

AGRI-TRANS: TRANSPARENCY IN AGRICULTURAL VOCATIONAL TRAINING

European Standards
Using the Example of Livestock Farming (Pig Farming)



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The Project Team

Berlin, in December 2010

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PREFACE

The trade union Industriegewerkschaft Bauen-Agrar-Umwelt (IG BAU) represents the agricultural employees and wants to ensure that initial and ongoing vocational training make the qualifications viable on a long-term basis and assure lasting employability for the labour force. For that reason IG BAU supports the concept of "Lifelong Learning". The vocational training system must be part of this concept. Every employee has the right to further his/her knowledge and skills and to adapt to changes on the labour market. This must be supported by the creation of systems for recognizing informally acquired knowledge and skills.

Pig production in Europe is currently undergoing major changes. In addition to a concentration process that reduces the number of producing enterprises on the one hand and that leads to bigger enterprises on the other hand the work processes themselves as well as the knowledge and skills of the employees are changing. Although vocational opportunities for the employees are improving the vocation of the animal farmer (pig production) continues to have a poor image. In the enterprises are still working many people who have informally acquired knowledge but they do not have certificates for this knowledge and only little chance to advance in their careers. This causes enormous fluctuation that cannot be in the interest neither of the employees nor of the employers.

For changing this situation and improving the prospects of the employees in agriculture we need initial and further vocational training for animal farmers that enables the learners to do top-quality jobs also in future. For that reason EFFAT and GEOPA have decided on 10/05/2007 that the instruments of *Agripass CV* and *Register of Agricultural Jobs* should be created to improve initial and further training and enhance transparency and mobility in vocational training.

With the project "Agri-Trans: Transparency in agricultural vocational training" IG BAU has responded to an initiative of the European social partners in agriculture (EFFAT and GEOPA) and together with partners from seven other countries the union contributed to making the instruments of the social partners better known on the national level; the national vocational training systems became more transparent for the partner countries and in consequence the need for adjusting agricultural vocational training in the EU has become more obvious.

Initial and further vocational training must ensure that employees are up to the dynamic changes in their vocations. In addition to the necessary job-related competences like feeding, animal health, reproduction, etc. trainees must

also acquire personal competences like teamwork ability, independence and reflexivity. The training must include not only business-related topics but also social (health and safety, collective agreements, labour protection laws, etc.) and environmental topics (preservation of nature, waste disposal, procurement, etc.) must play an essential role for ensuring sustainable qualifications.

We hope that the project will contribute essentially to improving working and living of employees in rural areas.

With this manual and the website we want to ensure that the essential purposes of the project – to make the innovative instruments of *Agripass* and the *Register of Agricultural Jobs* better known and to implement them on the national level as well as to improve transparency of the European initial and further vocational training – are achieved also after the project has been finished. In addition to that the manual also aims at accompanying the discussion about the necessary further development of the two instruments and thus support the dialogue about the future system of agricultural initial and further vocational training within the European Union.

The manual addresses especially the stakeholders and providers of agricultural vocational training, the social partners in agriculture (on both the national and the European levels) as well as interested employees and pig farming enterprises.

Holger Bartels

*IG BAU Federal Executive
Department Agriculture and Environment*

SUMMARY

During the past years the EU has increased its efforts to create a single European educational space that ensures for all citizens a high degree of (vocational) mobility. This refers to both getting employment in another country and personal advancement within a vocation or profession by extending ones qualification. An essential precondition in this respect is the transparency of the national educational systems and vocational qualifications. The social partners are called upon to join this process of enhancing initial and further vocational training. With the *Europass* the EU has by now presented an important instrument that is supposed to make cross-border vocational mobility easier.

However, in agriculture many employees are working who have many informally acquired qualifications without being able to prove these qualifications by presenting certificates. For that reason EFFAT and GEOPA – the European social partners in this sector – have decided in a joint dialogue to develop a simplified version of the *Europass* (called *Agripass CV*). Parallel to this will be established a *Register of Agricultural Jobs* that will show the competences that employers normally expect for each vocation. The *Register* is to support the use of the *Agripass CV*. Employers then have the possibility to gain an overview of the workers existing qualifications. The main challenges for the implementation of the two instruments is their implementation on the national level and the clarification of the future requirements for initial and further vocational training with respect to transparency and harmonisation.

Under the leadership of the IG BAU trade unionists from eight countries have come together as partners in the two-year project Agri-Trans to study the current and future situation for vocational training in Europe, test the two instruments in practice and produce recommendations for sustainable initial and further vocational training in agriculture using the example of pig farming.

The tasks were in detail:

- to make both instruments known among vocational training providers and social partners;
- to determine the need for adaptation of the national agricultural vocational systems;
- to submit proposals for a uniform qualification framework and
- to create recommendations for the social partners regarding the further development of *Agripass* and of the *Register of Agricultural Jobs*.

The project Agri-Trans has contributed to improving the comparability and transparency of the qualifications of employees in agriculture within the EU and enhancing the mobility of employees within the single labour market.

For achieving the targets other stakeholders beyond the partners were involved. Participants from scientific institutions and representatives from companies and educational facilities joined the regional conferences and the expert workshop; additional participants in the practice workshops were mainly employers, instructors and representatives from vocational training. Thanks also to this mix of participants it was possible to integrate even countries in the project that were not originally envisaged as partners or to allow them to join as experts. This extended existing networks and prepared bi-national projects.

Project results are diffused via this manual and the already mentioned website. The project participants address the partners of sectorial social dialogue in agriculture by a list of recommendations which contains further ideas for the development of both instruments.



Farrow production outdoor in the south of Denmark

I. THE AGRI-TRANS PROJECT

The Agripass CV and the Register of Agricultural Jobs

In May 2007 GEOPA and EFFAT decided in the committee for sectoral dialogue in agriculture to create an *Agripass CV* and a *Register of Agricultural Jobs*. Their aim was to make existing qualifications of the employees in the member states more transparent to improve their mobility and make employment procedures easier for the employers.

Already in 2002 representatives of both employers and employees responded to the European discussion on education in the sectoral dialogue of agriculture and signed the European Agreement on vocational training in agriculture. The background for this was the Lisbon Strategy (March 2000) and the agenda on social policy (Nice 2000) that had described the improvement of qualifications of employees as a fundamental precondition for achieving the targets of improving competitiveness and full employment in the European Union. This is to be achieved by improving the opportunities for lifelong learning and enhancing the involvement of the social partners. For implementing the agreement the representatives of employers and employees in all member states should demand national centres of reference that register all certificates that can be acquired within agricultural initial and further vocational training.

Background

The rural area in wide parts of Europe are decoupled from the positive economic developments taking place in other regions and was especially hit by the current crisis. A study of the General direction Employment, social affairs and equal opportunity shows the precarious situation of many people in the countryside. One of the main problems for the eradication of poverty is the low education level². Main characteristics of many rural areas are:

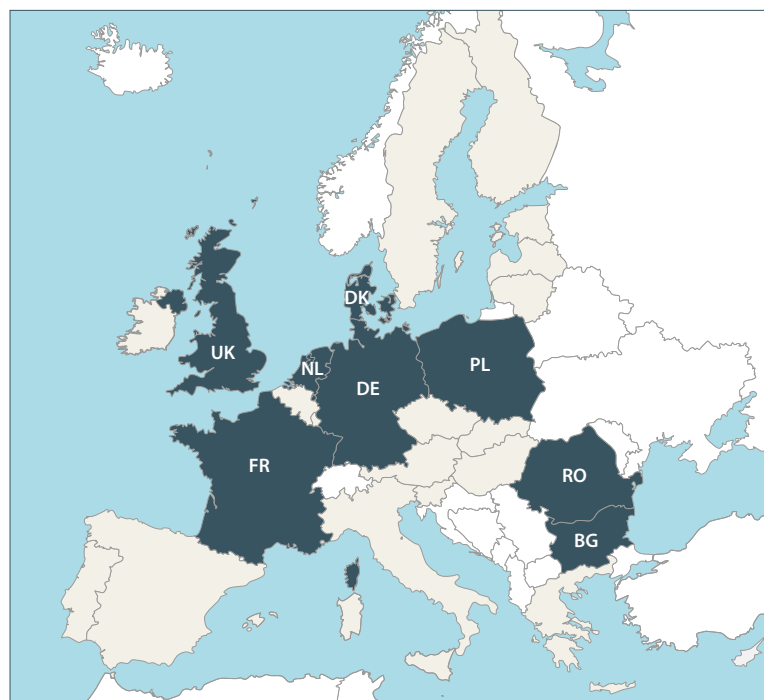
- Migration into cities especially of young and educated people,
- A limited offer of public services such as health care, cultural events, unfavourable living conditions,
- Low wages as well as
- Lower possibility of access to training institutions and lesser qualification of employees in average.³

1 Resolution of GEOPA-COPA and EFFAT of 10 May 2007, the file can be downloaded from the social partners websites <http://www.effat.eu/public/index.php?lang=2&menu=http://www.copa-cogeca.be/Main.aspx?page=HomePage&lang=en>

2 European Commission (2008): Poverty and social exclusion in rural areas (Manuscript): <http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?dclid=2085&langId=en>

3 Unfortunately, there are no detailed numbers for all EU countries available. In Germany, the share of farmers with finished vocational training was 68.5 % from 2004 until 2006. The EU average was only 21.8 %. See also: 1. Fortschrittsbericht 2010 zum Nationalen Strategieplan der Bundesrepublik Deutschland für die Entwicklung ländlicher Räume 2007 bis 2013 unveröffentlichtes Manuskript, Bonn 2010, S. 82

The lack of access or the long ways to educational sites means that particularly handicapped people are excluded from further qualification permanently. Negative learning experiences influence the behaviour later in life and often leads to refusal of continued training. Therefore, the EU commission demands for a bundle of measures to increase the educational level in rural areas. It especially addressed young and mid-aged people.⁴



European partner countries of the project Agri-Trans

As early as in the 1990s the social partners had agreed on improving conditions for the employees, yet, they considered that the prerequisite for this was an improvement of the competitiveness of the agricultural enterprises. Precondition for this in turn was the improvement of the vocational qualification level. Especially in agriculture many employees have non-formally and informally acquired knowledge and skills that limit their "mobility".

Resolution

In the resolution of 10 May 2007 EFFAT and GEOPA specified their ideas and agreed on

- an *Agripass CV* that reflects in a simplified form the *Euro-pass CV* that was developed by CEDEFOP and
- a *Register of Agricultural Jobs* that aims at facilitating the use of the *Agripass CV*. This register should consist of a set of sheets that list the most important competences required for each vocation and describe the work procedures and level of responsibility involved.

Both instruments should be available in all EU-languages.

4 European Commission (2008): Poverty and social exclusion in rural areas, pp. 21f

“So that these skills can be recognised, the Agreement recommends introducing a process in each Member State to validate vocational skills.”⁵

The instruments to be developed should be tested, improved and integrated in the EURES-system.

The fact that this integration in the EURES- and/or the ESCO-system has not yet been done and the still missing recognition process are central obstacles for further development.

5 *ibid.*

The Agripass CV

Personal details:

Last name, first name:

Address: Date of birth:

Nationality: Sex:

Job sought:

.

General education:

- Schooling (where necessary, diplomas received):

.

Mother tongue:

Other languages: 1. Understood: Spoken: Written:

2. Understood: Spoken: Written:

Computer skills. Driving licence:

Vocational training:

Diplomas and certificates from initial vocational training:

.

.

Diplomas and certificates from ongoing vocational training:

.

.

Previous employment:

Positions held, dates, employer’s name and address:

.

.

Skills gained for the job sought:

Use the job lists to list the skills you have gained:

.

.

Other skills:

.

.

Register of Agricultural Jobs

EFFAT / GEOPA: Creation of a european register of agricultural jobs, CV Agripass

(The following text is slightly edited.)

Name of job: SWINEMAN (or PIG FARMER)

General working conditions

The role of a SWINEMAN can be found in agricultural breeding businesses, specialised or otherwise, of varying orders of magnitude.

The job is performed in workshops where animal odours are strong and residual.

The job is repetitive and often requires working at nights and weekends. It involves having close, physical and secure contact with the animals.

