

Reinforced social dialogue aimed at supporting professional training and risk prevention for rural contractors

EXPERT REPORT

Project developed by CEETTAR in partnership with EFFAT



EFFAT

EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM TRADE UNIONS

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OVERVIEW

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I - Introduction

We have been assigned the task of formulating proposals aimed at improving the efficiency of social dialogue in the ARC sector. As a result, this sectoral dialogue will promote the implementation of initiatives included in the work programme implemented by the social partners at European level. The effectiveness of this dialogue, in the European context, depends on the quality of social dialogue at national level. This is all the more true if we consider that there is still no official committee for sectoral dialogue. Partnerships and similar relationships exist as part of a more general committee - the agricultural sector as a whole.

First of all, we feel it is important to raise the awareness of national social partners that work with ARCs. We need to stress that 2013 marked half a century of social dialogue in the agricultural sector. Moreover, this dialogue has produced significant results, which demonstrate how useful it can be, both for workers and employers.

Social dialogue seems to be a key factor for the success of the European model, in terms of the economy, employment, living conditions and welfare. From this point of view, it is important to remember that each member state is sovereign in this field, but its contribution to this success also depends, among other factors, on the level of awareness and understanding of the role of this social dialogue. However, while the national dimension continues to dominate relationships between social partners, social dialogue at European level may stimulate dynamics that will inevitably find support at national level.

European social dialogue has led to a variety of outcomes for ARCs, particularly in terms of health and safety at work. Various documents have been issued, including the “**success is no accident**” resolution, which was signed by EFFAT and CEETTAR in 2004. The resolution was based on specific questions included in a questionnaire sent to the different organisations. Other texts were also prepared, including:

June 2004: A **code of conduct** focusing on social responsibility for rural contractors in the European Union:

- At European level, the two organisations (CEETTAR/EFFAT) agreed that the sharing of information/opinions and joint initiatives will be organised in all fields, including community policy and European legislation issues, if the latter have an economic and social impact on the rural contractor sector.
- This sharing of information and opinions respects national and European requirements concerning the information and consultation of workers.

2005 – 2008: A **joint action plan** for the implementation of European social dialogue:

- This joint action plan describes a series of initiatives agreed by European social partners within the rural contractor sector, which focus on the following four policy areas: *employment, EU expansion, health & safety and professional training.*

December 2006: Joint declaration (Münster Declaration) – “More quality employment opportunities”

- The organisations are firmly committed to launching joint initiatives that are useful and necessary for the development of more high quality enterprises, employment and services in the rural sector

2006 – 2007 – 2008 - 2011: Joint projects and research initiatives

1. Implementation of European employment policy in the rural contractor sector.
2. Development of skills and training for new skills employment opportunities with rural contractors
3. Rural development: innovative enterprises create employment opportunities.
4. Working towards quality employment and strengthening industrial relations in the rural contractor sector.

April 2007: Sectoral agreement on continuous training, focusing on specialist skills and agricultural machinery. Training leading to accreditation as qualified agricultural service providers.

This project focuses on evaluating measures and initiatives prepared and negotiated at European level, for implementation in each of the countries where CEETTAR, together with EFFAT, has a certain influence. This exercise is interesting because:

It enables us to measure, transparently and independently, the outcomes of social dialogue, in which CEETTAR intends to play a leading role within its sector.

It should enable us to plan initiatives aimed at revitalising certain agreements.

It helps to establish consistent standards in a sector, which is developing due to structural and technological changes, in a context increasingly dominated by financial issues and capital requirements.

II – The project

The current project aims to identify levers for action, in order to follow up innovative initiatives launched by CEETTAR over the last few years - in countries where the organisation is already represented and new member/candidate states, which have potential for the development of initiatives. It concentrates on three general objectives:

1. To fully play its role as an EU-OSHA partner, as part of a risk prevention campaign;
2. To develop and harmonise social dialogue in the different member/candidate states, in order to implement work programmes more effectively at European level;
3. To harmonise training practices and stimulate discussion concerning forward planning of jobs and skills² -

Within this framework, 5 concrete objectives are specified:

1. To identify and promote existing measures and innovative practices aimed at risk prevention at work;
2. To identify innovative and forward-looking initiatives, in the fields of training and GPEC, in order to develop good practices;
3. To determine, as accurately as possible, employment levels in the sector;
4. To address problems that hinder effective social dialogue;
5. To provide an interactive discussion forum by adapting the website www.rural-services.eu.

Our task is to help you achieve some of these operational objectives, mainly by collecting a variety of information from CEETTAR members, as well as other sectors and/or documentary sources.

The information obtained covers two fields:

1. Risk prevention (covered by 11 questions)
2. Profitability and business management (10 questions in total)

It should not be forgotten that the project was implemented in partnership with EFFAT. This partnership demonstrates the shared commitment of social partners from the sector to following up and developing a variety of initiatives, which aim to raise awareness of the outcomes of European social dialogue.

