, based on figures from the Central Office for Statistics in Accident Insurance SSUV).
- Depending on the particular country, culture, sector, company size, etc., the return on investment for workplace health promotion can vary significantly. In Switzerland, experience from companies and initial studies have shown that the return on investment for workplace health promotion can be CHF 1:2.25 (Swiss Insurance, 2009)



Health Promotion
Switzerland

BENEFITS of workplace health promotion/management:

- reducing stress and improving stress resistance
- enhancing skills and responsibilities
- improving atmosphere at work and team spirit
- reducing disease-related costs
- reducing the frequency and cost of accidents/illness
- reducing employee turnover and absenteeism/presenteeism
- increasing employee satisfaction
- increasing motivation and productivity
- promoting health and quality of life