Depending on skill, the worker will be categorised in the job classification laid down by the collective agreement applicable to the company.

Technical competence of the job

The employee is able to ...

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| FEED | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> calculate feed rations for all stages of growth,<input type="radio"/> prepare and distribute feed,<input type="radio"/> keep feed storage areas clean and tidy, |
| REPRODUCTION | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> determine when sows are in heat, has knowledge of natural and artificial reproduction techniques and knows how to collect boar seed in adequately hygienic conditions,<input type="radio"/> carry out artificial insemination under adequately hygienic conditions,<input type="radio"/> supervise gestation periods, births and separate supernumerary piglets or kill unviable piglets, |
| WEANING/
FATTENING | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> sort and separate piglets by destination (for fattening/for reproduction),<input type="radio"/> carry out branding, castration, tail docking and tooth cutting, |
| HYGIENE/CARE/
SAFETY | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> clean the premises, clear or stock the litters according to their destination:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- carry out spreading, respecting legislation- energy production (methanisation),<input type="radio"/> disinfect the premises, eradicate rodents, parasite insects and potential intruders,<input type="radio"/> supervise the smooth running of high pressure cleaning equipment, heating or air conditioning and the temperature of the premises,<input type="radio"/> carry out and oversee the smooth running of rolling stock ,<input type="radio"/> carry out iron injections, antiparasite treatments, vaccinations ,<input type="radio"/> detect diseases and inform the hierarchy or the veterinarian in due course. |

Managerial skills of the job

The employee has the necessary skills, qualifications and knowledge to ...

- follow instructions given by a computer and create computer files or manuals needed to manage the business,
- knows how to organise, allocate and coordinate work as a team,
- organises production programmes, plans births and sales, carries out feed purchase orders, materials, equipment, etc and manages stocks and oversees personnel,
- is aware of the demands of the business' customers and integrates them into qualitative research,
- is familiar with European (and national) legislation regarding:
 - risk of pollution and knowledge of the places and timescale for liquid manure spreading,
 - animal welfare in terms of breeding and transport,
- knows the rules governing the health and safety of workers,
- is aware of disease prevention rules to be implemented in case of epidemics endangering public health.

The social dialogue on the European level

In 1985 the social dialogue between employees and employers was established by the European Commission for drafting viable proposals for the improvement of the working environment. The results and standards found and established are addressing all companies and employees in Europe. The Commission is formally obliged to further the social dialogue (Art. 138 EU-Treaty)⁶. The social dialogue of representatives of employees and employers is carried out across industries in the sectoral committees.

In the socio-political agenda 2000, the EU commission highlights the importance of all social actors especially with regard to the implementation of the Lisbon-objectives⁷. The social partners should

- pay attention to the maintenance of social basic rights,
- contribute systematically to a strategy of employment,
- develop the dialogue and the negotiations on all relevant levels with regard to the promotion of employment and lifelong learning, and
- set reference points for the measures of social partners at the national level.

In addition to that the tripartite social summit for growth and employment was established in March 2003. Its participants are representatives of the presidency, the commission and of the European social partners. Once per year before the spring European Council the three parties hold a summit meeting for discussing the economic and social situation of the Union.



Stable of the training center Quintenic (France)

The cross-industry social dialogue takes place for all sectors of the economy and all employees. Its purpose is to carry out a dialogue between the trade unions and the employers regarding the big horizontal issues of working environment and social affairs. With few exceptions the entire tripartite dialogue takes place on the supra-sectoral level.

⁶ See: http://europa.eu/scadplus/glossary/social_dialogue_en.htm

⁷ Commission of the European Communities (2000), Social Policy Agenda: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2000:0379:FIN:EN:PDF>
see also: Commission of the European Communities (2008): Renewed social agenda: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=COM:2008:0412:FIN:EN:PDF>

EFFAT – European Federation
of Trade Unions in the Food,
Agriculture and Tourism Sectors
and related sectors



EFFAT



GEOPA-COPA – Employers' Group of
Professional Agricultural Organisations
in the European Union

The sectoral social dialogue in agriculture

The committee for the sectoral social dialogue in agriculture was founded in 1999. GEOPA-COPA represents the employers and EFFAT the employees.

The European agrarian sector includes agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishery. According to Eurostat, 13 million agricultural enterprises existed in 2007 of which many were small farms and often led as a sideline business⁸. more than 90 % are owners who are usually working in family-owned enterprises. The number of employees was about 2,8 million employed in about 1 million enterprises. In addition, another 4,3 million agricultural migrant workers are active in the sector. In addition to the above a large number of unrecordable persons are working ("illicitly") in the sector. Resolving the problems of rural areas outlined in the study of the EU commission requires investments in infrastructure and people. Here, social partners are mentioned to play a decisive role in the building up and expansion of vocational training.

The main initiatives of the two partners in the dialogue regarding initial and further vocational training include the "Agreement on vocational training in agriculture" (2002) and the resolution regarding the introduction of an *Agri-pass CV* and of the *Register of Agricultural Jobs* (2007).

⁸ The number of farms decreases rapidly as a consequence of lacking efficiency and of concentration processes. In 2003, there still were more than 15 million. see: Eurostat-Database: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/statistics/search_database

Project schedule

The project began on 01/10/2008 and ended on 31/10/2010.

For achieving the defined aims the partners first analysed and compared the national initial and further vocational training system in agriculture on the basis of a questionnaire. This was done for the purpose of identifying common aspects and differences and especially for finding out the need for adaptation on the background of the European discussion regarding the further development of vocational training. The discussions also focussed on the two instruments of *Agripass* and *Register of Agricultural Jobs* and in this respect the main question was to what extent they would be suitable for improving the mobility of employees in Europe. The results of this phase provided the basis for a discussion at an expert conference on which initial proposals for the further development of the two instruments were produced.

In a next step the two instruments were tested in the companies and in vocational training themselves involving instructors, employees and employers.

The results of the individual project phases were bundled during the project's final phase and finally the participants established recommendations for the partners in the European social dialogue in agriculture regarding the further development of the two instruments which are meanwhile available to the social partners.

Because many employees in this sector are in a precarious situation since they have only low qualification levels or are unable to present any proof for their informally acquired qualifications and also because the modular training in some countries may and does lead to the fact that employees get only a "narrow" training the participants also created proposals for developing a sustainable agricultural vocational training. In this activity they focused on the quality of the initial and further vocational training, i.e. on a vocational training that promotes lifelong learning of the trainees (e.g. "Learn to learn") so that they will be prepared for technological changes, environmental protection requirements, enabled to go into other vocations in case they are no longer able to stay in the original one, i.e. The key competences mentioned in the recommendation of



Exchange about agricultural vocational training in France



Website of the project [agripass-online.eu](http://www.agripass-online.eu)

the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 are included.⁹

The individual project phases, results and products are presented on the project's homepage www.agripass-online.eu that was launched shortly after the project started for making the project and in particular the innovative instruments of *Agripass* and *Register of Agricultural Jobs* known and also for providing an information platform.

Kick-off and Advisory Board

At the kick-off meeting in mid November 2008 the project partners agreed on the individual project phases and on the joint dialogue to ensure that the exchange could be carried out and information would be available also between workshop meetings despite the fact that they spoke different languages and were separated by long distances.

During the same meeting the Advisory Board was established that not only accompanied the project but because of their expertise in the sectoral dialogue its members were also able to make proposals for the advance of the project (e.g. information about the state of the discussion regarding innovations in the social dialogue). In addition to the discussion about the two instruments the above referred also to the development of "Proposals for Improving the training, working and living conditions in agriculture using the example of pig farming" (see below).

9 <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:394:0010:0018:EN:PDF>

The eight competences are: native language competence, foreign language competence, mathematical competence, digital competence, learning to learn, social and civic competence, entrepreneurship and cultural expression.

Regional conferences

As a first important measure for exchange four regional seminars were organised (in Warsaw, Paris, Amsterdam and Berlin). The participants from the partner countries presented their initial and further vocational training systems and the situation in pig farming and they identified common features and differences in agricultural vocational training. To make it easier to compare the situations a questionnaire was sent to the participants before the meeting. It contained questions regarding the three key topics: significance of agriculture, the training system and the specific situation in initial and further vocational training in pig farming.

Expert workshop

For the expert workshop in February 2010 in Berlin were invited representatives of the employees and of vocational training institutions for discussing the contradictions and issues regarding the further development of the *Agripass* and the *Register* that had been identified on the regional seminars.

At the end of two days of plenary and group discussions two catalogues with recommendations were established. One of them contained proposals for improving and complementing the two instruments for enhancing transparency. The second was established for reflecting the trade union view regarding the future development of vocational training in Europe.



Before visiting a pig farm cooperative near Lamballe (France). Hygienic standards require protective clothing.

Practice workshops

The three practice workshops were held in Western European countries since neither Bulgaria nor Romania have educational facilities that are able to present a full-fledged training concept for agricultural vocations focussing on animal farming or with animal farming (pig farming) as specialisation. In Poland such an institution is to start working in late 2010.

During three practice workshops in countries with a large amount of pig farming (Denmark, Germany and France) the partners and experts visited pig farming enterprises and training facilities and had the opportunity to meet teachers and instructors, trainees and employers to find out

about their opinion regarding the qualification situation and the development of the EU labour market in their sector. The purpose of these events was to compare the actual qualification situation with the content of the *Register* and with the *Agripass* to be able to recommend any changes if necessary.



Multilingual explanations while visiting the training center Wehnen (Germany)

Final conference and finishing works

During the final conference in Eastbourne in September 2010 the project was reviewed and the results were presented. The recommendation catalogues were revised and approved. The participants feel that agricultural vocational training still needs a lot of improvement in particular on the background of the current discussions on the European level. As planned from the beginning a manual with the results was produced by the project "Agri-Trans" and the recommendations for the two innovative instruments were published.

Results of the dialogue process 1: The situation regarding vocational training in the partner countries and the need for adaptation of the two instruments

The vocational training concepts in the partner countries

All countries have theoretically a good training for farmers/animal farmers. However, in the Eastern European countries and in particular in Romania vocational training still suffers from the consequences of the collapse of the political and economic structures in the 1990s. The vocational training institutions have to be re-established. This process has not been completed even until now¹⁰.

The structures for acquiring formal qualifications and the training systems differ a lot among the participating countries. There are modular systems and other systems have training courses that last for several years and finish with a qualification. The new orientation towards learning outcomes in the European discussion on education points in the right direction, yet, there are fears (especially in Germany), that a focus on modular qualifications may generate a too narrowly trained workforce.

The basic contents of vocational training follows a similar concept everywhere. However, the arrangement of theory and practice varies (e.g. by linking them to schools and/or enterprises) and there are also differences in the mode of production (indoor/outdoor animal farming, specialisation for individual phases in the chain of production).

In the discussions on education different terminology is used which reflects that also the contents differ. In most of the Western countries there is much more focus on aspects like independent, self-organised learning than in the Eastern countries. In accordance with this the way how knowledge and skills are acquired is more important in the Western countries. The re-orientation to learning outcomes in the European debate on the further development of vocational training was not known. However, the examination regulations demand that the trainees show at the end of the training that they have acquired certain concrete knowledge and skills. This includes also environmental standards that will be stricter in future – however, they are of great significance only in the UK, Germany and Denmark.

Out of the key competences mentioned in the recommendation of the European Parliament and Council of 18 December 2006, language, social and civic competences as well as cultural expression are not contained in particular in the modular short-term training concepts. Only the Danish concept for initial and further vocational training focuses markedly on personal competences and to a smaller degree they are contained in the German concept;

10 Another factor that causes a confusing situation especially in the agrarian sector of the Eastern European partner countries is the large proportion of subsistence farming that produces a large proportion of the pig livestock in those countries. However, these small enterprises do not employ trainees and their standards can hardly be checked.

no other concept mentions them explicitly. Foreign languages and intercultural competences – from our point of view fundamental qualifications for improving cross-border mobility and also required for management work – are not included at all.

Training offers and need for jobs

Despite existing initial and further vocational training offers there is a lack of qualified employees. Many qualified animal farmers leave the sector quickly for various reasons. In addition to the hard working conditions and a bad image of the vocation wages in most of the partner countries are low and old age insurance is precarious.

