

DEMOGRAPHIC DEVELOPMENT AS A CHALLENGE FOR AGRICULTURAL WORKERS IN EUROPE



A presentation by EFFAT
the European Federation of Food, Agriculture and Tourism Trade Unions



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Although some 10 million agricultural workers in Europe are young than farmers, too few new and young workers enter the sector. Ageing is a specific challenge for the workers – and employers – of the future.

The situation varies regionally across Europe.

Legislators and employers need to improve the social situation of seasonal workers, temporary workers, harvest workers and day labourers.

The lack of farm-based employee participation must be supplemented with new methods.

Incomes must approximate incomes in comparable sectors.

Working hours must be adjusted to suit family and working life to the conditions of heavy physical work.



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PROBLEMS FOR WORKERS

- The incomes of agricultural workers are low
 - Working in agriculture is dangerous, with many accidents at work and occupational diseases.
 - Working hours are not family-friendly.
 - Women are excluded from skilled work careers.
 - Education offers are scarce or not easy to access.
 - Training systems are too strongly oriented to operational interests (lack of involvement of social partners).
 - Opportunities for individual careers are difficult to find.
- = A BAD IMAGE**
- = ONLY FEW NEW AND YOUNG WORKERS JOIN THE SECTOR**



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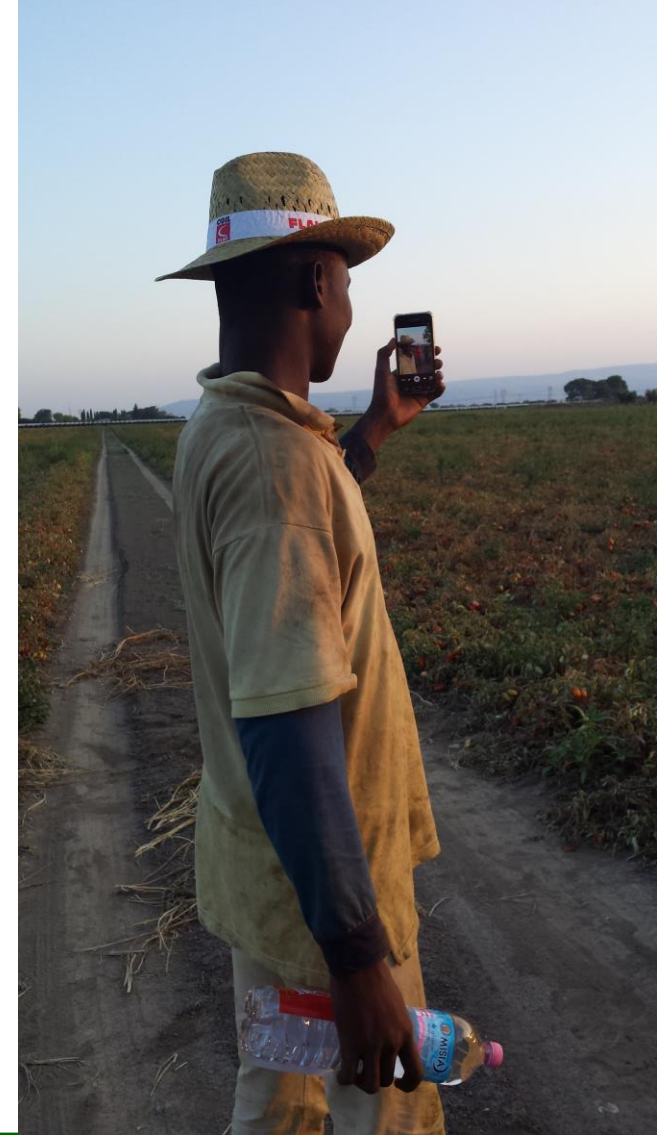
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REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

These problems do not occur everywhere and at the same time, as the agricultural industries in Europe are very differently developed:

- In the north, west and east, full-time and permanent jobs predominate, accounting for about 95% of permanent and about 50% of fixed-term workers in European agriculture;
- In the south, temporary and subordinate working relationships dominate – in the Mediterranean about 5% of the permanent and 50% of the temporary workers of European agriculture are employed.

This socially inadequate development in Mediterranean agriculture has far-reaching consequences: the social conditions of workers are substandard; young people are mostly illegally employed in the sector; incomes are not high enough for workers and their families to live on, making prospects very grim.



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THE PROBLEMS OF OVER 4 MILLION MIGRANT WORKERS

Migrant workers often have insufficient access to social security systems.

- Information about rights and obligations is often missing.
- Often no written work information.
- It is easy to get a job in agriculture without registration (high illegality).

Often, adequate accommodation and sanitation are lacking.

Collective bargaining agreements and local regulations are not complied with.



HIGH NUMBERS OF INFORMAL WORKERS
About 25% of the work is grey or black

PRECARIOUS EMPLOYMENT HAS INCREASED
by about 70%

AGRICULTURAL INCOME IS MOST FAMILIES
MAINSTAY

Employees live with their families above all on the income from agriculture.

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STATISTICS AND AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

INSUFFICIENT STATISTICAL RECOGNITION OF AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

11 million workers in EU 28 + candidate countries

The official statistics: EUROSTAT numbers about 2 million workers

The representation in the Annual Work Unit doesn't reflect employment in real terms.

Annual work units (AWU) are statistical measures based on general assumptions and rough estimates. An annual work unit can in fact hide several workers.

1/3 of agricultural workers are not recorded.

Research and case studies in our line of work suggests that 1/3 of agricultural workers aren't covered.

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POSITIVE DEVELOPMENTS

JOBS FOR SKILLED PROFESSIONALS HAVE IMPROVED

Specialization, diversification, digitization and agricultural services create new and high-quality jobs.

NUMBER OF WORKERS IN AGRICULTURE INCREASED

Overall, the numbers of people working in agriculture are falling, but the number of employees is increasing by 1% to 1.5% per annum.

While the number of landowning farmers and their families is decreasing, the number of employees in Europe is increasing: between 1% and 1.5% per year.



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SOLUTIONS

INCLUDING SOCIAL STANDARDS UNDER THE CAP

Linking social and agricultural policies: linking written statement directive and direct payments to prevent unequal competition.

Include European OSH-standards in cross-compliance to make work safer.

Workers in CAP will participate in co-funded education programmes to promote career advancement and better future

Combine capping with employment to promote employment and cohesion in rural areas



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