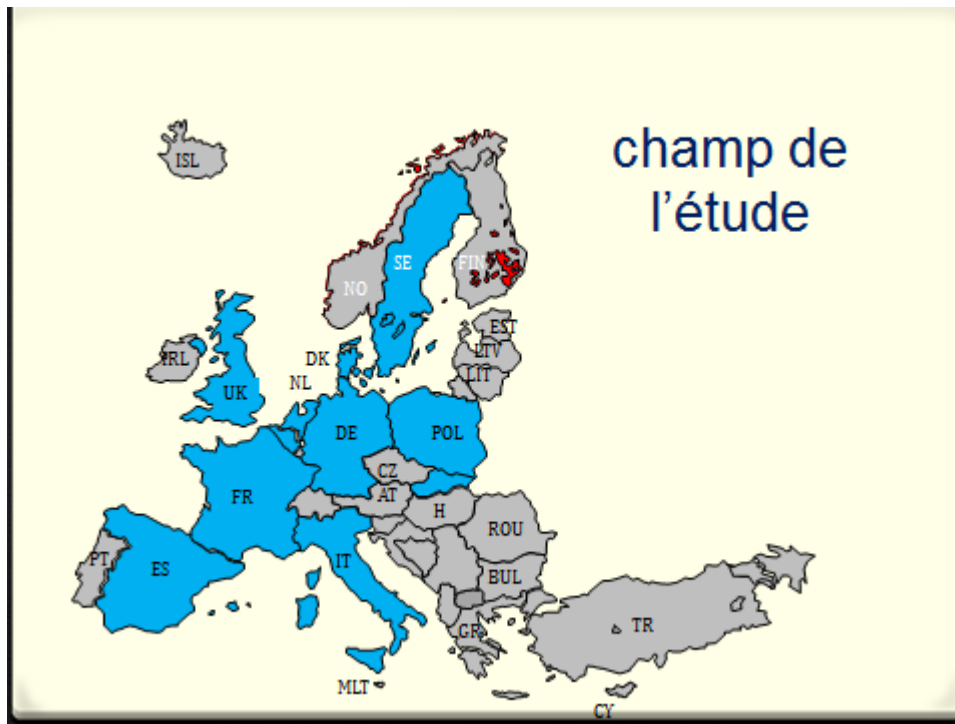
The study focuses specifically on several countries:

Germany – Belgium – Denmark – Spain - France – Italy – Netherland – Poland – United Kingdom – Slovakia – Sweden

In other words, 11 out of the 12 countries, where CEETTAR is represented (in addition to **Luxembourg**). However, out of all these countries, we have not yet received any responses from Germany and France. But it will be possible to include certain data in this report, using information that we already have.

² GPEC: Forward Planning of Jobs and Skills (Gestion Préventive et Prédicative de l'Emploi et des Compétences).

a) Scope of the initiative



Scope of the study

This map shows CEETAR's area of influence, as the ten countries that it covers represent over half the territory of the 28-state European Union.

B) Other countries and sources of growth



A general analysis of the agricultural world shows that the ARC sector has developed gradually over the last 50 years, as a result of the growing professionalisation of agriculture, with the pace increasing over the last 15 years. Overall, increasing average farm sizes, continuous structural changes and increasing technical developments are the main causes of growth in the ARC sector. In a very general way, ARCs provide services and specialise in consulting and mechanical tasks, which fall within 5 major categories:

Crop services	Crop protection	Forestry services	Rural services	Construction services
Soil preparation (ploughing, manure/slurry spreading, sowing)	Harvesting, operation of irrigation systems, silage making	Pruning, reforestation	Landscaping, lawn mowing,	Drainage, drilling, transport, dredging

Increasingly specialist agricultural services and improved productivity make it necessary to involve contractors that are able to invest more and thus help reduce production costs for farmers.

At the same time, environmental requirements and the resulting changes create new challenges and opportunities for ARCs.

This applies to the 15 oldest member states³, as ARCs are not widely represented in most of the new member states. CEETTAR is represented in 12 member states, which account for almost 2/3 of Europe, and covers almost 80% of the EU's population. Growth margins are therefore reduced from a geographical point of view, but agriculture is still developing significantly in some states. Of course, from the "size" point of view, they seem to have far less potential for development than the 12 countries, in which CEETTAR is represented. However, on-going and future large-scale structural changes in most member states, where agriculture is developing significantly, will create areas for development.

³ Member states (MS)

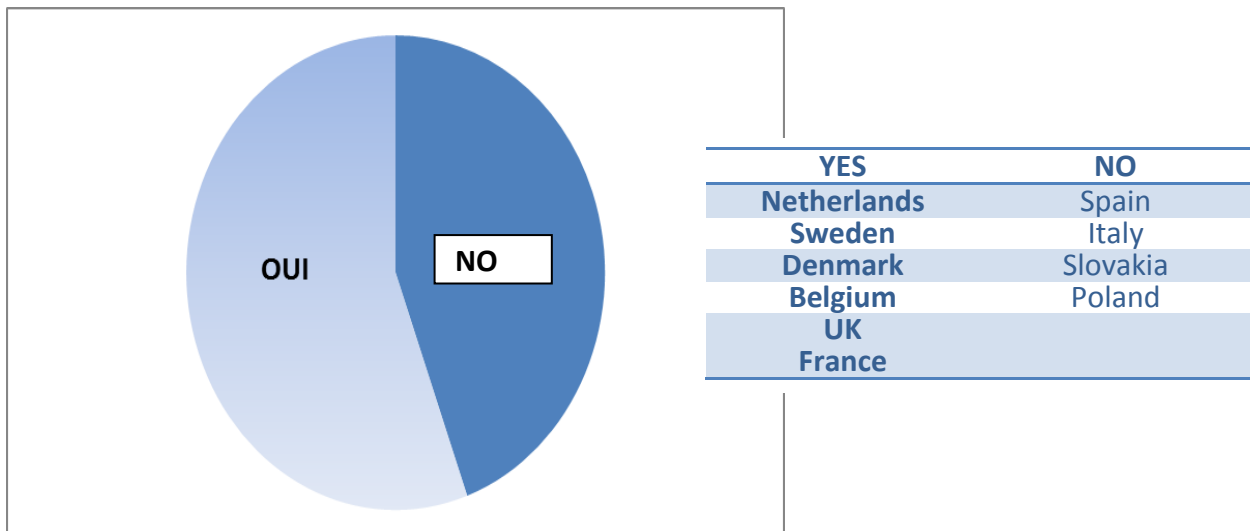
III – The study

3.1. Survey results

Group A: Risk prevention

Specific information and risk prevention policy for ARCs:

a) Implementation and obstacles



Five out of the nine North European countries are developing specific information and prevention policies.