So there is a major difference between the existing training offers and the qualification of those who are actually working in pig farming. Often the employees only had “short-term training courses” and/or acquired only informal qualifications. For that reason their opportunities for development (including any opportunity for a career) and their cross-border mobility are limited.

Employee mobility

In comparison with other sectors the involvement in further qualification of employees in agriculture is below average. Although there are many opportunities the employees hardly make use of them. Employers find it difficult to do without their employees since they do not (want) to find replacements for the time the people are away. Employees often are not motivated giving as a reason usually that career opportunities are virtually non-existent. Additionally, in the countryside distances even to the nearest training facility are often rather long.

Generally there is little or no mobility of employees in pig farming. Many people leave pig farms to work in other jobs/profession, but very few just go to another pig farm to work there. Cross-border mobility exists in particular in border-regions (e.g. at the border between Denmark and Germany). Other than that there are many Eastern European employees in the pig farms, however, most of them do not have any formal qualifications in pig farming. At the same time they may have high level qualifications in other professions.

Practical training of animal farmers

The three practice workshops were held in Germany (Wehnen), Denmark (Graasten) and France (Lamballe). Although the training systems differ a lot in some respects (see country portraits below and in greater detail on the website) there are common features regarding the desired contents of the training. All essential items shown in the *Register* are part of the curriculum.

Due to the difficult situation in the participating Eastern European countries they do not have a structured practical training on a broad basis. Yet, in Poland, as already mentioned, a facility is to start working in late 2010 that is in line with Western standards. The participants from Romania have agreed on having coordination meetings with the German training facility at Wehnen (organised by the chamber of agriculture of Niedersachsen (Lower Saxony) to

be able to take into account German experience in setting up their own facilities.

In Denmark and Germany personal competences are mentioned not only in the vocational training models but they are also “practised” during practical training. This is reflected by the open design of the rooms that invite communication and facilitate learner oriented teaching/learning. The learning competence is developed by a number of methods: In Germany it is especially the Guiding Text Method¹¹, that is the basis for learning and finding knowledge in groups; in Denmark it is the project method that is also implemented in groups. In addition to developing vocational expertise the training’s targets are to promote learning, methodological and social competences (i.e. competence for action). We think that this is an essential precondition for lifelong learning. In contrast to the above instructive learning is the main approach in France, this means that training is not as much project-oriented and self-controlled as in the other two countries where practice workshops were held. This is reflected by the classical schoolroom design. However, this does not mean that this is considered to be a bad training system – here, too, the enterprises are up to the high standards required by the European Union.

The two Instruments Agripass and Register of Agricultural Jobs

The *Agripass* and the *Register* were relatively unknown except among those participants who are involved in the European Social Dialogue in Agriculture. Because of the obvious lack of qualified workforce the employers are interested in the instruments – just not for the employees whom they already have and want to keep.

Both instruments have not yet been translated into all European languages as intended and they cannot easily be accessed and downloaded from the web. Both aspects are major obstacles for their dissemination.

Further, the instruments themselves are not yet sufficiently developed and do not yet improve the comparability of qualifications and in turn enhance mobility. The *Register* does list various fields of activities but they are as yet insufficiently differentiated and do not yet supply useful information about knowledge and competences. The same applies for the *Agripass* which is supposed to be a simplified form of the *Europass*. Yet, there are five different versions of the *Europass* and it is not yet clear which of them will be the basis of the *Agripass*.

The European agreement on vocational training in agriculture signed by associations of the employers (GEOPA) and employees (EFFAT) on 05 December 2002 demanded the creation of “national reference centres” for registering all existing diplomas and certificates. Since this work has not

been fully done an important prerequisite for the transparency of *Agripass* and the *Register* is missing.

Even greater problems are caused by the missing national methods for “validating vocational experience” that were also recommended in the agreement of 2002. Thus the employees can only describe their informally acquired competences. This limits the chance to implement the planned easier vocational mobility since the employees still do not know how to describe their informal knowledge and skills correctly and the employers still do not get clear information on the actually existing competences of their job applicants.

Moreover both instruments are lacking the integration into European activities for improving comparability, transparency and quality assurance. Although there are considerations and proposals to describe qualification levels in the *Register* – similar to the European qualification framework the *Register* does not have a final appendix that would facilitate the use of the *Agripass*.

This last deficit is certainly caused on the one hand by the fact that the discussion is not yet finished on the European level and work continues in many respects so that any application of results would be rash – on the other hand it is due to difficulties to integrate the instruments with the nomenclature of EURES.

For being successful the instruments would have to be revised and further developed and the national vocational institutions (in addition to the social partners) in the EU-countries would have to become more involved in implementing them. The situation is most difficult for those enterprises and employees that are no longer part of the educational system (see comments on the lack of interest in further qualification in the sector).

11 For the Guiding Text Method learners are working in small groups to solve tasks they are given. Guiding questions provide orientation for the work. “This method demands a high degree of own initiative and independence of the learners and it trains also social competence in addition to the vocational and methodological expertise.” Kersten Reich, methodenpool.uni-koeln.de/download/leittexte.pdf

II. PIG FARMING AND VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN THE PROJECT PARTNER COUNTRIES

Pig production in Europe

In the European Union more than 150 million pigs are produced annually. More than two thirds are produced in six countries: Denmark, Germany, Spain, France, the Netherlands and Poland.

In all countries the number of agricultural enterprises has decreased. At the same time the remaining enterprises have become bigger. By now three quarters of all pigs are produced by only 1.5 % of all producers. With the reduction of the number of companies and their growth in size the traditional relationship between the farmers and their employees is changing: from a close family-like structure it turns ever more into a relationship between employees and employers.

Although the share of agriculture in the GNP has dropped since 1990 in all EU member states production increased in many sectors or remained on the same level. While productivity increased the number of employees dropped. Within the period from 2000 until 2009 alone it shrank by 25 %¹².

Number of pigs (in 1000)

	2000	2009
EU (27)		151,961
EU (15)	122,196	122,661
AT	3,348	3,137
BG	831	730
DK	12,642	12,873*
DE	25,767	26,604
ES	22,149	25,343
FR	15,168	14,552
IT	8,646	9,157
NL	12,822	12,108
PL	16,992	14,253
PO	2,338	2,325
RO	4,797	5,793
FI	1,456	1,353
S	1,896	1,616
UK	5,948	4,601

Source: Eurostat

* The deviation from the production numbers in the country report (25 million) is due to the high export of farrows which are fattened until slaughtering in other countries (f.ex. Germany).

Simultaneously with this concentration the enterprises became ever more specialised. This means that often they do only piglet production or only fattening. This division of labour is not restricted to the enterprise level – it also takes place on the level of the European countries. For instance

Denmark and the Netherlands focus on producing piglets that are then sold to Italy, Romania, Germany or Spain for fattening.

Concentration and higher productivity are closely connected with the introduction of more advanced technologies and machinery in the enterprises like fully automatic feeding systems. Employees must get the qualifications required for handling the new technologies and coping with the trend towards specialisation.



Pig production in the European Union – Geographic distribution (2008); Source: Eurostat

However, especially in the EU-15 there is a shortage of labour both in agriculture in general and in pig farming in particular. This applies especially for qualified labour. In some countries (e.g. Denmark) this results in the fact that more and more employees from Eastern European countries are employed (some with unlimited contracts), however, these often have only little vocational qualification.

¹² Eurostat press release of 07/05/2010 – STAT/10/66: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/5-07052010-AP/EN/5-07052010-AP-EN.PDF

The partner countries and their initial and further vocational training

The following country portraits describe how initial and further vocational training in agriculture work in the various countries of the project partners (using the example of pig farming). In addition to that the portraits contain some information on the socio-economic context that is relevant for the topic.¹³



German trainees work with the Project learning method. Training center of the Chamber of Agriculture Lower Saxony in Wehnen (Germany)

It is obvious at the first glance that all partner countries have offers for training as farmer/animal farmer – yet, there are different systems, durations and certificates. This means that with respect to the targets of transparency and comparability a lot remains to be done. In the Eastern European member states new vocational training structures were established, however, they are not yet fully implemented and accepted.

There is no or only little connection with the European debate about vocational training with its orientation towards learning outcomes that intends to improve acceptance of informally and non-formally acquired qualifications. Certainly further improvement is required to better reflect future social challenges in initial and further vocational training. In addition to the integration of personal competences and greater attention to health and safety at work this also means that more consideration for sustainable production conditions is required; these are insufficiently taken into account – to an extent because they demand expenses and also because of a lack of legal regulations.

For ensuring high-quality production and products in ever bigger enterprises greater challenges that arise due to technological innovation and also other aspects play a growing role; these other aspects are for instance animal health and the impact of agricultural production on the environment. The new challenges will not influence the future development of initial vocational training alone – they also demand an ongoing further development of the

¹³ The main economic data are shown on the website of the statistical office of the European Union (Eurostat): <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu>. Detailed country reports are presented on the project website. With regard to the number of employees must be taken into account that there are differences between the various statistics. The main reason is that in agriculture are working many relatives whose working hours are assessed in different ways.

workforce by lifelong learning. Without ongoing qualification people risk losing their jobs.

Most countries have further qualification offers that respond to the new challenges in the vocations. However, during the project's work and in particular during the practice workshops we found that employees in agriculture are less interested in further qualification than employees in other sectors. For coping with the challenges described above urgent measures are required to improve the interest in further qualification and participation in qualification courses.

Due to a low interest in vocational training in other countries this is left aside in the country portraits. With exception of trainees in Denmark and the Netherlands training abroad during the agricultural training is hardly appreciated. The reason for the higher interest in these small countries might be that they traditionally are more open to impulses from other countries, the precise promotion of intercultural and new professional experiences or simply the consequent education of languages in vocational training sites. In Romania, many young people leave without any degree in vocational education due to a missing perspective.

The social partners in all countries play an important role in developing initial and further vocational training in agriculture. Yet, to date not all countries have managed to implement the validations procedures – in particular those for informally acquired competences – as desired by EFFAT and GEOPA (see above: The *Agripass CV* and the *Register of Agricultural Jobs*).



Agricultural training center (Landbruksskole) in Gråsten (Denmark)



BULGARIA

■ Population

7.6 million

■ Area

110,994 km², 47 % of them are used for agriculture

■ Economy

GNP 2009: Euro 35,043 million; ca. Euro 4,600 per capita

■ Agriculture

In 2009 the share of agriculture in the GNP was 6 %. In 2005 exports of agricultural produce grew by 13 % to just above Euro 1,000 million; imports of agricultural produce grew by 10 %. This means that also the export surplus grew in 2005. Also in the trade with agricultural produce within the EU the country has a positive balance. Bulgaria's main export good are cereals. Sunflower seeds and cheese are also exported in major volumes. The most important imported goods are pork, poultry and beef.

■ Pig production

Pig production has been shrinking for years (only in 2002 and 2003 this trend was interrupted). Whereas in 1998 pig production was still 1.7 million, the output was only ca. 730,000 pigs in 2009. There is only a small number of big enterprises left. However, recently foreign companies have become interested in investing into pig production in Bulgaria.

■ Employment

Total employment in 2009 was nearly 3.2 million persons (62.6 % of the population aged 15 to 64); ca. 2 % of them worked part-time. Agriculture had ca. 400,000 full-time employees in 2009. This means that the number dropped by 48 % since 2000. Since the country still has a large proportion of subsistence farming like the other Eastern European countries the number of people whose income mainly relies on agriculture is probably much higher than the figure shown.

Vocational training in agriculture

■ Structure and duration

Responsibility for the national educational policy lies with the ministry for education and science. The educational system consists of many types of schools and vocational training is closely linked with general education. Training for animal farming is mainly done at schools and universities. Practical experience can be acquired during practical periods. There are agricultural colleges on secondary level that teach elements of animal farming. Part of that training deals with pig farming although the training is not actually focussed on it. Average training duration here is 3 or 4

Qualification levels

- Level 1: Pig farming assistant (Pomoshtnik svinevad)
- Level 2: Pig farmer (Majstor svinevad)
- Level 3: Pig farming technician (Tehnik-jivotnovad/svinevad)

years. This is one of the main causes for the lack of young workforce in Bulgaria's agriculture.

