

Community programs to promote an active lifestyle.

Lombardy's Walking Groups

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Who we are



Population

10 million (Italy 60 million people)

Healthcare system

1 DG Welfare: regional governance

8 ATS (Health Protection Agency)

27 ASST (Local Social and Health Unit)

Chronic diseases

30% of the population absorbs

70% of healthcare system resources



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Policy approach

A regional planning document (Piano Regionale della Prevenzione 2014 – 2019) ensures that the same health promotion programs are offered throughout the territory. All programs should be based on suitability criteria:

- **efficacy;**
- **integration;**
- **intersectoriality;**
- **sustainability**

For Physical activity: walking groups



Physical activity and health

The health benefits of physical activity are well documented.

Adults and older adults should participate in at least 150 minutes of moderate or vigorous activity per week, in order to promote and maintain health.

However, most adults do not currently achieve this



Walking groups

Participants walk collectively in organized **walking groups** and thereby provide support relationships for behavior change.

Usually they walk twice a week.

People decide to participate thanks to:

- municipalities or volunteering associations advertisement
- Grapevine
- Physician recommendation

Usually they begin thanks to health practitioners guide. Then some of them are trained as **walking leader** and groups become independent.



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Walking groups efficacy

Walking groups (**WGs**) are efficacious at increasing physical activity

WGs that targeted both genders produced significantly higher effects on physical activity, compared with interventions that targeted only women

WGs that targeted older adults were found to be more efficacious than those that targeted younger adults. Thus older population benefits more from walking group in terms of physical activity effects.

WGs that had measures from baseline up to six months had significantly lower effect sizes than interventions that had measures over six months.

Aikaterini Kassavou, Andrew Turner, David P. French, (2013).

- ✓ efficacy;
- ✓ integration;
- ✓ intersectoriality
- ✓ sustainability



Walking groups **integration**

Walking groups provide social support relationships for behaviour change.

It can be a good chance to promote among peers and through walking leaders, other healthy behaviours:

- improve cognitive function
- socialize healthy diet recommendations
- support screening participation
- encourage tobacco smoking cessation
- discourage gambling
- stimulate flu vaccinations

- ✓ efficacy;
- ✓ **integration**;
- ✓ intersectorality
- ✓ sustainability



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Walking groups **intersectorality**

Health is an outcome of all policies and this requires multisectorial action

Walking group could involve:

- Health care sectors
- Municipalities
- Volunteers associations
- University Sports sciences

- ✓ efficacy;
- ✓ integration;
- ✓ **intersectorality**
- ✓ sustainability



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Walking groups **sustainability**

They are a popular, accessible and acceptable form of activity among populations who are the most physically inactive