Based on the positive responses, these experiences might inspire the 4 other countries to develop their own policies, bearing in mind that most of the obstacles highlighted were administrative or financial. Some further information has also been obtained:

Italy: initiatives have been introduced, which are aimed at the agricultural sector as a whole.

Slovakia: this topic seems relatively new and needs to be gradually integrated into the business culture. The organisation that completed the questionnaire sees itself as a pioneer in this field and has fulfilled this role by becoming involved in its implementation.

Poland: health and safety regulations are of a general nature.

b) Organisation of initiatives

Three proposals were put forward (several answers were possible):

Ministries (national, regional, etc.)	Your organisation	Health insurance fund
Spain	<u>Denmark</u>	France
Denmark	<u>Netherlands</u>	
UK	<u>Poland</u>	
Slovakia	UK	
	<u>Slovakia</u>	

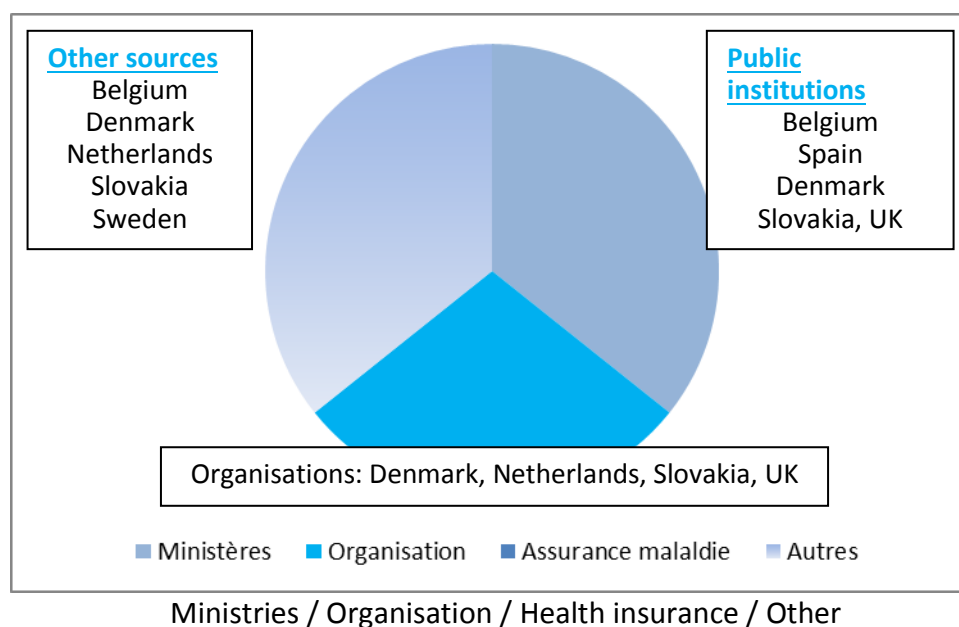
In Denmark, it seems that a body exists, which acts as a major stakeholder.

In Belgium, there is the Mission Wallonne des Secteurs Verts.

In Sweden, initiatives are developed in cooperation with other bodies.

Poland's response needs to be developed by the organisation that completed the questionnaire. A contradiction appears to exist between the fact that its health and safety regulations are of a general nature, despite the organisation being involved in the process. Would it not be more appropriate to develop specific measures for some sectors? In Slovakia, as we have already seen, the organisation sees itself as a pioneer and develops these initiatives, within the framework of a partnership agreement. In Sweden and all the countries that are underlined in the above table⁴ (middle column), initiatives are implemented as part of partnership agreements. **In France, the agricultural health insurance fund is responsible for introducing initiatives, in partnership with the French representative organisation, within the framework of the collective agreement.**

c) Funding:



The organisations covered by the survey account for the majority of funding sources.

⁴ **Belgium:** by collective agreement, **Poland** with the association of agricultural workers, **Sweden:** agreements between several parties.

Other funding sources include:

Belgium: Social security

Netherlands: General agreements with social partners

Slovakia: National Labour Inspectorate

Sweden: LRF and SLA

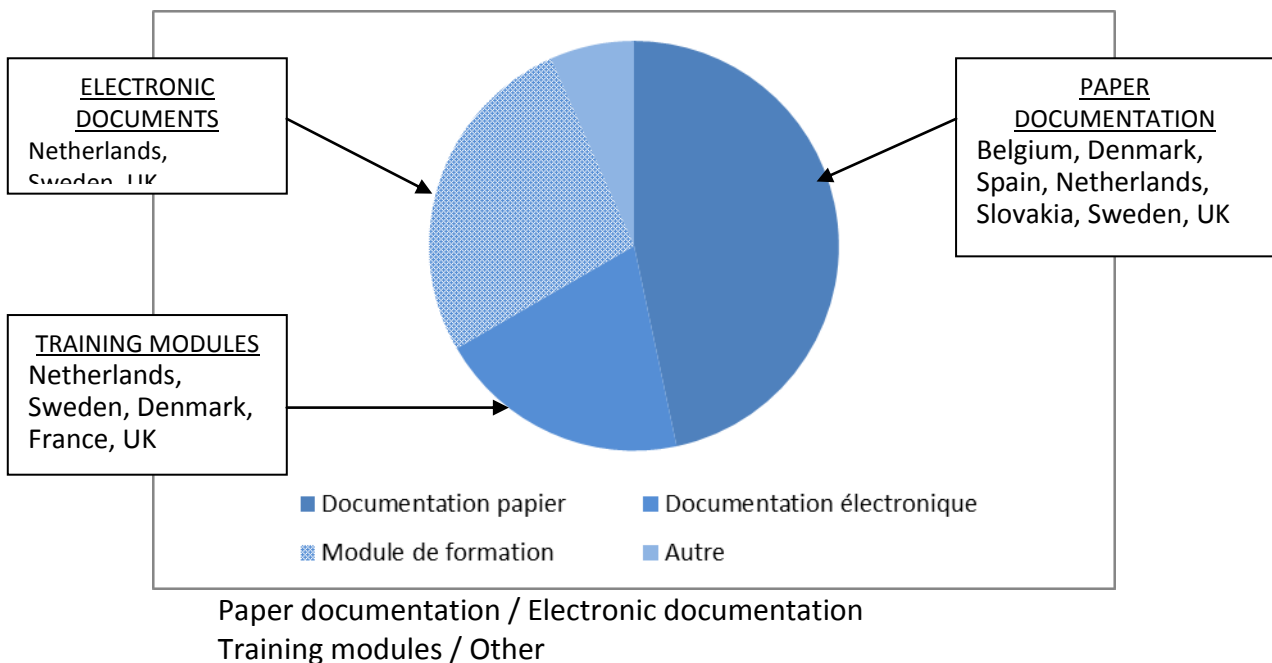
France: employers, by means of subscriptions

d) Types of information provided

Health and safety (fatigue, stress, etc.)	Belgium, Denmark, Spain, Netherlands, Slovakia, Sweden, UK
Highly specific risks linked to driving vehicles	Belgium, Denmark, Netherlands, Slovakia, France, UK
Highly specific risks linked to vehicle maintenance	Belgium, Denmark, Netherlands, Slovakia, France, UK
Highly specific risks linked to handling chemical products	Belgium, Denmark, Netherlands, Slovakia, Sweden, France, UK
Aimed at a specific target group (e.g. vehicle driver, maintenance, etc.)	Belgium, Denmark, Netherlands, Slovakia, UK
Other	UK (concerning stocks)

The following countries are missing from this overview: Italy, Poland. However, this is consistent with the answers to the 1st question.

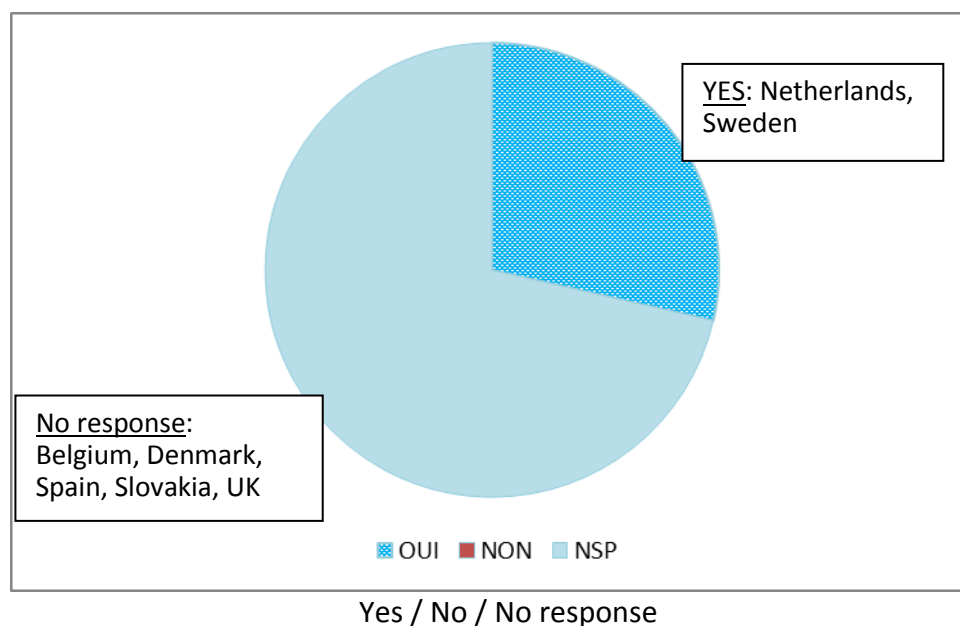
e) Training materials



Paper resources are the most widespread and are used in 7 out of the 9 countries that responded. Electronic materials were only mentioned in 1/3 of the questionnaires. Training modules are mostly used in Northern Europe (except for France and Germany), but further information is required regarding their content.

f) Results

According to the responses, it seems that there is no means of measuring the outcomes of initiatives previously implemented: only the Netherlands, France and Sweden indicate some improvement, which is due mainly to a more positive attitude towards industrial safety issues (Netherlands) and a very marked reduction in the number of accidents in Sweden and France.