It is possible to study pig farming/breeding at various universities in Bulgaria (Sofia and Plovdiv). They end with the bachelor or master degrees. Training at agricultural colleges takes ca. three or four years, university training takes three or even five years – depending upon the desired degree.

In addition to the above vocational training centres offer three different types of certificates (see box). Training programmes are only approved by the state authorities if they include a practical training contract between the school and an enterprise. Most of the practical training is done in the only remaining state farm that is part of the university of Sofia.

■ Remuneration during training

Trainees are not paid.

■ Lifelong learning

The labour law obliged the employers to ensure further qualification for their employees, however, this is hardly ever enforced. For that reason the employees representatives are trying to make arrangements for it when negotiating the employment contracts. Actually, further education is mostly restricted to the few large companies since here the employers pay the cost and need qualified employees.

The National Agency for initial and further vocational training (NAVET) is responsible for the further qualification programmes. NAVET was introduced with the adoption of the vocational training law in 1999. Its tasks include the issuing of licenses to educational centres, maintenance of the register of licensed institutions, monitoring, control and maintenance of the quality management system, establishing education standards and lists of jobs.

■ Social partners

The trade union responsible for agriculture is FNSZ. The social partners may join commissions of the national agency for initial and further vocational training (NAVET) with equal representation (development of training standards, certification of training institutions and teachers, lists of jobs). Other levels where the social partners can collaborate in influencing initial and further vocational training are the national council for trilateral partnership, the national initiative "Social Solidarity" and the national council for the creation of jobs.

**■ Population**

5.5 million

■ Area

45,000 km², 66 % of them are used for agriculture

■ Economy

GNP 2009: Euro 223,251 million; ca. Euro 40,400 per capita

■ Agriculture

In 2007 the share of agriculture and forestry in the GNP was ca. 1.1 %. 19 % of the Danish exports are agricultural produce.

■ Pig production

In 2008 13 % of the Danish agricultural enterprises were pig farms. Total pig production was 25 million. Ca. 70 % of the Danish pork were exported to Europe and 13 % go to Japan and China.

■ Employment

In Denmark total employment in 2009 was nearly 2.8 million persons (75.7 % of the population aged 15 to 64); ca. one quarter of them worked part-time. Ca. 15,000 persons were employed directly in pig production; when processing is included this number grew to 48,000.

Vocational training in agriculture**■ Structure and duration**

Agricultural training is divided into three parts and begins with a two-year basic training programme. After another one and a half years the trainee finishes as qualified farmer with a specialisation.

The vocational training programme (VET) ensures initial vocational training for young people and consists of components of theoretical and practical training that are taken in turns and last each for several weeks. The agricultural vocational schools usually have their own farmland and stables. In addition to that the trainees go to one or several enterprises during their training. They themselves (supported by the vocational schools) find these enterprises for the required practical periods.

Depending on previously acquired qualifications the training up to the second part may take up to three years and 5 to 11 months.

Training for all vocations has the same structure so that it is possible to change the training vocation and get recognition for the competences acquired to that point. The vocational schools and training centres are financed by the

Qualification levels

- Basic training (Landbrugsassistent)
- Fully trained farmer (Falgært Landmann)
- Production manager (Landbrugets lederuddannelse
Produktionsleder),
Manager (Virksomhedsleder),
Agricultural economist (Agrarøkonom)

ministry for education. The training companies get compensation payments for the time that the trainees are at school.

■ Remuneration during training

The trainees conclude a training contract with an enterprise and during their entire training they will receive a remuneration that is defined in the collective agreement. Currently trainees in their first year get ca. DKK 10,000 (Euro 1,333) per month. During the training this remuneration grows to DKK 15,700 (Euro 2,000).

■ Lifelong learning

Arbejdsmarkedsuddannelser (AMU) is the adult training programme for persons with and without qualifications. Its contents are very practice- and demand-oriented. This means that the further qualification contents should not be part of the formal training and are developed on the basis of innovations in everyday work and the need for adapting to them – e.g. handling milking robots or feeding systems. Often elements from further qualification that turned out to be useful are integrated into the basic training.

These demands for adaptation and further qualification are defined by the proportionally composed national committee for agricultural education. Each year a respective study is made in one sector. Finance is provided by the ministry of education.

Costs for participation in further education courses are kept as low as possible to make them accessible for all. Additionally enterprises receive a compensation of DKK 100 (Euro 13.40) per working hour.

■ Social partners

The social partners in the pig sectors are the trade union Fagligt Fælles Forbund (3F) and the employers association Gartneri-, Land- og Skovbrugets Arbejdsgivere (GLS-A). The social partners are represented in the so-called national educational committee for agriculture and within this framework they are responsible for the quality of the training. In this committee they define the content, curriculum, duration and certificates on the basis of a legal framework. They are also responsible for licensing the training enterprises and they control the coincidence of the needs of the labour market and the training offered.



GERMANY

■ Population

81.8 million

■ Area

357,111.91 km², 52 % of them are used for agriculture

■ Economy

GNP 2009: Euro 2,397,100 million; ca. Euro 29,400 per capita

■ Agriculture

In 2007 the share of agriculture and forestry in the GNP was slightly below 1 %. Exports of agricultural produce have a share of about 5.9 % in the total German exports.

■ Pig production

In 2009 ca. 26.9 million pigs were kept in approximately 67,600 enterprises; most of the piglets are now coming from Denmark; in Germany they are fattened until they have slaughtering weight.

■ Employment

In Germany total employment in 2009 was nearly 39 million persons (70.9 % of the population aged 15 to 64); ca. one quarter of them worked part-time. In the same year agriculture had 536,000 full-time employees (annual labour units); versus 2000 this is a drop by almost 22 %¹⁴.

Vocational training in agriculture

■ Structure and duration

Agricultural training consists of a basic training with specialisation and further qualification. Precondition for access to the basic training is completed nine year compulsory schooling (secondary level I). For access to further qualification applicants must have completed their vocational training and they must have several years of practical experience.

Training for pig farming takes three years and includes a two-year basic training as animal farmer and a one-year specialisation for pig farming.

Training is usually done in the dual system, i.e. in a combination of training at vocational school and at a company. At the beginning the trainees and the training enterprise conclude a training contract that is subject to private law. The contents of training at the companies are prescribed by the training ordinance. This training covers three to four days per week and lasts up to eight weeks in a row. It may be complemented by extra-plant training. Training at the vocational schools is controlled by the school inspection authorities of the federal states and usually covers two days per week. This part comprises theoretical training both for vocational expertise and also for general subjects (German language, bookkeeping, sports, politics, etc.).

¹⁴ Other calculations show a workforce of almost 1.3 million in 2007, of these 729,400 working relatives, 186,800 employees and 335,500 seasonal harvest workers; these figures include also part-time farmers and relatives in limited part-time employment. The seasonal workers have limited employment contracts only.

■ Remuneration during training

The enterprises pay a remuneration that is regulated in the collective agreements and grows for each year of training. The actual amounts vary from region to region. In Bavaria, for instance, trainees get Euro 550 in the first year and Euro 670 in the third year when they are older than 18 years.

■ Lifelong learning

The relevant institutions (e.g. chambers of agriculture) offer formal further education opportunities. In addition to that there are further education offers by technical colleges and vocational colleges or universities of applied sciences. Vocational further qualification is based on the needs of the companies and of the individuals. The cost for further qualification must usually be paid by the employees themselves. Depending upon the kind of further qualification the cost may be covered partially or entirely by the employer or various state or private institutions. Whether a further vocational qualification entitles to educational leave and continuation of wage payment depends upon the regulations established by the relevant government of the Land (usually 10 days within 2 years or after at least 6 months of employment at the company). In case a Land does not have specific regulations any requests for time off or cost coverage must be arranged individually with the enterprise.

Under the regulation for external training it is possible to admit persons for final examinations for a recognised training vocation who did not go through a regular vocational training. Precondition for admission is that they are able to prove that they have worked in the vocation for which they want to be examined for at least twice the regular training duration.

■ Social partners

The social partners in pig farming are the *Industriegewerkschaft Bauen-Agrar-Umwelt* (IG BAU) and the employers' associations for forestry and agriculture. They participate in developing training schemes/standards, submit recommendations for all fields of vocational training regarding the coordination of vocational schools and enterprises and they are represented in vocational training committees that monitor the execution of vocational training in the enterprises. They certify qualifications, negotiate the offer of vocational training places and engage in collective bargaining regarding the remuneration for trainees. Examinations are organised by commissions with equal representation at the responsible institutions like chambers of agriculture or the so-called responsible authorities. IG BAU assumes that between 40 and 50 % of the enterprises adhere to the collective agreements.

Qualification levels

- Animal farmer, specialisation pig farming (Tierwirt, Schwerpunkt Schweinewirt)
- Meister in animal farming (Tierwirtschaftsmeister)
- Specialised farmer (Fachagrarwirt)



FRANCE

■ Population

64.7 million

■ Area

544,000 km², 54 % of them are used for agriculture

■ Economy

GNP 2009: Euro 1,907,145 million; ca. Euro 24,800 per capita

■ Agriculture

Agriculture in France contributes a share of 2.2 % to the gross national product and it is one of the biggest agricultural producers in the EU.

■ Pig production

Total pig production in 2009 was ca. 146 million. This means that approximately 10 % of the European pork are from France, although there has been a slight downward trend during the past few years.

■ Employment

Total employment in 2009 was nearly 26 million persons (64.2 % of the population aged 15 to 64); ca. 17 % of them worked part-time. In the same year agriculture had 858,000 full-time employees (annual labour units); versus 2000 this is a drop by almost 16.6 %. Pig farming had roughly between 4,000 and 5,000 specialised employees. Since there are also mixed farms that keep pigs the number of people actually involved in pig farming is probably above 16,000.

Vocational training in agriculture

■ Structure and duration

France has a ranking of certificates with levels 5 through 1. Level 5 equals completed general school education and level 1 equals a university degree. There are three different paths of training; nearly all of them begin after the young people qualified for university entrance or they include the training for it.

Training is characterised by the système de alternance that is a combination of training at an enterprise and at school. The rhythm depends on the needs of the enterprises and for that reason it is organised in different patterns in the regions and schools. On the other hand the schools themselves often have farmland and stables and do also the practical training themselves. This system is very widely spread especially in Brittany, the centre of pig farming. The duration of the training depends upon the kind of qualifi-

Qualification levels

- Level V: Skilled worker (Ouvrier qualifié)
- Level IV: Production manager (Responsable d'élevage)
- Level III: Specialized craft worker (Technicien d'élevage)

In addition, the following certificates can be obtained:

- BREPA: Degree in management of an agricultural company
- BPA TPA Agricultural degree "Work in agricultural production"

cation. In case a person is learning on the job the duration depends on the employer. The specific training for farming (CGEA) with a broad basic qualification consists of several modules with a total of 800 hours.

■ Remuneration during training

While switching between enterprise and school the trainees get Euro 700 per month. The employers do not contribute and for providing the training they get financial support from the state. This regulation does not apply everywhere in France.

■ Lifelong learning

Since the adoption of a law within the framework of the programme for "lifelong learning" of the European Commission (2004) employees who do not have a formal qualification can have their vocational experience recognised by an examination board through presenting their activities and expertise. This enables employees to get certificates for subspecialisations. Any lacking knowledge may be acquired by practical training or participation in vocational training courses. The employees get time off for the examinations.

Theoretically employees do not need their employer's approval for engaging in further qualification. In practice especially the employees who have been in employment for a long time hardly use further qualification offers.

There is a growing number of promotion schemes for disadvantaged employees (e.g. those older than 45 years, unemployed and women after child-care leave).

During the further qualification courses wages will be paid by an agricultural training fund (financed by contributions from employers and employees). This fund is run jointly by the social partners and in agriculture it has sufficient finance.

■ Social partners

The Commission Paritaire Nationale de l'Emploi (CPNE) that is subdivided into regional commissions (Commissions Paritaires Régionales de l'Emploi (CPRE)) consists of representatives of employers and employees. Its tasks are the negotiation of employment relationships, further development of the vocations and of vocational training, verifying the vocational qualifications that have been developed by the ministries and the recognition of private and public institutions of vocational training; they also accompany young people on their way into working life and provide vocational counselling; other tasks are the training and re-qualification of employees with regard to health issues, seasonal workers and disabled persons.

