

Sicurezza e salute dei lavoratori dell'Industria attraverso i dati INAIL e INPS, Veneto, 1994-2002

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KEY WORDS

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SUMMARY

«Safety and health in workers employed in industry. Data from Industrial Accidents Compensation Board (INAIL) and National Social Security Institute (INPS), Veneto Region, 1994-2002». Background: A decreasing time trend for occupational injuries and sickness absence would be the effect of the new legislation (D.Lgs. 626/94 and successive laws) on prevention in occupational settings. Conversely, the reduction of INPS disability would reflect a health improvement due to non-occupational causes. Objectives: The aim of the study was to investigate the efficacy of the new legislation among employees in industry (where the law was mainly applied), via the time trend of three standardized rates in the Veneto Region. Methods: The numerator for the rate of occupational accidents (cases occurring in industry workers in the Veneto Region, broken down for sex, age and calendar years) was supplied by INAIL. The denominator for the above rate, as well as numerators and denominators for disability and sickness absence were supplied by INPS. Data were available from 1994 to 2002 for accidents and disability, and from 1997 to 2002 for sickness absence. In every year from 1994 to 2002, the rates were standardized for age and sex with the direct method, using an internal "standard" population. The time trend of year-specific standardized rates was analyzed by Joinpoint regression software. Results: Among industrial workers in the Veneto Region, occupational accidents increased by 0.4% yearly, while disability decreased by 2.56% from 1994 to 2002. Sick absence increased up to 1999, then decreased. Conclusions: This epidemiological pattern is difficult to explain. The increase in accidents could be due to the increase of non-European Union workers and/or to the fact that accidents on the way to or from work were recognized as occupational accidents by INAIL starting from 2000. Both these phenomena could have contributed to increase the rate that was otherwise diminishing. On the other hand, this same situation could be due to insufficient efficacy of the legislation (D.Lgs. 626/94 and successive laws) for preventing occupational accidents and diseases.