The answers cannot therefore be used directly. In addition, the questionnaire asked the member organisations about how they have used the sectoral agreement based on the 2004 “success is no accident” resolution. Only Slovakia responded positively.

It would appear that further development is needed in this area:

- Are the participants aware of the sectoral agreement?*
- If so, is it seen as restrictive, inappropriate or inadequate?*

g) Case not covered by national reports

France: (source: MSA⁵)

In France, as in other member states, new lifestyles impact directly on the organisation of labour. Structures, such as employer associations and replacement services, are emerging and enable job sharing, as a new form of labour, aimed at improving working conditions.

⁵ MSA: Mutualité Sociale Agricole

Farmers are also making greater use of contractors. Since 2000, these contractors have recruited **35%** of additional employees (source: MSA). Some work is outsourced to agricultural contractors or cooperatives (CUMA)⁶

ARCs⁷ are suffering fewer accidents at work, but this organisation still sees the seriousness of the accidents that do occur as a cause for concern. A study has highlighted the main risks associated with:

- Working with animals: 12 %
- Maintenance work: 15 %
- Maintenance work on machines and tools: 16 %

This overall conclusion explains the growing discussion and creation of a workshop involving advisors from the MSA Professional Risk Prevention department and Chamber of Agriculture. This context gave rise to the “Occupational Health and Safety Plan 2011-2015” (OHS *plan*).

6 National Development Axes (NDA) were created, for which the MSA aims to achieve substantial results by 2015, in qualitative and/or quantitative terms.

6 Shared Intervention Axes (SIA) highlight priority areas, in which the OHS invests heavily, and the majority of projects are local initiatives. Each MSA also contributes to the NDAs, by means of specific initiatives developed at local level.

17 professions will be supported, partly by means of National Agreements on Prevention Objectives (NAPO), which help implement projects developed by enterprises. The 2011-2015 OHS plan is also an opportunity to develop new funding sources for the risk prevention in micro-businesses.

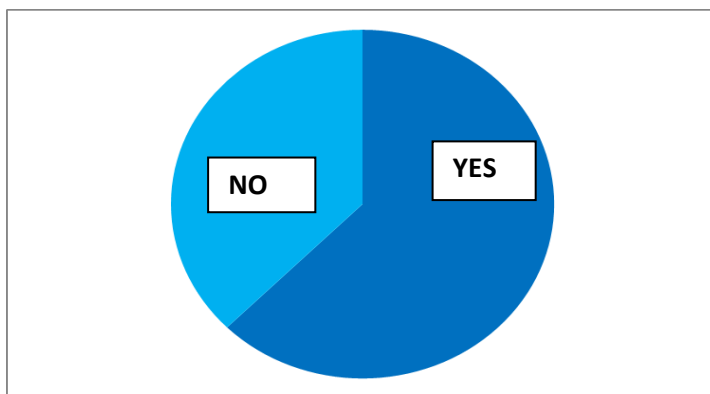
It should be noted, at this juncture, that the situation is special in France. In fact, as Europe’s only social protection system to cover industrial health and professional risk prevention, the MSA enjoys a privileged position, which enables it to consult a wide range of partners/institutions and support almost two million employees, both collectively and individually.

Group B: Profitability and business management

a. Specific initiatives aimed at developing management skills

⁶ Agricultural Equipment Cooperatives (Coopérative d'Utilisation de Matériel Agricole)

⁷ ARC: Agricultural and Rural Contractor



YES:
Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Poland, UK

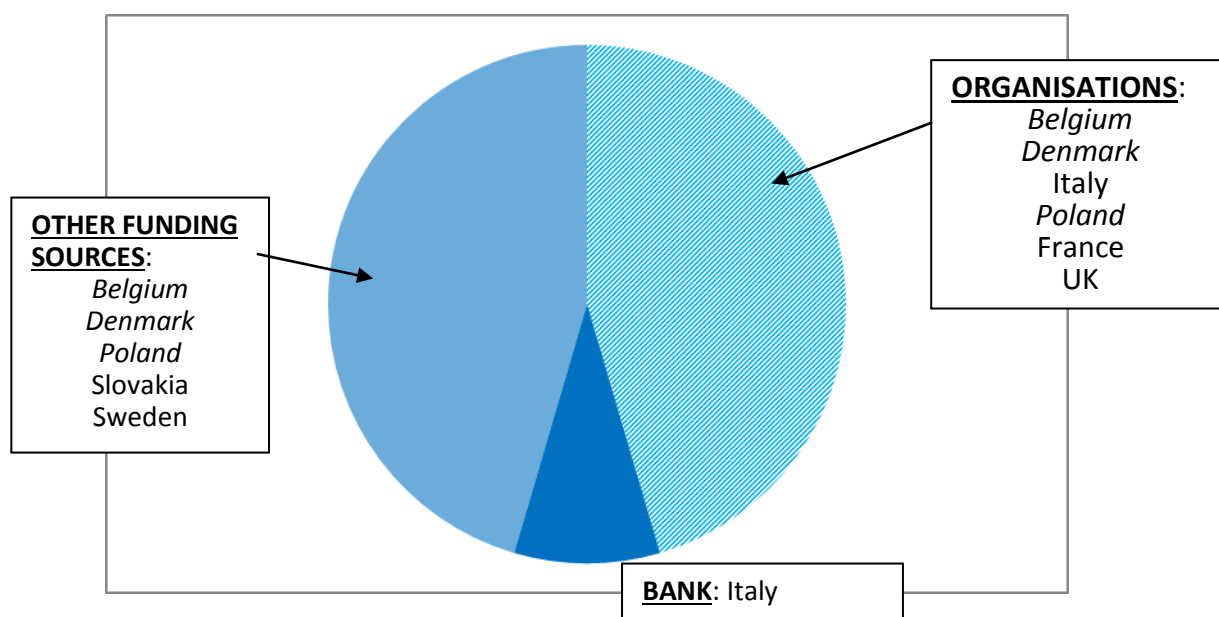
NON:
Spain, France, Slovakia, Sweden

In Spain, the organisation does not have sufficient financial resources to organise a specific course in business management.

