



Professional driver Mauri Äkäslompolo (a.k.a. comedian Jope Ruonansuu) in a video clip for the Alert at the wheel project.

Staying healthy and competent at work

Labour organisations' capabilities to cope with structural change, due to globalisation and technological development, must be enhanced. In addition, coping at work and the availability of labour must be secured in times of change.

THE 'STAYING HEALTHY AND COMPETENT AT WORK'

PROGRAMME strives to strengthen the health and working ability of workers, as well as promoting long-term careers and remaining at work, while increasing occupational wellbeing and coping.

Some of the projects within the programme involve developing new approaches to promoting health in the workplace. Working ability and health can be promoted through workplace-specific or individual measures targeted at, for example, eating habits, healthy exercise and the prevention of substance abuse. Other projects are aimed at developing occupational health care services. Small enterprises and entrepreneurs have been using occupational health care services and occupational safety-related services to a lesser degree than they are entitled to. In order to develop these services, a network-based cooperation model between public health care centres and private occupational health care services is being piloted. The target area for development is cooperation between the workplace, occupational health care services and rehabilitation services. Here, the main focus is on absences due to illness caused by mental health problems and musculoskeletal disorders. In addition, improving the occupational health of unemployed people, temporary workers and young people during transitional phases is important. Occupational health care service trials can be conducted to promote the functional capacity of such people.

Social and health care services have been chosen as a target of the development programme. These service systems are under great pressure. Changes in the age structure of the population are being reflected in health care and nursing service needs, and the availability of labour. In addition, social and health care service personnel are encountering more health problems and burnouts in comparison to other sectors.

The right diet helps you stay alert at the wheel

'Alert at the wheel – food choices for staying healthy on the road' is a sub-project of the 'Promoting health at work' project. Professional drivers, trade unions, employers, food service providers, occupational health care services and educational institutions are participating in this project. For example, the project develops information packages for drivers in their food and drink choices, and instructions on how employers can support healthy eating habits. Cooperation with food service providers (e.g. petrol stations) is necessary, in order to get healthy meals onto menus, including for night-time customers.

PUNK promotes coping at work in SMEs

The PUNK – renewal in SMEs project, administered by the Rehabilitation Foundation, aims to develop suitable instruments for promoting occupational wellbeing in SMEs. Problems related to working ability and competence must be dealt with at an earlier stage. In addition, new operating models for cooperation between workplaces and occupational health care services will be developed. Two operating models for early rehabilitation, designed for the special needs of SMEs, will be tested.

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