They don't require special equipment

They have low risk of injuries

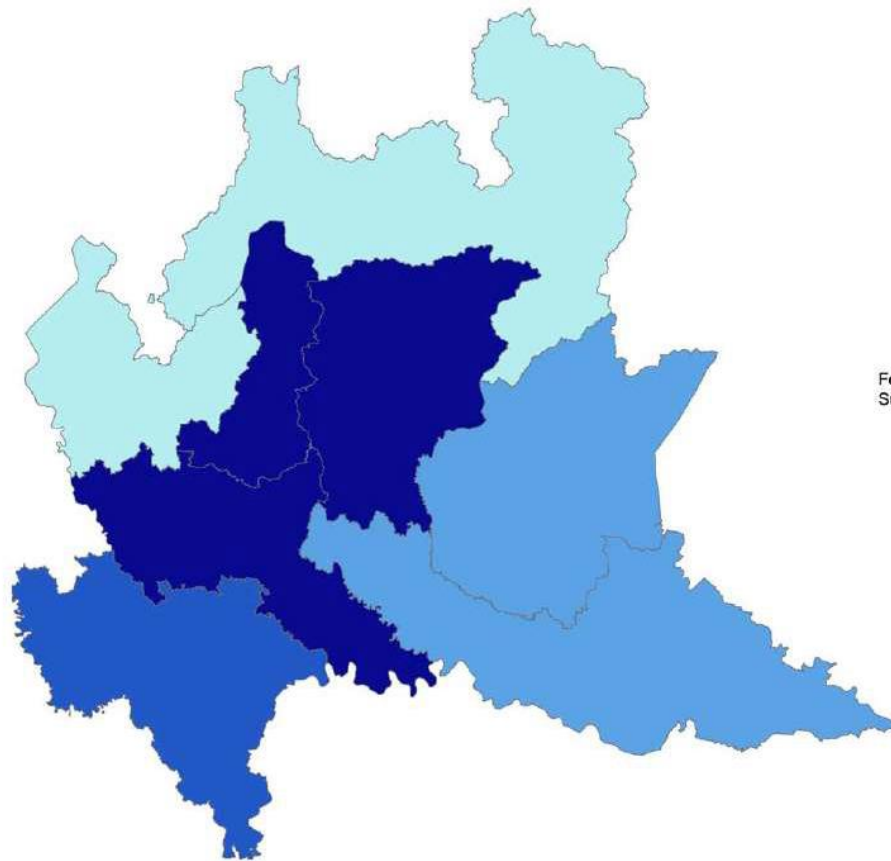
They don't need to be delivered by professionals. Groups are guided by local walking leaders trained

- ✓ efficacy;
- ✓ integration;
- ✓ intersectoriality
- ✓ **sustainability**



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Regional coverage



Legenda

	tra il 10% e il 20%
	tra il 21% e il 30%
	tra il 31% e il 40%
	> 40%

Fonte Dati:
Survey "Stili di vita" 2017 – ATS - Regione Lombardia

D.G. Welfare
U.O. Prevenzione
Struttura: Promozione della Salute e Screening
16/07/18



Numbers

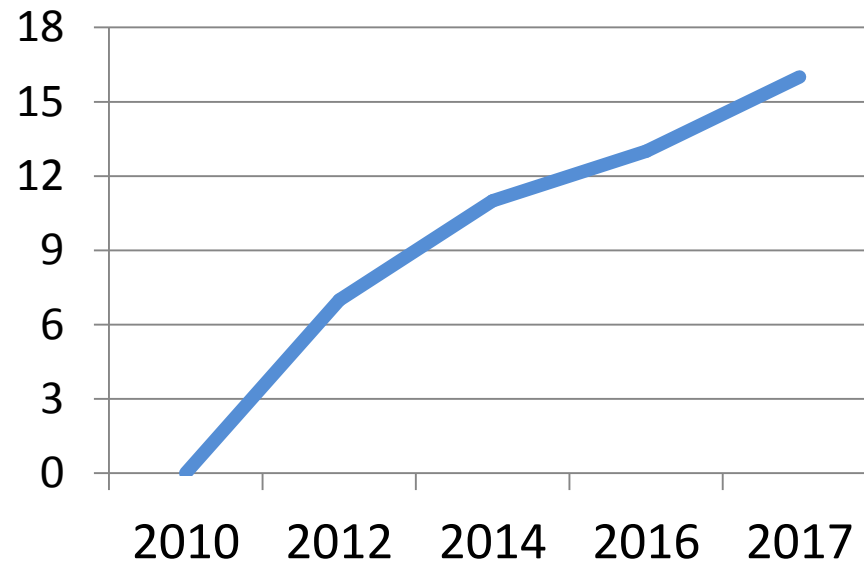
REGIONAL DATA 2017

Municipalities with active walking groups	Number of walking groups currently active	Number of people involved (estimate)	Number of participants aged 45-64 (estimate)	N° di participants over 65 (estimate)
528	840	27.500	10.000	17.500



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Rate ‰ population > 65



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Future challenges

- Who are the elderly people that don't join the walking group?
- Why don't they take part in walking group?
- How is it possible to involve the unattainable?
- How to maintain participation ?

