

QUALITY ASSESSMENT FORM

Title of the study:

STUDY ON AGRICULTURAL INTERBRANCH ORGANISATIONS

DG/Unit: DG AGRI, Unit C.1

- Official(s) managing the study: Annette KLIEMANN

Contractor: Arcadia International, LEI Wageningen

Assessment carried out by:

Steering group with the active participation of units C1, C2, C 3, C 4, E 1, E 2, E 4, I 2 of DG AGRI, DG COMP, DG GROW, SEC GEN, LS.

Date of the Quality Assessment: 30 November 2016

(1) RELEVANCE

Does the study respond to information needs, in particular as expressed in the terms of references?

SCORING Poor Satisfactory Good Very Good Excellent
x

Arguments for scoring:

The study adequately responds to the information needs of the commissioning body and fully meets the requirements of the terms of reference. The themes are fully addressed and the geographical scope of the study is covered.

The study provides an overview on the numbers of recognised interbranch organisations (IBOs) in Europe, their objectives, challenges and historical development. Such an overview on the number of existing IBOs has never been carried out before. This analysis is deepened with five selected case studies, which represent different sectors and MS in the EU. The study also contains very useful information on the national legislation of the MS on IBOs, which is likewise entirely new information for the entirety of the EU.

The study provides useful findings and recommendations for the conditions which are helpful for the creation and the functioning of IBOs.

(2) APPROPRIATE DESIGN

Is the design of the study adequate for obtaining the results needed to answer the study themes?

SCORING Poor Satisfactory Good Very Good Excellent
X

Arguments for scoring:

The methodology design is adequate for the terms of reference. The following tools were used for data collection and analysis:

- **EU-wide survey and inventory on the existing recognised IBOs (123, 119 + 4 recognised under national law)**
- **Interviews with IBOs, members of IBOs and governments (e.g. bodies responsible for recognition of IBOs in the MS)**
- **Desk research, literature review (which provides a bibliography on IBO relevant academic and grey literature articles)**
- **5 case studies which are based on indepth interviews with the relevant stakeholders.**

The study team was flexible to adapt the methodology where needed. The design applied is adapted to information needs and data availability and has allowed answering most information needs.

(3) RELIABLE DATA

Are data collected adequate for their intended use and have their reliability been ascertained?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The study is based on existing data and field work. The study used a mix of quantitative and qualitative data:

- a) for the IBO inventory, the Commission's survey was studied and data gaps were filled by obtaining information from MS competent authorities and individual IBOs
- b) legislation of MS was studied and discussed with MS national competent authorities
- c) for the analytical part of the study, i.e. the five case studies, literature review (both academic and grey literature) was carried out, in particular focus on French historic development of IBOs, field visits were conducted with face to face and phone interviews
- d) and statistic data were collected.

Overall, the contractor has made an effort to exploit all available data sources, including secondary data sources such as reports, literature review etc. The data sources are identifiable in the report.

(4) SOUND ANALYSIS

Are data systematically analysed to answer study themes and cover other information needs in a valid manner?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The analysis was performed according to the requirements set out in the terms of reference and based on the methods and tools proposed by the contractor. The different analytical tools were used to analyse the qualitative and quantitative data in an appropriate way. Linkages between the various sections of the study have been largely ensured, although the analysis could sometimes have deepened certain aspects, in particular on the part on case studies.

(5) CREDIBLE FINDINGS

Do findings follow logically from and are justified by, the data/information analysis and interpretations based on pre-established criteria and rational?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			x		

The findings are based on the evidence provided through the analysis and the link between the analysis and the conclusions is presented in a clear manner. Opinions from different stakeholders were considered and reflected in a balanced way.

(6) VALID CONCLUSIONS

Are conclusions non-biased and fully based on findings?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The study findings follow logically from the analysis of the available data. The conclusions are substantiated by analytical findings, which in turn were drawn from the analysis and are backed-up by case study evidence and good practise analysis. The reasoning between the findings and the conclusions are explained.

(7) HELPFUL RECOMMENDATIONS

Are areas needing improvements identified in coherence with the conclusions? Are the suggested options realistic and impartial?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
				x	

Arguments for scoring:

The recommendations are clear and based on the conclusions. The study text itself, but also the inventory of IBOs, the national legislation sheets and case studies provide a useful factual basis to assess what IBOs are currently doing, in which legal framework they operate, which conditions (financing, clear communication and cooperation between MS and the IBO, good organisation of the IBO, consensus principle) are beneficial to their work, which limitations they naturally have (IBOs cannot do certain things which e.g. producer organisations would be able to do), they have to respect competition rules. By providing also an insight into the reasons why in certain MS no IBOs have been created or no legislation has been developed the study also gives an insight to the hurdles which interbranch organisations face. The conclusions draw on these elements and summarise which conditions are beneficial to a good functioning of IBOs.

(8) CLARITY

Is the report well structured, balanced and written in an understandable manner?

SCORING	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Very Good	Excellent
			X		

Arguments for scoring:

The final version of the report is well-structured, relatively easy to read and balanced.

OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF THE FINAL REPORT

Overall, the quality of the report is assessed to be **good**.

Is the overall quality of the report adequate, in particular:

- Does the study fulfil contractual conditions?

Clearly and fully.

- Are the findings and conclusions of the report reliable, and are there any specific limitations to their validity and completeness?

The findings and conclusions of the report are reliable and clear. Certain limitations exist though, as the impact of interbranch organisations on producers income and the analysis of the case studies could not be deepened within the available time frame and budget.

- Is the information in the report potentially useful for designing intervention, setting priorities, allocating resources or improving interventions?

The study provides useful findings and recommendations for further reflection on the role of interbranch organisations and the best conditions for their efficient functioning. These findings could form a basis for further clarifying and improving the provisions on producer cooperations and interbranch organisations in the CMO Regulation.