Examinations are organised by commissions with equal representation at the responsible institutions. There is also the Association Nationale pour l'Emploi et la Formation en Agriculture that has been founded by the social partners in 1993 for promoting vocations in agriculture and for providing information for recruiting agricultural employees.

In France, workers' unions are marked characterized by a very plural landscape which sometimes makes it difficult to bundle workers' interests. The representative of the employees in agriculture involved in the project was the following trade union: FGA-CFDT Fédération Générale Agroalimentaire CFDT.



NETHERLANDS

■ Population

16.6 million

■ Area

41,528 km², 55 % of them are used for agriculture

■ Economy

GNP 2009: Euro 571,979 million; ca. Euro 30,133 per capita

■ Agriculture

10% of the GNP are generated by agriculture that is considered to be highly productive. The Netherlands are among the world's biggest exporters of agricultural produce. A total of 17.5 % of all exported goods are from agriculture.

■ Pig production

In 2009 ca. 12.1 million pigs were produced in 8,200 enterprises. On average an enterprise keeps 38,000 pigs.

■ Employment

Total employment in 2009 was nearly 8.6 million persons (77 % of the population aged 15 to 64); ca. 48 % of them worked part-time. In the same year agriculture had 182,000 full-time employees (annual labour units); versus 2000 this is a drop by almost 17.2 %.

Vocational training in agriculture

■ Structure and duration

In the Dutch system there is a clear separation between vocational training on the one hand and general education on the other hand. Vocational training on secondary level II is offered in two forms: as blocks accompanying work on the job and as actual vocational training. The participants conclude a contract with the enterprise where they do the practical training. The vocational training scheme is more focussed on theory. The share of practical training ranges between 20 and 60 percent. In principle it is possible to reach any level of the qualification structure through both schemes.

The vocational training courses in higher education teach theory and practice of vocations. These courses are offered by universities of applied science. Full-time studies at institutions for vocational training (ISCED level 5) require the completion of preparatory scientific schools (VWO), general secondary education (HAVO) or the extended form of vocational training on secondary level II (MBO). These courses usually have a duration of four years and provide both theoretical and practical preparation for a vocation. The centres for vocational training, further qualification and labour market have established criteria for approving enterprises that offer the practical training.

Qualification levels

- Level I: Helper (assistentenopleiding)
- Level II: Future skilled worker (basisberoepsopleiding)
- Level III: Skilled Worker (vakopleiding)
- Level IV: Expert for the middle management level (middenkaderopleiding)

Initial vocational training is financed by the state. The ministry for education, culture and science and the ministry for agriculture, environmental protection and food quality are responsible for financing this sector. The latter bears the share of the expenses that is directly related to the training with agricultural orientation and for the agricultural training centres (AOC).

■ Remuneration during training

Persons who participate in training in an enterprise receive trainee's payments. In the Netherlands this remuneration depends upon the age of the persons and ranges from ca. Euro 500 for 16 year old trainees and Euro 1,300 for 23 year old trainees.

■ Lifelong learning

The national strategy for lifelong learning focuses on the target to improve and maintain the knowledge level of the population. It is considered to be an important key to the increase of productivity and the improvement of social cohesion within the society.

The most important state-financed forms of part-time vocational training are part-time versions of the vocational training on secondary level II and in higher education. The participants usually do these courses while they are active on a job. These activities are also financed by the state. The most frequently used form is further training in the form of courses or learning on the job. A special feature of further vocational qualification is the fact that organisations of employers and employees have taken over responsibility for offering and financing a lot of the further qualification measures for employees on a voluntary basis in collective agreements. The state does share the cost – however, usually by granting tax reductions. So, most of the further qualification in the enterprises is organised and financed privately. Private training by definition is financed privately, i.e. by fees paid by the participants.

■ Social partners

The negotiating social partners are the FNV Bondgenoten (trade union) and RCO for the employers.

On the national level the social partners act as councillors for the Dutch government within the council for economic and social affairs. On sectoral level the social partners are represented on the administrative board of the umbrella organisation of the industry's training facilities. In addition to that each sector has committees (so-called committees with proportional representation) where social partners and representatives of the educational system are equally represented. These committees define jobs that are then developed into educational profiles by the educational facilities. In the enterprises or sectors the social partners participate in collective bargaining. Ever more often training activities become part of the collective agreements, for instance by stipulations regarding measures for utilising human resources or regarding lifelong learning for employees.

**■ Population**

38.2 million

■ Area

312,685 km², 53 % of them are used for agriculture

■ Economy

GNP 2009: Euro 310,486 million; ca. Euro 6,900 per capita

■ Agriculture

In 2008 the share of agriculture in the GNP was 4.18%. After Romania Poland has the largest number of agricultural enterprises and it has the biggest rural population among the EU member states.

■ Pig production

Pig production shrank markedly during the past years. In 1998 the number of pigs was still 19 million; in 2009 the number had dropped to slightly more than 14 million.

■ Employment

Total employment in 2009 was nearly 14 million persons (59.3 % of the population aged 15 to 64); slightly less than 8 % of them worked part-time. In the same year agriculture had 2.3 million full-time employees (annual labour units); versus 2000 this is a drop by almost 11.3 %. Approximately 300,000 persons are working in pig farming. Of these 10,500 are employees. With respect to this number it must be noted that it is hardly possible to make a clear difference between working family members and employees because of the domination of small farming and the existence of many mixed enterprises.

Vocational training in agriculture**■ Structure and duration**

University training for animal farming is particularly well developed. After 1990 – together with the privatisation – many technical secondary and vocational schools were closed so that not all parts of the country have facilities for vocational, non-academic basic training.

Poland has ca. 600 schools with an agricultural profile. Vocational training is provided mainly at schools and is enriched by short-term practical training in enterprises. These enterprises are thin on the ground since most employers are not willing to invest in training.

Training for animal farmer or a specialisation for pig farming do not exist in Poland. Rather, this field is part of the general agricultural training that includes a certain number of lessons dealing with animal farming (depending upon the school the number of lessons on animal farming varies from 90 to 162).

The duration of the training depends on the type of school where it is provided and ranges from one and a half to four

Qualification levels

- Technician for animal keeping
- Agricultural engineer

years. At a technical college for agriculture that can be attended after secondary school (finishing with university entrance level) it takes two to three years. In addition to this college there are technical vocational schools that integrate vocational training and general education to reach university entrance level and training there takes five years. At a secondary school it is possible to join a two-year agricultural training without having university entrance level education.

■ Remuneration during training

Trainees are not paid.

■ Lifelong learning

Further qualification is possible through a three-year training at an agricultural vocational school or one and a half year courses at a profile secondary school when the trainees have basic knowledge on agriculture.

Otherwise further qualification takes place both in the enterprises and at schools. Often the employees do not get a generally valid certificate when they did some qualification at the enterprise.

■ Social partners

Vocational training in agriculture is steered by the ministry for agriculture; through it the trade unions can exercise influence on the development of framework curricula and submit proposals. The responsible trade union is ZZPR.



ROMANIA

■ Population

21.5 million

■ Area

238,391 km², ca. 62 % of them are used for agriculture

■ Economy

GNP 2009: Euro 115,869 million; Euro 2,900 per capita

■ Agriculture

The share of agriculture in the Romanian GNP is shrinking markedly; however, in comparison with other EU-countries it is still very big (5.7 % in 2009). Yet, Romania currently imports 80 % of its food to cover the demand. Large numbers of the population are working in other European countries as seasonal workers.

■ Pig production

Romania's pig livestock dropped very much after 1990 but it started to recover. In the early 1990s the output of pig production was still almost 13 million pigs; in 2009 the number had dropped to 5.8 million. Of these only 1.6 million pigs were produced in commercial farms. Approximately two thirds of all pig farms had less than 10 pigs.

■ Employment

Total employment in 2009 was nearly 9.25 million persons (58.6 % of the population aged 15 to 64); ca. 8.5 % of them worked part-time. In addition to the above ca. 2 million persons were working abroad – most of them have only a low qualification level.

In the same year agriculture had 2.1 million full-time employees (annual labour units); versus 2000 this is a drop by roughly 41 %. Since the country still has a large proportion of subsistence farming like the other Eastern European countries the number of people whose income mainly relies on agriculture is probably much higher than the figure shown. Ca. 5,450 persons were working in pig farming.

Vocational training in agriculture

■ Structure and duration

Although the country has a well developed system for training veterinarians and engineers there is a lack of vocational and secondary schools that prepare for agricultural vocations since after the "revolution" in 1990 all secondary schools were dissolved. This means that there is an acute need for new training standards for special agricultural vocations like that of pig farmer. By now the educational system was reformed within the context of the EQR and three qualification levels have been established that are defined by the number of lessons. The lowest level is that

Qualification levels

- Level I: unskilled labourer in animal husbandry
- Level II: animal farmer and worker in agriculture and ecological farming
- Level III: agricultural technician, technician for animal husbandry

of worker with training on the job; the middle level is that of animal farmers and agricultural technicians including training for ecological animal farming. The highest level that can be reached is that of technician for animal husbandry. Theoretical training is provided at schools and practical training either at workshops in the schools or as practical training in enterprises.

However, the employees in the enterprises have hardly ever done any qualified training since the new standards are not yet implemented because the necessary infrastructure is still missing.

■ Remuneration during training

Trainees are not paid.

■ Lifelong learning

To date the country has no standards for ongoing vocational qualification or employment in pig farming. Further qualification usually takes place in the enterprises, yet, the certificates are then only valid within the respective enterprise. Training is subdivided into regional networks: the Romanian mountain region (CEFIDEC) and the national area (ANCA-OJCA).

Finance for further qualification comes from various sources. On the one hand the employees pay for training courses or the employers themselves may pay, on the other hand sponsors and international funds (World bank, EU social fund) provide finance for further qualification. In addition to the above the unemployment insurance budget finances further qualification for unemployed.

Romania makes efforts to further develop the vocational training system within the European Qualification Framework. Responsibility for these efforts lies with the national council for adult qualification (CNFPA). New qualification facilities are created and the union Agrostar has been able – with assistance of the European social fund – to open two agricultural vocational schools for training pig farmers. The target is to have involved 12.5 % of the adults (age range 25 to 64) in a programme for lifelong learning by late 2010.

■ Social partners

The social partners have the following tasks: they assess the need for qualification within individual sectors and sub-sectors; they propose new training courses for qualifications that are in demand on the labour market; they also draft specific training curricula for the individual vocations and offer information and counselling for enterprises and employees. Examinations are held by boards with equal representation at the relevant institutions. The employees are represented by Federatia Agrostar.



UNITED KINGDOM

■ Population

62 million

■ Area

243,610 km², 66 % of them are used for agriculture

■ Economy

GNP 2009: Euro 1,563,106 million; Euro 25,640 per capita

■ Agriculture

Agriculture contributes less than 1 % to the GNP.

■ Pig production

In 2009 4.6 million pigs were produced in the UK. Most of the enterprises keep the pigs outdoors and only the last phase of fattening is done as intensive fattening in stables. Please note, that the regulations for the protection of animals are stricter than in continental Europe.

■ Employment

In the UK total employment in 2009 was nearly 29 million persons (69.9 % of the population aged 15 to 64); ca. one quarter of them worked part-time.

In the same year agriculture had 290,000 full-time employees (annual labour units); versus 2000 this is a drop by more than 13 %¹⁵. Less than 2,000 employees were working as full-time employees in pig farming since only 365 of the pig farms are taking on employees.

Vocational training in agriculture

■ Structure and duration

After completing secondary school the young people can either go to a vocational training facility or conclude an employment contract that includes training or they may take up an employment without training.

An apprenticeship (vocational training) offers them the opportunity to acquire recognised vocational skills certificates on the job within a period of one to three years. After they have completed such a training the young people may either move on into higher education or enter working life. The duration and also contents and extent of these training courses vary a lot. Level 2 apprenticeships take at least 12 months, those from level 3 upward take at least 24 months.