In France, this task is assigned to ARC partners, who are essentially accountants, consular chambers, etc.

In most cases, the organisations decide on the content. In Slovakia, it is the enterprise itself that decides. In Belgium, courses are delivered in partnership with CRA-W.

b. Funding



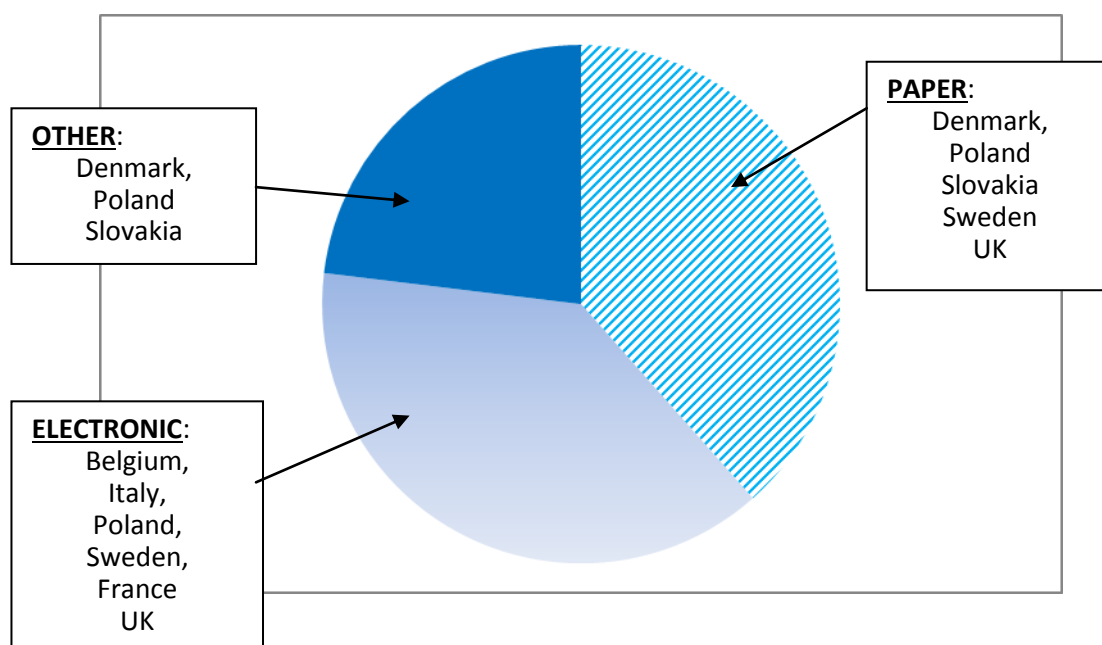
In 5 countries, most sessions are funded by the organisations themselves. At the same time, the courses were jointly funded in three of these countries (shown in *italics*), such as Belgium, where the government makes a contribution. It should be noted that Italy is particularly interesting, as its banks help fund this type of training.

c. Content

General information on business management (basic level) aimed at the general public	Denmark, Italy, Poland, Slovakia
General information on business management (advanced level) aimed at the general public	Denmark
Practical information and case studies aimed at the general public	Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Sweden
Personalised initiatives (support as required by enterprises)	Belgium, Denmark, France, Sweden
General information aimed at a specific target group (e.g. managing director or partner/employee in charge of accounts, etc.)	Denmark, UK
Other	Belgium, Poland

General information on business management predominates in the different courses. 4 countries are mentioned, in addition to France, where this is also the case when enterprises first set up business (compulsory training course). Practical role-plays are used in 4 out of the 9 countries and it should be emphasised that this approach probably meets contractors' needs more effectively. At the same time, these modules seem to be complemented by individual initiatives, except in Italy.

d. Training tools



Electronic materials are just as important as “paper” resources. In Denmark, the emphasis seems to be placed on dialogue and forging links. As a general rule, without looking at the assessment methods, these contents produce positive outcomes.

General note on two groups of questions: all participants said that they consented to CEETAR circulating information on initiatives introduced in all the countries that responded. In addition, the opportunity to share experiences seems to be particularly appreciated, especially in Poland, in fields such as:

Economics, organisation, business management, agricultural services, provision of services, health and safety at work, focusing exclusively on the agricultural services sector

e) Case not covered by the national reports

GERMANY: Initial and professional training: an example of what social dialogue can achieve

In Germany, initial training is defined by two characteristics:

In the 1st cycle of secondary education (<i>primary school</i>), 3 - 4 types of school exist, which follow on from the common core of primary school	The importance of linked work/training (<i>dual system</i>). After completing compulsory full-time school education, two thirds of young German people from the same age group complete professional training at work, which lasts from 2 to 3.5 years.
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The basic structure that underpins the entire education system in Germany is based on an agreement concluded by the Länder

Professional training structure

4 branches

① **Berufsfachschule**
(Vocational school): Full-time vocational schools, which prepare pupils for jobs or provide with vocational and general education

② **Fachoberschule**
(Technical secondary school): Accessible for pupils that have been awarded a school leaver's certificate from a Realschule. They provide general education and theoretical/practical technical knowledge

③ **Berufliche Gymnasium/ Fachgymnasium**
(Vocational/specialist college): Technical or business FE college

Linked work ④ **Fachschule**
(In-Service Training Centre): These schools/colleges aim to train specialist middle managers, future company managers in a variety of sectors. To be entitled to this training, it is necessary to have completed formal training and have professional experience in the relevant sector.

