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**JOINT WORK PROGRAMME OF THE  
EUROPEAN SOCIAL PARTNERS  
OF THE RURAL CONTRACTORS SECTOR**

**FOR THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL DIALOGUE  
OF THE RURAL CONTRACTORS SECTOR**

**(2014 - 2016)**

# **JOINT WORK PROGRAMME OF THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL PARTNERS OF THE RURAL CONTRACTORS SECTOR FOR THE EUROPEAN SOCIAL DIALOGUE OF THE RURAL CONTRACTORS SECTOR (2014 - 2016)**

*The European Federation of food, agriculture and tourism (EFFAT), represents 7.5 million workers from 120 national trade unions of 35 countries.*

*The European Organisation of agricultural and rural contractors (CEETTAR), represents the employers from 14 national employers' federations of 13 countries.*

*Both organizations are looking for the formal recognition of their longstanding European social dialogue by the European Commission.*

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The European social partners, EFFAT and CEETTAR, confirm the importance of a strong and autonomous European social dialogue for the rural services contractors sector in order to develop a sustainable sector. This joint dialogue was established in total respect of the provisions of the Commission decision of 20 May 1998 and will be further developed in accordance with the objectives of the Commission staff working document of 22 July 2010 on the functioning and potential of European sectoral social dialogue.

Within the framework of their European sectoral social dialogue both organisations have agreed on a joint work programme for the period 2014 - 2016.

The joint work programme sets out a range of actions, agreed upon by the European social partners of the rural contractors sector and focusing on the following four policy areas: employment, support to national social partners, health and safety and vocational training.

The social partners of the rural contractors sector will seek joint positions on issues and developments which will affect the interests on the rural contractors sector in Europe, and where the interest of both companies and workers are involved.

The social partners will hold at the end of 2016, a final evaluation of this joint work programme.

## **I. EMPLOYMENT**

EFFAT and CEETTAR underline the importance of a coherent European employment policy. Within the framework of the European Employment Strategy both organisations have identified several employment issues that will require joint actions, at European and national level. These are related to the specific characteristics of the sector (1), to undeclared labour (2), to internal market and workers mobility (3) and the impact and consequences of the 'self employed' status in the rural contractors sector (4) .

### **1.1. Specific characteristics of the European rural contractors sector**

EFFAT and CEETTAR will, in compliance with the decisions of the Council:

- 1.1.1. analyse and valuate the specific situation of the rural contractors sector in the EU;
- 1.1.2. analyse and valuate the specific situation of the rural contractors sector in the new member states of the EU;

- 1.1.3. improve the matters of the code of conduct from June 2004 to present best practices, developed at national level;
- 1.1.4. analyse best practices of the Social Dialogue in other sectors, evaluate and implement these practices, which are useful for the developing of a sustainable rural contractors sector.

## **1.2. Undeclared labour.**

EFFAT and CEETTAR will, in compliance with the ambitions of the Ministers for Employment and Social Affairs and of the Commission:

- 1.2.1. analyse and evaluate the impact of the latest European initiatives on undeclared labour in the rural contractors sector.
- 1.2.2. develop joint proposals for effectively preventing and combating undeclared labour in the rural contractors sector;
- 1.2.3. elaborate a code of conduct to present best practices, developed at national level, to prevent and combat undeclared labour.

## **1.3. Internal market and workers mobility.**

EFFAT and CEETTAR will:

- 1.3.1. organise a joint seminar to present and discuss the economic and social dimensions of the internal market with regard to the provisions of services and cross border mobility of workers
- 1.3.2. formulate common conclusions and recommendations for potential improvement, including administrative and legal aspects, on the basis of this seminar.

## **1.4. The 'self-employed' status.**

EFFAT and CEETTAR will:

- 1.4.1. examine the consequences of the application of the use of the 'self-employed' status in the rural contractors sector.
- 1.4.2. elaborate a joint declaration and/or awareness-raising action in order to prevent the abuse of the self-employed status in the rural contractors sector as an instrument for unfair competition or social dumping.

## **II. SUPPORT TO NATIONAL SOCIAL PARTNERS**

The European social partners of the rural contractors sector consider the past enlargements of the EU as an important milestone for the social and economic development of the European rural contractors sector. EFFAT and CEETTAR wish to draw special attention to the socio-economic situation of the rural contractors sector and to the challenges faced by the representatives organisations in the new member states.

EFFAT and CEETTAR will:

- 2.1. ensure a maximal participation of the national trade unions and employers' federation in the European social dialogue and its working groups for the rural contractors sector;
- 2.2. encourage its member organisations to provide adequate instruments and assistance to their respective sister organisations to organise workers and employers in the best possible way;

- 2.3. organise seminars on the implementation and application of the legal 'acquis communautaire' on industrial relations in the rural contractors sector, including case studies on ways of articulating different levels of negotiation.

### **III. HEALTH AND SAFETY AT THE WORKPLACE**

EFFAT and CEETTAR confirm the added value of a strong "health and safety policy" in the European rural contractors sector. They are committed to the adequate application of the existing European "health and safety" regulations in all the member states.

#### **3.1. Improving health and safety culture and management in the rural contractors sector**

EFFAT and CEETTAR will, in line with the guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States:

- 3.1.1. use all the possible way to conclude an agreement to reduce occupational health and safety risks in the rural contractors sector;
- 3.1.2. initiate activities supporting the fulfilment of this agreement;
- 3.1.3. encourage the European and national institutions as well as organisations to support the agreement and to initiate activities, for instance in connection with the implementation of the Community strategy on health and safety.

#### **3.2. Decrease of complaints and illnesses related to the sector**

EFFAT and CEETTAR will jointly organise a seminar to identify health and safety in order to prepare a common position paper on the elimination of complaints and illnesses in the sector.

#### **3.3. Building close relationship with European Health and safety institutions**

EFFAT and CEETTAR will continue their collaboration with the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work in order to increase the added value and visibility of their own actions.

### **IV. VOCATIONAL TRAINING**

The European social partners of the rural contractors sector agree that a vocational training policy is one of the most important instruments for developing a sustainable rural contractors sector.

#### **4.1. Recognitions of vocational qualifications in the rural contractors sector**

- 4.1.1. CEETTAR and EFFAT will identify, assess and communicate on vocational training policies undertaken at national level. This evaluation should address both contents of training and means to achieve these goals.
- 4.1.2. In a second step, EFFAT and CEETTAR will examine the possible recognition at European level of vocational training qualifications for employees in the rural contractors sector.

#### **4.2. Health and safety rules in the education and training program for rural contractors' workers.**

EFFAT and CEETTAR will examine the application of the health and safety rules in the education and training program for rural contractors' workers. A comparative study between the actual EU member states and the applicant countries will be made.

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