

Brussels, 13 October 2006

**EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF RURAL CONTRACTORS (CEETTAR)
AND EFFAT WORKING PARTIES**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS
OF 11 AND 12 OCTOBER 2006**

The meetings took place in Brussels.

Note: The next meeting is on 6 November 2006 in Brussels.

1. PARTICIPANTS

CEETTAR

Erik **GROTH** (CEETTAR Denmark), Erwan **CHARPENTIER** (CEETTAR France), Pirko **RENFTEL** (CEETTAR Germany), Barbara **SZUSZKIEWICZ** (CEETTAR Poland), Pedro **SERRA-RAMOS** (CEETTAR Portugal), Eddy **KLÖCKER** (CEETTAR Director)

APOLOGIES: Jan **MARIS** (CEETTAR Netherlands)

EFFAT

Pierre **SUPLICE** (EFFAT France), Martin **SIECKER** (EFFAT Netherlands), Marian **SIENKIEWICZ** (EFFAT Poland), Arlette **CUREZ** (EFFAT Secretariat), Arnd **SPAHN** (EFFAT Agricultural Secretary)

EXTERNAL EXPERTS

Jean-Pierre **KLAPUCH**, Patrick **CAUDRON** (both “Réseau Projectives”/Projects Network)

2. INTRODUCTION

Mr Jean-Pierre **KLAPUCH** (Projects Network) opened the meetings and introduced the project “Transposition of European Employment Policy in the Rural Contractors’ Sector”. He made it clear that the work now beginning had received no recognition as an official social dialogue in this sector. Rather, it was now time for the necessary resources to be made available to EFFAT and CEETTAR partners in order to achieve an efficient transposition of European employment policy in businesses in the rural contractors’ sector.

During discussions Messrs **SPAHN**, **KLÖCKER**, **CHARPENTIER**, **RENFTEL** and **SUPLICE** all spoke.

3. PROMOTION OF QUALITY ORIENTATED EMPLOYMENT

Participants discussed the central elements of quality orientated employment in rural contractors' businesses. Amongst others, the themes covered were health and safety, lifelong learning, qualification and initial training, further and advanced training, the European Union's Lisbon strategy, information from businesses and organisations in the new Member States, European legal developments and market barriers presented by various national regulations. All participants spoke during these discussions.

4. QUALIFICATION AS A CENTRAL APPROACH TO THE PROMOTION OF QUALITY ORIENTATED EMPLOYMENT

In the subsequent debates qualification was identified as the key to the solution of various problems (employment, job security, expansion). Participants received reports from four Member States (Denmark, presented by Erik **GROTH**, Portugal by Pedro **SERRA-RAMOS**, Poland by Barbara **SZUSZKIEWICZ** and Germany by Pirkko **RENFTEL**). The country reports (which were partly available in writing), together with contributions to the discussions, underlined the significance of both initial and continued professional training in any further work.

5. PLANT PRODUCTION, SERVICE ORIENTATION AND AGRICULTURAL TECHNOLOGY AS PARTICULARLY FEASIBLE TRADE RELATED CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE TRANSPOSITION OF EUROPEAN EMPLOYMENT POLICY

Particular trade related approaches to the promotion of a European employment policy were debated at the final working parties. The main points emerging from this work are attached as an appendix to these minutes.

6. DECISIONS

The working parties made the following decisions:

1. The next meetings will take place on 6 November 2006 in Brussels. Participants will receive no further invitations to those events.
2. The secretariats will be tasked with preparation of a resolution for the conference in Münster (Germany) on 6 and 7 December 2006. The draft will be discussed by participants in the working parties on 6 November 2006 in Brussels.



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3. The experts (Jean-Pierre KLAPUCH and Patrick CAUDRON) were tasked with development of a questionnaire which will be answered by member organisations of CEETTAR and EFFAT at the partners' conference in Brussels in March 2007. The questionnaire will cover two areas:
 - a. Analysis of professional initial training systems in Member States (especially under the background of modern competence demands such as plant production, service orientation and agricultural technology).
 - b. Demands of rural contractors on the competences and qualifications of employees – today and in the future.
4. The questionnaire can if necessary consist of two parts. The draft will be discussed by participants in the working parties in Brussels on 6 November 2006.
5. The secretariats have been tasked with submission of a first draft of a “ Further Training for Services Module” for rural contractors' branches within the EU. This draft will also be discussed by participants in the working parties in Brussels on 6 November.

6. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the working party will take place on 6 November 2006 in the Hotel VENDÔME, Boulevard Adolphe Max 98, 1000 Brussels (telephone: 0032.22.27.03.00, Fax: 0032.22.18.06.83, e-mail: sales@hotel-vendome.be, internet: www.belhotel.com).

The EFFAT delegation meets at 10.30 hrs in the Hotel VENDÔME, the CEETTAR delegation at the CEETTAR office in the Rue de Spa. The joint lunch will be at 12.30 hrs in the Hotel VENDÔME. The joint meeting begins at 14.00 hrs and finishes at 17.00 hrs, also in the Hotel VENDÔME.

Directions are available from the secretariats.

EFFAT has already reserved single rooms in the Hotel VENDÔME; please apply to us early for a room reservation.

Arnd **SPAHN**

EFFAT Agricultural Secretary



LIST OF MAIN POINTS FROM INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

- Contractors are firms, people and qualifications
- Only the character of the service accentuates the quality
- It's all about equipment, maintenance and use of machinery
- Multi-competences are the basis for diversification of businesses
- No, there are also various basic competences, followed by development of specific competences
- Realisation of the CEETTAR guidelines requires specific competences
- Initial training for students and apprentices
- Further training for workers
- Lifelong learning
- Do businesses find suitable employees?
- Employees must be service orientated
- We have customers – farmers don't
- Driving licences for cars and tractors
- They must like tractors
- They should come from farming or rural areas
- Punctuality and precision
- They should be able to fill in forms
- In future they should be able to work with the latest mobile telephones
- Understanding of machinery manuals (reading ability)
- Season orientated (more work in the summer months)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ practice in businesses, $\frac{1}{4}$ theory in schools
- 50-60 % of employees have training:
 - of which 10 % in rural contractors' enterprises
 - of which 50 % in agriculture
 - remainder trained as mechanics
- 40-50 % have no training (learning through doing)
- Interest and commitment



- Further training lasts between 2 days and 3 weeks (plant protection, trucks, electronics on tractors, John Deere sales outlets provide product-orientated qualification)
- Training spread over products with additional product-specific training is better
- Who pays for further training?
- Whoever is better trained is also able to pay more for further training
- Guarantee continued wages
- Supplementary course in cross compliance
- Knowledge of specialised agricultural vehicles (including road related knowledge)
- Knowledge of environmental effects
- Safety regulations
- Use your head (“take care of yourselves and your colleagues”)
- Older workers have more problems with new technologies
- Older workers have more problems in attending courses – they train through “learning by doing”
- In dealings with customers – be nice
- Listen more than talking
- We need more language competences – we use workers from other countries
- There are problems with working hours at harvest time
- Consideration must also be paid to married employees
- Contractors stand between farm and industry
- Forestry contractors are very specialised
- Contractors are looking to secure year-round employment
- We need employment outside of agriculture
- We need more training in activities outside of agriculture
- We have sufficient competences in agriculture
- Whilst in agriculture people work alone, we have social teams
- We work in offices, workshops and with machines
- Our work is not highly regarded (image problem)
- We must improve our image
- We lack support by official institutions (ministries etc)
- Certification is important



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- Certification must be recognised
- Motivation is important
- There is too much wrongly targeted training
- We are lacking in motivated technicians
- 30 people were trained in this area over a period of 2 years, of which none are still working there
- A lot of training is done by contractors
- If I train workers, they move to another concern and I am left with the costs
- Year-round employment, eg in landscape architecture, communal waste industry etc
- We prefer older workers: they are more loyal
- Subsidies reduce our prices. Then we also have problems with working conditions
- New activities are needed to secure year-round employment
- Neighbourhood help: up to € 51,000 possible for agricultural businesses
- Agricultural service: plant production, services and agricultural technology
- Training is the target
- What do contractors expect?
- Integrated approach by CEETTAR: quality of environmental services, health and safety, product tracking
 - On one hand: plant production, services and agricultural technology
 - On the other hand: offices, workshops, machinery
- Business competence requirements
 - Basic training
 - Further training
- Social partners must be involved and integrated in legal developments (eg national regulations for the protection of plants)