An apprenticeship combines practical and theoretical training: a national vocational qualification (NVQ), i.e. a qualification for a specific vocation that is primarily provided and assessed within an enterprise, key competences like communication ability, mathematics and a technical certificate for the actual vocational expertise. Normally the trainees attend lessons at a qualification facility for one day each week and the rest of the week they spend at the enterprise where they are trained or working.

¹⁵ According to other calculations the number is 130,000 full- and part-time employees. On top of this come 250,000 seasonal workers; many of them are from Eastern Europe and have only limited employment contracts.

Apprentices get a training contract and an individual curriculum that the employers establish with support of local educational institutions. The latter also provide assessment and quality control and help the enterprise to find suitable apprentices.

The Quality and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is responsible for controlling the national qualifications and competence certificates. Programmes that have QCA-approval may be funded by the Learning & Skills Council (LSC). The Skills Council for pig farming is called LANTRA SSC. Together with representatives of the sector it defines which competences are required for exercising the individual activities. When they have got QCA-approval they are offered by the agricultural training facilities. There are six different qualification levels which depend on the verifiable competences. Remuneration is linked to the level reached (fixed to level four, then negotiated between employer and employee).

■ Remuneration during training

Trainees are paid by the employers and in most enterprises they count as regular employees. The local LSC reimburses part of the wages to the employer.

■ Lifelong learning

In 2006 the pig farming sector adopted the consultation document "From Sustainability to Sustained Ability". It comprises for instance certificates of competence, training manuals, trainee of the year awards, management development programmes for future managers and the Pig Industry Professional Register (PIPR). The latter comprises 6 different levels. In the PIPR are entered and recognised all activities of personal further qualification.

■ Social partners

Training is usually done on the basis of a voluntary model under leadership of the employers. Three models reflect regulations agreed by the social partners in the UK: consultation, collective agreements and participation in formal structures. In the Agricultural Wages Board UNITE (employees) and the National Farmers Union (employers) negotiate wages, qualifications and social standards in the enterprises.

Qualification levels

- Level 1: No skills, manual work
- Level 2: Standard worker, 1 recognised competence
- Level 3: Lead worker, 4 competences some sector specific
- Level 4: Craft Worker, 8 competencies, NVQ 3 level skills many specific
- Level 5: Supervisory grades, supervise workers implementing management decisions
- Level 6: Farm Management grade, responsible for farm or individual enterprise

III. VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN THE EUROPEAN UNION

With the Lisbon Strategy of 2000 the European Union intends to become the world's most competitive and dynamic economic sphere by 2010. Innovation as engine of economic growth, the knowledge society and social cohesion as well as environmental protection have been identified as main fields for renewal and sustainability. Education has been identified as key instrument for achieving these aims. The current EU-strategy "Europe 2020" also lists as one of its three priorities the "development of a knowledge- and innovation-based economy".

Although every EU-country decides alone on its educational policy efforts have been increased since Lisbon to create common framework conditions for improving transparency and comparability of the educational systems and with them also of the acquired qualifications and competences. The purpose of this is to enhance the mobility of learners and workers within Europe.

The "work programme concerning general education and vocational training 2010" of 2002 provided the basis for new forms of political cooperation and further development of general education and vocational training within the European Union.



Kirsten Nelsen, irector of the Landbruksskole in Gråsten, explains the training structure in Denmark

An essential precondition for cooperation concerning vocational training is the Copenhagen Declaration of 2002 that has been adopted by ministries for education of 31 European countries, the social partners and the European Commission. They defined the following central targets: strengthening of the European dimension of vocational training, improved transparency of the national educational systems and existing vocational training certificates, development of common instruments of quality assurance and principles for recognising informally and non-formally acquired qualifications.

A coordination body and three subject-oriented working groups (for transparency, quality assurance and credit point system) were created for achieving these aims. In follow-up conferences (Maastricht 2004, Helsinki 2006, Bordeaux 2008) the results were presented and the next steps were agreed.

Lifelong learning means for instance that the significance of non-formally and informally acquired qualifications and competences grows while the assessment of initial and further vocational training focuses ever more on learning outcomes and less on the question of by what formal way the qualification was acquired. For that reason common European principles for identifying and validating non-formally and informally acquired learning outcomes have been developed. Their translation into practicable procedures has not yet been completed.

In May 2009 the European Council in its conclusions regarding the "strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training (ET 2020)" approved the continuation of the cooperation with the following strategic targets until 2020: implementation of lifelong learning and mobility, improvement of the quality and efficiency of education and training, promotion of equity, social cohesion and active citizenship and enhancing innovation and creativity.¹⁶

Several instruments resulted from the manifold activities in the field of vocational training; some of them have already been implemented, others are being implemented or tested currently. These include:¹⁷

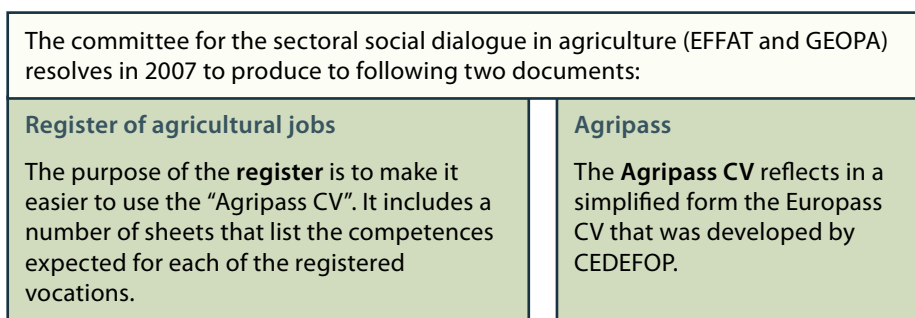
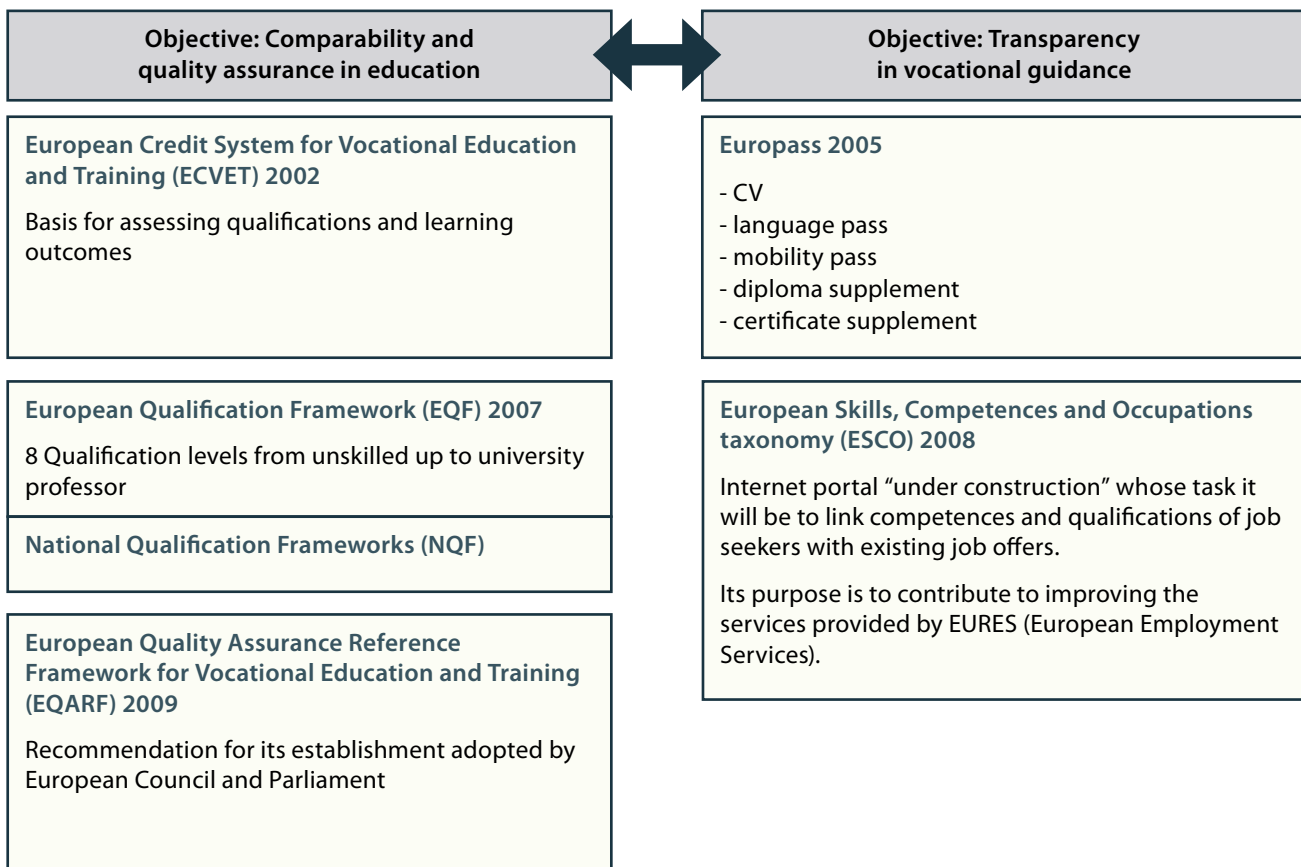
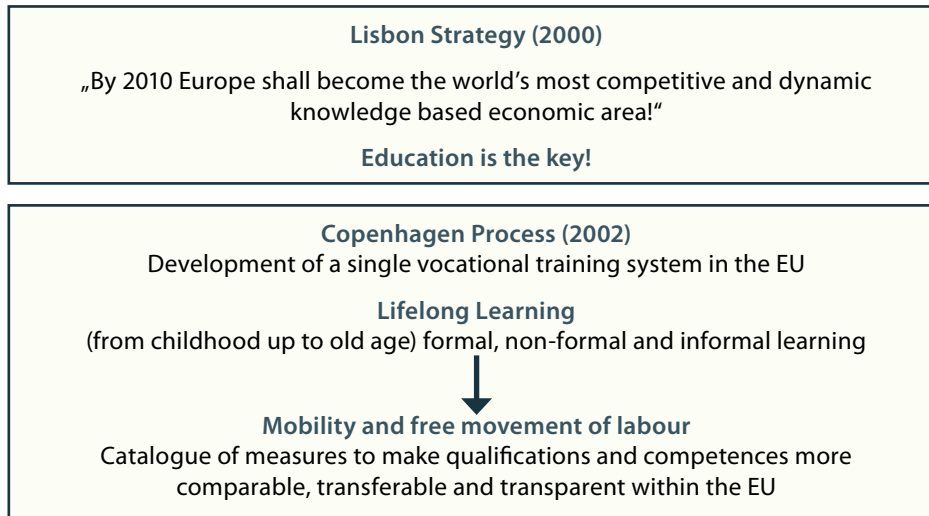
EUROPASS

The *Europass* has been developed as an instrument that is supposed to make it easier for the people to document and present the experience and competences they acquired abroad. It provides an overall image of the qualifications, unifies the various national forms of presentation and thus facilitates comparability within the European context. Applications to jobs abroad are to be facilitated with this. There are five documents altogether: the *Europass CV*, the *Europass language pass* (documentation of the knowledge of languages), the *Europass mobility* (documentation of learning and work experience within Europe), the *Europass Diploma Supplement* (explanations of the certificate of higher education) and the *Europass Certificate Supplement* (explanations of the vocational training certificate).

¹⁶ European Council (2009): Council conclusions of 12 May 2009 on a strategic framework for European cooperation in education and training ("ET 2020"): <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2009:119:0002:0010:EN:PDF>

¹⁷ You will find an overview in http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc40_en.htm

VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN THE EUROPEAN UNION



ECVET

The ECVET (European Credit System of Vocational Education and Training) is based on the orientation towards learning outcome. In future it will no longer be important for how long and where somebody has done a training but what knowledge, skills and competences he or she has acquired. These are called learning outcomes. Within ECVET the learning outcomes are sorted into learning units and assessed with credit points.

Initially the necessary structures will be established and individual elements will be tested in practice during a pilot phase. The activities will first focus on formal learning. As from 2012 the system will gradually be applied for the vocational qualifications. In 2014 the experience gained to that date will be evaluated so that improvements that may turn out to be necessary can be made.

