

**RELAZIONE INTERVENTO DR. CLAUDIO DETOGNI
BORMIO 2007**

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION CO-FINANCED PROJECT BEPRASA
(BEST PRACTICES ON SKIING SAFETY)**

BEPRASA is the only existing European Commission's cofinanced project on skiing safety. The leader of the project is ULSS 20 Verona – Regione Veneto and the project leader is Dr. Claudio Detogni.

The Be.Pra.S.A. project (Best Practices in Prevention of Skiing Accidents in Europe: The New Challenge) was elaborated to respond to the identified general lack of harmonization of injury prevention measures on skiing slopes, within and between the European countries, despite the increasing relevance of the phenomenon of skiing and snowboarding accidents. In particular an unsatisfactory availability of micro data for cross-countries comparisons at EU level of both injury data and data regarding prevention measures was highlighted.

The specific aims of the project are to fill this gap, to provide the European Community with a reliable manual of best prevention practices, to disseminate the results achieved by the project and to promote a harmonization of best prevention practices in Europe.

The project started on 01/09/2005 and will end on 30/06/2008, The primary aim of BE.PRA.S.A. is to fill in the information gaps pertaining to injury and prevention measures, through the collection and analysis of data at selected European ski spots (2-3 spots will be selected for each beneficiary country), in order to provide the European Community with a reliable manual of best prevention practices for dissemination throughout Europe.

The principal activities under this action will include:

- Establishing a network of European experts and associations on skiing injuries and prevention measures
- Promoting understanding of specific surveillance systems on skiing injuries
- Carrying out comparative analyses of data (e.g. European Injury Data Base) on skiing and mountain injuries at the European and international level and identifying gaps and problems with the already existing data at the European level
- Promoting the simultaneous collection of skiing/snowboarding injury data and of data regarding prevention measures at 2-3 spots (for each beneficiary country) relevant at national level, in a way which makes it possible to address risk taking (incidence rates) and to classify risk areas
- Performing comparative analyses of the collected data in order to establish best practices of prevention of skiing and snowboarding injuries

Important results have been achieved so far, thanks to a fruitful collaboration among partners and to networking activities in the relevant field:

Turin Charter on Skiing Safety (Winter Olympic Games 2006) - The European Commission supported the idea of Be.Pra.S.A. project to be promoter of the Turin Charter on Skiing Safety, a guideline-document prepared by a panel of international experts that gathered in Turin on February 5th 2006 in the context of the XX Olympic Winter Games, under the patronage and coordination of the Olympic Games Committee.

The aim of the Charter is to lay the foundations for articulating a common universal vision and implementing global norms and standards for safety aspects for skiing activities in order to reduce the burden of injuries and promote sport activities and their related benefits, and to create incentives for effective injury prevention.

Azienda ULSS 20 Verona together with EuroSafe (European Network Association for Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion, based in Amsterdam) was appointed to follow the implementation and world-wide diffusion of the Charter.

The Charter has already been endorsed by numerous international expert in the field. It was presented at the First European Conference on Safety Promotion and Injury Prevention held in Vienna on 25-27 June 2006 and abstracts and full versions have been disseminated in different languages through various web sites in key countries. More than 200 international institutions have been contacted through the Be.Pra.S.A. network for the Charter dissemination. Mr. Franco Frattini, Vice President at the European Commission who is very committed in the issue decide to support the Charter which is now in his official web site.

Literature Review Update exercise - Guidelines and Terms of reference have been circulated among relevant Partners to conduct a joint exercise to update the project's information regarding existing literature/data/research work both at regional/national and international level. The strength of this exercise is to identify and highlight in particular important relevant data/experiences/pilot projects produced at regional and national level, with the final aim of exchanging good practices and ideas that otherwise may remain ignored among the majority of the European Community, final beneficiary of the project .

Study Design – A Study Design document was prepared and disseminated among Partners, setting the guidelines and methodological framework for the implementation of project activities regarding collection, processing and analysis of data on skiing/snowboarding accidents and injuries and exiting safety prevention measures at EU level. The Study tries to investigate the extent to which the lack of harmonization prevents from obtaining relevant results by comparing data among different selected European countries.

All along the project life regular reports culminating in a manual of best practices with recommendations to the European Community will be edited.

Minimum Data Set Model – Through a review process and comparison study between existing questionnaires identified at selected ski resorts in Europe, Azienda ULSS20 Verona and the Italian National Health Institute (ISS, Rome) elaborated an European Minimum Data Set Model specific for data collection on injuries and accidents on the slopes, which could constitute a first step toward a relevant harmonised skiing/snowboarding injuries data collection and analysis work.

Lessons Learnt

Problems and constraints encountered during this first phase of the project should turn into important lessons in order to further improve the efficiency of the project's activities and avoid the same errors in the future.

In particular:

- Data collection on accidents and injuries:
 - the overall process of identifying resort managers willing to collaborate with the Be.Pra.S.A. in selected ski areas in Europe, has proven to be a difficult task. It was only thanks to an excellent networking activity by the Partners that fruitful collaboration has been achieved. In particular questions relating to privacy issues had to be faced: this problem was overcome by assuring

the publication of the results only in an aggregated format, while raw data will be kept in a dedicated secure database and will be used only of analysis purposes.

- The implementation of new collection systems where already existing ones could retrieve and deliver the data needed for the Be.Pra.S.A.'s purposes was deemed not efficient and not useful at this stage. Therefore full integration of data gathered via different collection systems has been pursued.

Conclusions

Although minor delays in the project's activities have occurred, these have been agreed among Partners and have not compromised the smooth flow of the project. Important results have been achieved so far and key activities relating to accidents/injuries data collection is currently underway.

The contribution of highly committed Partners in the development of this project proved to be essential. Only through their constant communication and exchange of ideas an important series of activities could be completed so far.

Of great help it was confronting experiences in various international meetings including the International Conference on Skiing Safety in Scotland organised by ISSS and the 2 fruitful Conferences held in Bormio in 2006 and 2007 where BEPRASA could exchange experiences with the top international experts in the field of Snow and Legislation which has been identified as a key issue and a major risk factor in paying an important role in skiing accidents and injuries prevention.

Continuous dialogue among Partners and contact with the European Commission will be ensured to allow for an efficient development of the project's oncoming activities.

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