Approximately 600,000 young people enter the “dual system”, which enables them to spend alternate weeks in vocational colleges and on work placements over a period of 2 – 3.5 years.

2 characteristics



This linked work/training system **aims** to provide **extensive basic vocational education** and teach, as part of a structured training course, **the necessary technical knowledge and skills for skilled professional work**. After completing these studies, the young person is entitled to work in the regulated profession, for which he has been trained, and assume the title of qualified worker (qualifizierte Fachkraft/Facharbeiter)

Continuous professional training

The laws on continuous training and legislation on adult education describe continuous training as a discrete area, which includes continuous professional, political and general training. A variety of bodies contribute to the organisation of professional training at federal level, alongside the Länder. The social partners and consular chambers are present throughout the consultation, planning and decision-making process. A federal "platform" was created for those responsible for continuous training in 1987 (Konzertierte Aktion Weiterbildung, KAW). It is made up of representatives from the federal government, Länder, local government, social partners, various associations and authorities responsible for continuous training, further education colleges and the media.

Federal provisions aim to achieve the greater standardisation of initiatives and secure government recognition of continuous training qualifications and their outcomes, while improving and standardising continuous professional training. Regulations concerning continuous training can be found in the German employment promotion law, continuous training law, which promotes professional mobility, the law on professional training, Crafts Ordinance, framework law on higher education, federal law for the promotion of training and distance learning protection law. The conditions and principles concerning assistance and funding for continuous training are established in the laws on continuous training and exemption from training.

The federal law on professional training distinguishes between **two key sectors** for continuous professional training:



Continuous refresher training (Anpassungsfortbildung)

This training aims to update professional qualifications already obtained, in line with the latest scientific and technical developments. It does not focus on hierarchical promotion.



Continuous advanced further training (Aufstiegsfortbildung)

This training generally leads to higher qualifications, with or without certificates, which are required for professional advancement on the hierarchical ladder. The Länder are responsible for general continuous training, continuous training leading to school qualifications, continuous scientific training for higher education establishments and certain aspects of continuous political and professional training.

Collective agreements include a wide range of provisions for enterprises. They focus on continuous professional training/qualifications, political/cultural education, professional examinations and training for board members, as well as other managers that may attend conferences and meetings.

Enterprises invest large amounts in continuous training. They are the main source of funding, while there is no statutory requirement for the employer to provide funding. Collective funding regulations exist, which are based on collective agreements. In this case, all enterprises pay a contribution to a shared training fund, including those that do not provide training.

Public funding (local government, Länder, federal government, European Union) includes institutional support for continuous training institutions/local adult education centres, local assistance for continuous cultural education activities, individual assistance for people wishing to obtain school qualifications later in life, individual assistance for people wishing to return to professional training and continuous training for employees of the federal government, Länder and local government.

Individual rights to training for employees: statutory educational leave

In most of the Länder, provisions guarantee employees 4 - 5 days leave, so that they can attend professional or political training courses (*Bildungsurlaub*). Throughout their training leave, the employer continues to pay the applicable salary and contributions. However, training courses in the “political education” sector are subsidised by the government, while training costs are partly or in full by the employee. Due to the limited success of statutory educational leave (1.5% of employees per year), a working time account was introduced in 2001. It serves to allocate time for individual training, so that employees can obtain qualifications in-house. Training courses can be provided during or out of working hours.

Professional training for the unemployed (Umschulung: retraining)

Unemployed people and unqualified workers can take advantage of the system established by the German employment promotion law. This enables people to return to their professional studies or retrain.

Continuous training organisations

A wide range of training organisations and facilities exist, which are aimed at different types of worker.

Adult education centres (Volkshochschulen) are open training centres and exist throughout Germany (at over 1000 sites). They provide general and professional training for anyone wishing to advance in their professional life. In general, these centres are managed by local government and training costs remain minimal. **Enterprises** often have in-house training centres or share these facilities. Other organisations that also provide training include **private institutes, churches, higher education institutions** working with professional federations, chambers of commerce, agriculture, trade, federations, trade unions, distance learning institutions, libraries and 'second chance' schools.

Professional training reform and support for learning

Professional training reform

The lower chamber (**Bundestag**) and chamber of the Länder (**Bundesrat**) approved the reform of the law on professional training – which dated back to 1967. This reform entered into force on 1 April 2005.

60% of young people make use of the German linked work/training system, which requires enterprises and schools to work together to validate professional qualifications. This reform essentially aims to make professional training more flexible. With this in mind, all apprentices are now permitted to complete part of their training with a foreign enterprise.

The many changes to the law include the following new regulations:

- Any qualifications acquired before training can be validated as part of an in-house training course completed at a later stage;
- It is now possible, subject to certain conditions, to obtain additional qualifications during the training course and obtain a separate certificate;
- New opportunities for cooperation between enterprises, vocational schools and other training providers.