EQF

The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is a common European reference framework to make it easier to compare qualifications that were acquired in the various countries. Like the other instruments its purpose is to enhance mobility of the citizens and support their lifelong learning.

The EQF consists of eight reference levels (8 as highest level) that comprise all qualification levels of general education and initial and further vocational training (including the academic levels). They describe three categories of learning outcomes: knowledge, skills and competences.

Currently most EU-countries are in the process of implementing the systems on their national levels. The German qualification framework has two main categories that are themselves subdivided: professional competence into knowledge and skills and personal competence into social and self-competence.



Danish trainees learn self-organized.

ESCO

The initiative “New Competences for New Employment” has been launched by the EU-Commission in December 2008 for enhancing the link between the educational systems and the world of work. One consequence is the creation of the web-portal ESCO (European Skills, Competences and Occupations taxonomy¹⁸) for relating competences and qualifications of job seekers with the existing job offers for facilitating the finding of jobs in Europe.

Its purpose is to contribute to improving the services provided by EURES (European Employment Services, founded in 1993).

EQARF

In 2009 the European Council and the Parliament adopted the recommendation for establishing EQARF (European Quality Assurance Reference Framework for Vocational Education and Training). The purpose of this system is to use ten so-called reference indicators for measuring and reflecting the progress in quality assurance of the national educational system and providers of education.

¹⁸ Taxonomy = classification in an (ordered) system

Additional background: Lifelong learning

“Lifelong learning” has been a key term in the European discussion of education in the 2000s. But also in the decade before, questions of learning was an important item. In 1995, the White Paper “Teaching and learning: towards the learning society” appeared and 1996 became the “European Year of Lifelong Learning”.¹⁹

Retrospect

Adult education has a long-standing tradition that has exercised a predominating influence (at least) on the content of this term. As early as in the 19th century Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig (1783-1872) founded the adult education centre movement in Denmark that soon spread across other European countries. This movement aimed to compensate discrimination in the educational system and to make access to “culture” and social life possible for all people.

Discussions taking place in the adult education later gave rise to debates about general education and vocational training. Own targets and methodology were developed and tested and are still used today. These include follow-up learning, orientation towards the participants, independent learning, learning by doing etc.

The term of “lifelong learning” was used frequently on international conferences of UNESCO in the 1960s. It is linked with the effort of finding new ways to overcome the widely spread illiteracy in the so-called Third World. Simply transferring European education systems turned out to be an unsuitable method. Learning should and must continue in adult age to be successful but it needs different forms than the ones used in European or North American schools then. It also is consensus in the European education discussion that learning at an adult age takes place in a different manner than when being young. But unfortunately, this still is seldomly put into practice in daily education.²⁰

In the 1970s several concepts were developed simultaneously. They all represented lifelong learning as a principle and in a humanist tradition they focussed on the general/holistic education of people. This was understood also as a logical response to new technological and socio-political challenges. Examples are the models developed by UNESCO, Council of Europe and OECD.²¹

In the 1980s and 1990s the dynamic economic development caused unprecedented modernisation and adjustment processes and the educational debate was more and more influenced by economic demands. Denis Kallen, OECD-employee of many years and co-author of the

OECD-model, comes already in 1996 to the rather depressing conclusion: “The generous and all-embracing idea of lifelong learning as it was originally perceived does not have a place in the current performance-oriented, rational market economies.”²²

Lifelong learning in the EU

When the Lisbon strategy was adopted in 2000 knowledge was considered to be essential for the policies of the following decades. A new strategic aim was declared which should help to match the challenges of globalisation: “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion”²³.

Following the Lisbon strategy two papers shaping vocational education and training were published by the EU-commission: “Memorandum on Lifelong Learning” (2000) and “Communication from the Commission of 21 November 2001 on making a European area of lifelong learning a reality” (2001)²⁴. Aims have been to empower people to freely choose between learning environment, jobs, regions and countries to optimally apply their skills and knowledge and to realize the ideas of more wealth, integration, tolerance and democracy. Meanwhile, several concepts around the issue of professional training had been developed to implement these demands.

Even though an economic focus on education sometimes plays a major role in many discussions, the European Union goes beyond this as the documents mentioned above show. Also, the eight key competences mentioned in the recommendation of the European Parliament and the Council from 2006 underlines this. Important learning objectives listed in there are learning competence, social and civic competences as well as cultural consciousness and expressiveness²⁵. But these points do rarely play a role during the concrete training activities in the EU countries (See Results of Dialogue Process 1).

Lifelong learning became indispensable for the individual development as well as the economic development of the EU, in present times. But, it should not be forgotten next to all the applause that lifelong learning means permanent pressure for many people. It also is linked with the feeling of impertinence especially as the development of demands is not clear all the time. Often, people lack a target based on their own interests of life²⁶. The focus of learning processes in a democratic educational model must be the learning and working people.

22 Denis Kallen (1996): Lifelong-learning in retrospect, in: Vocational Training Nr. 8/9, p. 22

23 Presidency Conclusions Lisbon European Council 23 and 24 March 2000: http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/PRESIDENCY_CONCLUSIONS_Lissabon.pdf

24 EU commission (2001) Communication from the Commission of 21 November 2001 on making a European area of lifelong learning a reality, http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11054_en.htm

25 RECOMMENDATION OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning. (<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2006:394:0010:0018:EN:PDF>)

26 Cf. Faulstich, Peter (2006): Lernen und Widerstände, in: ders./ Bayer, Mechthild (Hrsg.): Lernwiderstände. Hamburg, p. 10

19 http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/education_training_youth/lifelong_learning/c11024_en.htm

20 Siebert, Horst (2006): Didaktisches Handeln in der Erwachsenenbildung. Didaktik aus konstruktivistischer Sicht. Augsburg; Illeris, Knud (2006): Das „Lerndreieck“. Rahmenkonzept für ein übergreifendes Verständnis vom menschlichen Lernen, in: Ekkehard Nüssli (Hrsg.), Vom Lernen zum Lehren. Lern- und Lehrforschung für die Weiterbildung, Bielefeld, pp. 29-41

21 see also: Vocational Training (European Journal) Nr. 8/9 (1996); Focus: Life Long Learning (<http://www2.trainingvillage.gr/download/journal/bull-8-9/8-9-95-en.pdf>)

IV. PROJECT RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

Results of the dialogue process 2: Recommendations for furthering the development of the instruments Agripass and Register of Agricultural Jobs

In the European agreement on vocational training in agriculture of 05 December 2002 (see website) the partners in the sectoral social dialogue in agriculture resolved to enhance the level of vocational qualifications of the employees, to improve their paid employment and facilitate their mobility within the European area. For this end methods for recording the competences (including those that have been acquired informally) were to be developed and implemented in the partner countries. An essential aim was to make the existing qualifications comparable.

By resolution of the social partners of 10 May 2007 the agreement was specified in greater detail and the partners agreed to develop the *Agripass CV* and a *Register of Agricultural Jobs* to make the use of the *Agripass CV* easier. The first vocation listed in the *Register of Agricultural Jobs* with its competences was that of the animal farmer with a focus on pig farming. Currently the process of further development of the instruments does not advance since the social partners and the representatives of EURES have been unable to agree on the procedure of integrating the *Register* into EURES and/or ESCO.

The participants in the project "Agri-Trans" welcome the development of the two instruments. They provide orientation for employers and employees by trying to present the qualifications transparently and they can thus help to make it easier to search for jobs across the borders of the EU-member states. By presenting their qualifications employees can apply for vacant jobs more easily. On the long term these two instruments can improve the opportunities on the labour market especially for those employees who possess informally acquired qualifications but do not have evidence for them.

However, it was also found that the currently existing instruments still need a lot of improvement. A number of recommendations have been developed in the course of the project of which the project participants think that they improve the instruments and simplify their dissemination.

- The project participants welcome the activities of the social partners to integrate the *Agripass* and the *Register* in existing structures. This applies in particular for the integration in ESCO/EURES. Yet, the instruments should also be presented to the stakeholders on the labour market and in vocational training in the sector of agriculture on the national level and they should be accessible through the web.
- For being successful the instruments would have to be revised and further developed and the national vocational institutions (in addition to the social partners) in the EU-countries would have to become more involved

in implementing them. The situation is difficult for those enterprises and employees that are no longer part of the educational system (see comments on the lack of interest in further qualification in the sector).

- Although the final versions do not yet exist the basic structures and contents have been defined. Dissemination would be promoted very much if the intended users would have access already now. Any changes made at a later point in time can be made easily. It would not be a major effort, either, if individual users would have to renew their *Agripass* at a later time.
- The terminology and systems of *Agripass* and *Register* are still insufficiently coordinated. Greatest efforts should be made to ensure that the two instruments complement each other better to avoid misunderstandings.
- Moreover the two instruments have not yet been translated into all European languages although this had been announced in the resolution of 2007. Especially in agriculture many employees do not know any foreign languages. For that reason we recommend urgently to have the existing instruments translated so that they can be used.
- The instruments themselves should be revised and further developed. They are not yet sufficiently developed and do not yet really improve the comparability of qualifications and in turn enhance mobility. The *Register* does list various fields of activities but they are as yet insufficiently differentiated and do not yet supply useful information about knowledge and competences. The same applies for the *Agripass* which is supposed to be a simplified form of the *Europass*.
- In addition to the above the demand in the agreement of 2002 to establish "national reference centres" for registering the existing diplomas and certificates must be fulfilled soon since otherwise it will hardly be possible to achieve comparability of the different educational pathways and certificates.
- Also the envisaged national procedures for "validating vocational experience" must be established that are demanded in the agreement of 2002. Only when they exist employees will be able to present transparent descriptions of their informally acquired competences and employers can get reliable information about the competences of applicants.
- In addition to the above more account should be taken of the two instruments in the European discussion about comparability, transparency and quality assurance. There are considerations and proposals to describe qualification levels in the *Register* – similar to the European qualification framework. However, the *Register* does not have a final appendix that would facilitate the use of the *Agripass*. We are aware that this last deficit is certainly caused on the one hand by the fact that the discussion is not yet finished on the European level and work continues in many respects so that

any application of results would be rash – on the other hand it is due to difficulties to integrate the instruments with the nomenclature of EURES.

- We propose to add to the *Register* an overview of the existing titles of jobs and available qualifications. Since there is an immense number of educational pathways and qualifications in Europe a summarised presentation will make it easier to settle disputes regarding the qualifications and thus simplify job application and employment decisions for employees and employers.
- The competences shown in the *Register* should include references to the social and environmental aspects of the jobs. Soft skills and/or personal competences are insufficiently presented in the *Register*. This should be improved. In this context we refer to the recommendations regarding the key competences issued by the European Council and Parliament in 2006.
- Finally, we need a transparent evaluation procedure for a continuous review of the instruments in practice and their adaptation to the ever changing requirements in the vocation of animal farmer (pig farming).

The project participants hope that the necessary measures are taken as soon as possible so that the two instruments can become fully effective and agricultural employees in Europe can improve their chances on the labour market.

Results of the dialogue process 3: **Outline of the proposals to improve the training, working, and living conditions in livestock farming (pig farming)**

During the two-year project Agri-Trans, the partners involved dealt with the situation in vocational education and training of pig farmers and developed the following proposals for the European dialogue highlighting transparency and comparability of qualifications. The discussion took place under the leadership of the Industriegewerkschaft Bauen-Agrar-Umwelt (IG BAU, Union for construction-agriculture-environment) with the support of PECO-Institute.

Pig husbandry in Europe is currently undergoing a period of considerable changes. Besides a process in which are fewer but bigger production sites, work procedures as well as employee know-how and abilities are also changing. This is why workers partly need more and broader qualifications.

Since employers lament the lack of a qualified workforce, workers are forced to acquire more and more qualifications.

On the one hand, this problem can be attributed to the bad image of pig husbandry. On the other hand, traditionally, workers have not been given responsible activities at the farms in the sector: there are small career opportunities and modest salaries. As a result, there is a high turnover in all countries. In response to this deplorable situation, we present the following demands to the European decision makers.

We want an initial and on-going continued training in animal husbandry (pig husbandry) so that trainees receive good working and living conditions. This means adequate wages and working hours to guarantee social integration in the social environment as well as an occupational image that does not lead to social exclusion. All degrees and qualifications awarded by the EU member countries must be comparable.

This means:

- Everybody has to have the right and the possibility to attend a qualified vocational education and training. Training must be free and decently paid.
- Initial training has to fulfill broad basic qualifications (acquired in two years) and with the possibility to specialize in the occupation (acquired in one year). Here, theoretical and practical training must be closely entwined. The quality of training facilities (schools, farms, companies, etc.) has to be regulated and maintained.
- Vocational education and training has to ensure the sustainability of qualifications and the maintenance of workforce. Besides necessary technical (f.ex. feeding, animal welfare, reproduction etc.) personal competences (i.e. team work, independence, reflexivity etc.) have to be considered in the training, too. Furthermore, social (i.e. health and safety issues, collective agreements, labor codes etc.) and environmental (i.e. nature conservation, waste disposal, purchasing etc.) aspects have to play a considerably role besides economic contents to do justice to a sustainable vocational education and training.
- The entire vocational training system has to be embedded in the concept of “lifelong learning”. Every employee has a right to develop his/her knowledge and capabilities so they can adapt to the developments in the labor market. Therefore, the educational system has to recognize informally acquired knowledge and capabilities.
- The employer has to support and ensure qualified vocational education and training. One possibility could be the regular payment of a fee into a training/qualification fund that would finance in each sector and/or country.
- Flexibility in reaching objectives of the training programs has to be reached (i.e. part-time, resuming after a break etc.).
- All social groups must have access to a vocational training program. This especially addresses equal treatment of sexes.

- Trainees as well as employees must receive a decent pay which allows them to live a decent life and to make financial retirement arrangement. The principal “same pay for same work” should be applied here, ignoring sex, nationality etc.
- Training program and content have to be geared to the social and technological developments of the respective occupations. Social partners have to participate and decide equally on the contents. All training facilities including business (based on a certain number of employees) shall develop long-term business plans for the development of their company, the development of the sector and the development of the necessary qualifications for future employees. Vocational training programs must adapt to market trends and prepare for the future. If such long-term plans are not implemented sanctions have to follow (i.e. no layoffs without a broad justification beyond existing regulation).
- It has to be possible to put acquired qualifications into practice in a typical work routine.

We want a legal framework which ensures that 95% of the population has a formal qualification. Unqualified employees have to be qualified. For this, unskilled workers must have the opportunity and support to gain experience.



Breeding animals in the training center Quintenic (France)

We want the implication and participation of social partners in all decision making processes in the vocational training systems (initial and continued training). This will ensure the fulfillment and satisfaction of employees' justifiable needs.

We want the implication of employees the decision making processes because of their experience and knowledge. In addition, they have to receive appropriate qualifications so that they can contribute in a good manner to internal decisions.

We want harmonized and binding EU-wide social and environmental standards for working processes and they have to be part of the basic vocational education and training. The harmonization of social standards must be labored European-wide. Here, the best existing standards have to be used as orientation benchmark. An improvement by collective agreements is possible at any time. The following aspects should be paid attention at:

Working time

- The work day has to be shaped so that, first of all, it is family-friendly. Second, work time has to be linked to payment in a way that allows a good life for a family.

Occupational health and safety measures

- Strict hygiene and health standards have to be introduced at the work place. The monitoring of these standards has to be ensured. In case of non compliance, sanctions must follow (until the closure of the enterprise).
- Working conditions have to be developed in such a way that female workers can easily adapt to them.

Holiday

- Every employee in the pig sector can claim a sufficient number of days of holidays per year.
- Besides regular yearly holiday arrangements, employees who have worked in the agricultural sector for ten years have to be granted an additional health holiday of a longer period, since their jobs continue to be physically challenging despite technical innovations.

Continuing training and retraining

- Every employee has the right to continued training during his career.

Bonuses

- In exchange for particular circumstances or strains, bonuses (based on wage) have to be paid. Nevertheless, improvements and the reduction of difficult circumstances or strains continue to have priority over the pay of bonuses.

In addition to a good payment for employees, we want that employees receive a percentage of the company's profits. This participation should depend on the revenue of the enterprise and can be either financial or some other kind of payment (i.e. funding of social facilities, reductions of the number of products developed in the house, holiday resorts and vacation time).

The implementation of these demands and measures will automatically contribute to the improvement of the occupational image of all agricultural occupations, particular the pig worker. Consequently, qualified employees can be attracted to pig husbandry and will remain in the business. All current and future employees and employees have to be empowered to adapt to and to shape the current restructuring of agriculture. Moreover, workers have to be allowed to develop personally as well as vocationally in a self-determined way by means of their qualifications.

We especially asked legislators as well as social partners to create the respective conditions and institutional procedures necessary to implement our demands.

Decided by the project partners at the final conference in Eastbourne, September 8th, 2010

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Vater: AAN4E	Mutter: CAM1	
aktuelle Leistung: 2	Faktor: 12,5	Futtermenge: 2,5
Leistung von Ei: 2,5	von Ei: 11,5	Sau: 2,5
mit Ferkeln an: 02.04	3	
mit Ferkeln ab: 03.04		
geb. Ferk.		
abgesetzt am	abgesetzt bei Ferkeln	Futtermenge: 13,04
Gesamtgewicht: kg	kg/Ferkel	412
Bemerkungen: MMH		

Overview on the performance of a breeding sow

Outlook

At December 17th, 2010 the project Agri-Trans was presented at a session of the Social Dialogue Agriculture. The main emphasis in this discussion was the recommendations. It was pointed out that *Agripass* and the *Register of Agricultural Jobs* can importantly contribute to more transparency of existing qualifications. Therefore, the European Sectoral Council for Jobs and Qualifications in agriculture (intended to be established) should take an important role in the diffusion of both instruments.

The further development of both instruments can help to implement the demands of the European Agreement on Vocational Training in Agriculture (2002): the validation of professional experience in single member states and the central data collection of all degrees in vocational training (see above). But even without these important steps on the way to a better transparency, participants of the project agree that both instruments have to get into the hands of users. This means a higher integration of actors in vocational education during the diffusion process.

The study on poverty in rural areas done by the EU commission and outlined above showed the special problem of low qualification in agriculture. Here, informally acquired qualifications are not sufficient to increase the chance to better workplaces as the social agenda (2008) demanded. Employees do not have any chance to get decent jobs without a broad basic qualification, neither in their own or in other countries.

Despite the already existing variety of educational sites there still are regions characterized by a limited access to vocational education and training. Here, all actors are called to look for reasons and develop concrete aims to implement necessary infrastructure, start campaigns and ensure a better participation in further training measures. This means educational offers suiting target groups and basing on the learning experiences of employees and help to learn learning again. Social partners have to introduce their knowledge about future needs in agriculture and their competences in agricultural education and training.

Participants of the project Agri-Trans agreed that the attractiveness of agricultural jobs have to be increased significantly. This means for animal husbandry better salaries, better working conditions and insurance for retired workers, more responsibilities and better career opportunities.

The EU program "lifelong learning" aims to make offers to people of different ages to widen and deepen their qualifications. The current opinion thinks this program would only focus on competences relevant in an economic sense. But this program also aims improving personal and social competences which besides contributes to a growing profit of enterprises.

Not least, the development of vocational education and training has to consider the future challenges to agricultural occupations. Environmental regulations and technological processes are increasingly important in professional activities. Without constant learning, these trends are missed. Finally, it is also about to give a broad basic knowledge, and allowing workers to change their careers,

if they are, f.ex., no longer able to work in their professions for occupational health reasons.

Project participants will continue their successful cooperation and continue to shape the debate on agricultural education and training. By focusing on specific issues over a longer period there is, different than in formal contexts, a greater ability to develop differentiated proposals and forward its implementation at European and national level. Ultimately, they want to make a contribution to helping improve the working and living conditions of workers in agriculture permanently.

Areas of future cooperation should concentrate on the following points from the perspective of the project partners:

- the dissemination of the innovations at the national level as through regional conferences and information campaigns. So far important persons and institutions of vocational education and training got to know the innovations and their features through the project. But with over 6 million agricultural workers (including seasonal workers), it is still a long way to go before most of the possibilities of *Agripass* and *Register* have not only experienced, but you can use them too.
- Strengthening the links between *Agripass* and the *Register of Agricultural Jobs* and the development of European instruments that have been designed to increase transparency and comparability of vocational qualifications has to be worked out. These mainly include the EQF and the NQF's respective and ECVET and ESCO. The project has shown that most players barely know the regulations of their own country, let alone know what is happening in neighboring countries.
- the continuation of the initiated network formation. During the project a mutual understanding for the conditions of vocational education in the participating countries and the associated strengths and weaknesses has developed. Much more needs to be done to describe the actual skills of employees in agriculture and thus can be compared. A precise presentation and evaluation will help determine, ultimately, the quality of *Agripass* and the *Register*.
- the expansion of the previously only occasional cross-border cooperation in agricultural education institutions. The work undertaken under the project networking has made clear that there is a lot of interest in the exchange of existing procedures and the development of new methods – whereas the current focus lies more on learning outcome than on ways of learning.

Agripass and *Register* help employers and applicants to communicate about existing qualifications, thus facilitating the employment in other companies nationally and internationally. They may also be an important element in their careers. Without the sustainable design of agricultural education and training in European countries, they remain blunt “weapons” in the proceedings initiated by the Lisbon strategy modernization process of the European Union.

SOURCES AND LINKS

The website of the Agri-Trans project contains more material and in particular the detailed country reports

agripass-online.eu

Informations about Europe and the European Union

Website of the European Union

europa.eu

Website of the European Commission

ec.europa.eu

Overview regarding all employment-related issues in the EU

ec.europa.eu/social

Representatives of employers and employees in the social dialogue for agriculture

EFFAT – European Federation of Trade Unions in the Food, Agriculture and Tourism Sectors and related sectors

effat.eu

GEOPA-COPA – Employers' Group of Professional Agricultural Organisations in the European Union

copa-cogeca.be

Vocational training in Europe

Overview of the instruments of vocational training and the programme Lifelong Learning:
ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc40_en.htm

ec.europa.eu/education

Europass

europass.cedefop.europa.eu
europass-info.de

National Agency Education for Europe at the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (NA beim BIBB)

na-bibb.de

Data on the countries

Most of the data on the countries have been gleaned from Eurostat, the statistical office of the European Union

epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu

Employment rates in Europe (Eurostat press release of 04 August 2010):
epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/3-04082010-BP/EN/3-04082010-BP-EN.PDF

Employment in agriculture and actual agricultural income (Eurostat press release of 07 May 2010): epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/cache/ITY_PUBLIC/5-07052010-AP/EN/5-07052010-AP-EN.PDF

Current figures for pig livestock in Europe:
epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/printTable.do?tab=table&plugin=1&language=en&pcode=tag00018&printPreview=true

Area size of the EU-members states:
europa.eu/abc/keyfigures/sizeandpopulation/howbig/index_de.htm#chart1

europa.eu/abc/keyfigures

Economic information (incl. the figures for the gross national product – GNP) of the individual EU-member states

www.economic-growth.eu

Global gross added value in the agricultural sector:
www.destatis.de/jetspeed/portal/cms/Sites/destatis/Internet/DE/Content/Statistiken/Internationales/InternationaleStatistik/Thema/Tabellen/Basistabelle__LWWertschoepfung,templateId=renderPrint.psml

www.destatis.de

igbau.de	IG Bauen-Agrar-Umwelt (Germany)
peco-ev.de	PECO-Institut e. V. (Germany)
federatiaagrostar.ro	Agrostar (Romania)
effat.eu	EFFAT (Europe)
3f.dk	Fagligt Fælles Forbund (Denmark)
fga.cfdt.fr	FGA-CFDT (France)
fnsz.org	FNSZ (Bulgaria)
fnv.nl	FNV Bondgenoten (Netherlands)
reseau-projectives.org	Réseau Projectives (France)
unitetheunion.org	Unite (United Kingdom)
zzpr.org.pl	ZZPR (Poland)

PARTNERS