Apprenticeship support programme

On 6 December 2005, the German government announced that it would allocate 100 million Euros by 2010, for the launch of its new programme, in order to “*guarantee the future of the apprenticeship system.*”

This project sets out to restructure support programmes for continuous professional training. It aims to increase the number of apprenticeships by supporting innovation and structural development in the field of professional training.

Co-financed by the European Social Fund, this programme encourages the creation of regional and thematic clusters and networks, by means of the “apprentice coaching” initiative.

France: highly regionalised GPEC initiatives

Like social dialogue in the agricultural production sector, and due to extremely varied regional realities, GPEC initiatives are highly regionalised in the French ARC sector: prior to this study, we received a summary document detailing GPEC provisions in 14 regions. Seven action groups determine the content, which focuses on several topics:

- Developing skills
- Enhancing professional experience
- Health and safety at work
- Nomenclature of professions
- Professional reorientation
- Legal aspects relating to the management of employment contracts
- Etc.

f) Following up agreements and guidelines issued by European social partners

At European level, the ARC sector is characterised by relatively active social dialogue between the two European federations of social partners. It should be remembered that this dialogue takes place in a special context, as it is not structured around a sectoral committee. As stated in the introduction, several joint position statements have been prepared and a number of agreements have been negotiated. As we will see, some agreements do not appear to have been implemented in certain member states. Four themes create a structure for European social dialogue:

- 1 – Employment and increasing the number of contractors;
- 2 – Professional training: a **sectoral agreement** on continuous training in specialist skills and agricultural machinery was prepared in 2007 (Training leading to accreditation as qualified agricultural service providers).
- 3 – Health and safety at work: 2004 agreement “**success is no accident**”
- 4 – EU expansion

Comments

The question of social dialogue is important for all CEETTAR members. However, several observations can be made on the basis of these questionnaires:

The outcomes of social dialogue have not always been fully exploited, possibly because the sector is still not represented as such – either at European or national level.

The 2004 “*success is no accident*” agreement aims to resolve a strictly sectoral problem. This agreement cannot therefore be used in all the member countries. We feel that this point will require further attention.

We consulted the websites of the various participants, in order to check information on “social dialogue”, but found that no such sections existed. As stated in the introduction to this report, national social dialogue is necessary if European social dialogue is to be successful. Could we consider adding some content or links to other websites, with the aim of sharing the outcomes of social dialogue at these two levels?

The restructuring and modernisation of the agricultural sector in the new member states represent major challenges for these new member states. In this context, the above agreements represent a lever that should make it possible to address present and future changes, while limiting negative effects on employment. This pre-supposes, however, that social dialogue can take place in perfect harmony in each new member state. But we are also aware of the difficulties of implementing social dialogue, mainly because the representative role of social partners (particularly employers) is not always clear.

What exactly is the current situation in terms of agreements in the 12 member states, in which CEETTAR is represented?

As we have observed, there seem to have been problems affecting implementation of the 2004 agreement on health and safety. The 2007 agreement on professional training paved the way for national training modules on a variety of themes: business management, providing services and environmental questions. However, it does not appear to have been implemented consistently in all the member states, due mainly to the sector not being fully organised.

IV – Conclusions for inclusion in future action plans

Due to the above factor, we feel that it is important to develop a strategy, in order to address various points:

Sectoral organisation: identify the stakeholders and develop their representative role.

Application of agreements: notwithstanding the above point, it seems that the agreements have not been fully implemented, including in the more structured member states. We feel that we should continue to identify obstacles to this implementation.

Harmonisation: we must continue to share experiences, with the aim of continuing to bring consistency to a sector, which sometimes suffers from practices being affected by new

potential difficulties. In this context, it is possible to imagine a European label that will enable us to promote socially responsible enterprises.

Human resources: new challenges facing the ARC sector make it necessary to organise a preventative strategy for human resources management. The examples of Germany and France, as described above, provide a basis for discussion, together with practices observed in other countries, which have demonstrated great expertise: this is the case in the member states, where the sector has been organised for several decades.

Social dialogue: we are more specifically targeting national social dialogue, by creating sections on (national and European) social dialogue on the websites of the member organisations. The European level must not be neglected at this stage, as it helps, in particular, to reinforce European coherence and harmonise practices aimed at establishing consistent standards in the sector.

Health and safety: except for the point concerning implementation of the agreement, while bearing in mind that this theme is central to social dialogue, we propose that policies developed at national level should be continuously evaluated, within a standard framework. From this point of view, the continued partnership with OSHA is an asset. In addition, the current work of the Commission focusing on agricultural and forestry tractors reinforces functional safety and other aspects, which call for new practices: subjects of this nature demonstrate the importance attached to safety and we must evaluate how safety issues are being addressed.

ANNEXE

Useful websites

This list is based on responses to the questionnaires.

Websites on risk prevention

Country	Website
Spain	
Italy	
Netherlands	http://www.cumela.nl/ www.stigas.nl
Slovakia	www.eur-lex.europa.eu
Sweden	
Denmark	
Belgium	www.eduplus.be www.secteursverts.be
Poland	
United Kingdom	www.hse.gov.uk/agriculture www.naac.co.uk/stay-safe
France	http://www.msa.fr/lfr/actions-prevention-sst

Websites on profitability and business management

Country	Website
Spain	
Italy	
Netherlands	
Slovakia	www.eur-lex.europa.eu
Sweden	www.google.se
Denmark	
Belgium	www.mecacost.cra.wallonie.be
Poland	
United Kingdom	
France	http://www.etf-aquitaine.org/travaux/forestiers/49/outils-etfa-69.html