



Report on the Final Conference of the EU Employee Agri-Tech Project

Saalbau Gutleut in Frankfurt a. M./Germany

September 9th and 10th 2008

by Ludger Budde (Krone, Spelle) and Eckhard Voss (Wilke, Maack and Partner, Hamburg)

General Remarks

On September 9th and 10th 2008, the IG Metall hosted the final conference of the EU Agri-Tech Employee Network in Frankfurt, Germany.

Participants were representatives of metalworkers unions and company representatives from Austria, Germany, the Czech Republic, Hungary and Spain. For the first time, the IG Metall was able to welcome representatives from the Finish, Polish and French metalworkers union at the EU Agri-Tech Project. Aside from the strong presence of trade unions, European agricultural machinery companies such as John Deere in Spain and Germany, Claas in France and Germany, Zetor, Linamar, Rekard in the Czech Republic, CNH in Poland, Austria and Germany participated at the conference. In addition, employee representatives from Lemken and Krone, also members of the initial German BDL network, and a representative of the European Metalworkers' Federation (EMF) in Brussels came to Frankfurt.

The international participants discussed national reports presented by the French union FTM CGT, the Polish Metalworkers' Secretariat NSZZ "Solidarnosc" and the Finish Metalworkersunion Metalli.

September 9th 2008

Introductory Speech

The conference was opened by **Wolfgang Rhode, member of the IG Metall management board**, who stressed the importance of trans-boarder networking among trade unions of this industry in his speech. Also, he pointed out that solidarity has to be maintained in a renewed and transforming Europe and asked all participants to establish European structures in their work.

EU employee networking in the agricultural technology sector: Our achievements so far and tasks ahead

Wolfgang Nettelstroth evaluated the outcome and interim results of the networking project and all related activities during the reporting period of 12-months:

Currently in the final phase of the project, we have to think about plans for follow-up activities. As a good example, I would like to refer to the German BDL network of works councils in the agricultural engineering sector, which can look back on 10 years of successful activities.



Possible follow-up activities

Wolfgang Nettelstroth summarised the main aspects of networking, which are of importance for the future:

- First, the exchange of contact details is essential for all networking activities.
- Secondly, the European Agri-Tech map includes most of the sites of companies involved.
- Through the company profiles (yet to be completed with details of our new partners), a quick overview on all project partners is easily accessible.
- As a declaration of interest for follow-up activities and to see the final conference in Frankfurt as the beginning of joint activities in the future, we suggest to agree on a common statement (Frankfurt Statement).

What have we done so far?

On the one hand, various reports and data sheets serve as the projects' material and information included in the European Agri-tech map or soon on the CD Rom. On the other hand, another major part of the project were personal contacts and exchange of information, and also the development of a trustful relationship among the international project partners.

- Pre-conference in Vienna: For the first time, international project partners came together.
- Country visits in Poland and Hungary: Activities and objectives of the EU Agri-tech network were presented.

Round table discussion: Current challenges of workplace interest representation and trade union policy

Introduction and moderation: Wolfgang Nettelstroth, IG Metall

Representatives of employee interest representation for different countries and companies throughout Europe actively participated in the panel by giving a brief statement on specific problems, challenges of interest representation, working conditions and restructuring in their country. Participants were:

- **Juan-Manuel Aranda** is chairman of the John Deere works council in Getafe (Spain) and a delegate at the John Deere European Works Council.
- **Alois Kazelle** is the chairman of the works council and OS Kovo representative at Zetor Traktor Agrostroj, Czech Republic.
- **Lászlóné Szilágyi** is president of the VASAS works council at Linamar in Hungary.
- **Alois Schlager** is the chairman of the white and blue collar works councils of CNH in Sankt Valentin, Austria and is actively involved in the German BDL network.
- **Ludger Budde** is wise chairman of the works council at Krone in Germany and actively engaged in trade union work at the IG metal in Rheine.

Expectations for ongoing work of the network

All participants clearly share the same expectations in regard to the ongoing work of this network, which easily can be put into one phrase: **"We must carry on!"**

The exchange of information on production sites, national conditions and problems for workplace interest representation and trade union policy or general challenges are increasingly important. Therefore, all participants agreed on setting up measures for the sustainable establishment of the EU-Network. One participant referred to the interesting and matching image: **"We opened the gate to Europe, now we need to enter!"**

Interim results on the „European map on agricultural technology“

Website and European Agri-tech map

In his introductory presentation, (also available in the download section of this website), **Eckhard Voss from wmp consult** summarised the interim results of all project activities. He referred to the country reports, sector reports, company data sheets and additional information and material which is available in German and English in the download section of the website.

So far, the project activities have demonstrated remarkable results. It is important to point out, that the realisation of the English website was only possible because of the cooperation and support of the German works council network. The English and German website of the EU Agri-Tech network includes a brief portrait on each European project partners.

New project partners from Finland, Poland and France shall complete contact details and deliver country reports and company profiles. Each company profile of participating companies from the agri-cultural engineering sector shall include an overview on production site, workforce, main products and contact person of the EU Agri-Tech network.

On a subordinated level the **country reports**, which were written and presented by the respective European trade union partners provide a lot of important information on agricultural engineering sector and conditions of trade union policy in each country. During the conference, new country reports will be presented and subsequently made available on the website. For a detailed list of country reports in English and German, please see our website and note that due to security issues this particular section requires previous accreditation and password.

In addition to country reports from Germany (IG Metal), Austria (gmtn), the Czech Republic (OS Kovo), Spain (FM CC.OO and MCA UGT) and Hungary (VASAS), previously presented at the International Workshop in Vienna, 3 new reports have been prepared on France, Finland and Poland. On this basis, Wilke, Maack and Partner (wmp consult) has developed short country profiles incorporated into the European Agri-tech map in order to sum up the main facts on each country

Country report France

Pierre Labourdette, FTM CGT, from Claas Velizy presented the country report on France, which is available in the download section (documents final conference) of the website.

Country report Finland

Jouko Reijonen, Finish Metalworkersunion Metalli presented the country report on Finland. Jouko is head of a trade union institute and working as a teacher and researcher for the Finish union Metalli. His presentation is available in the download section (documents final conference) of the website.

Country report Hungary

Since 1992, Sandor Baracscai is working for the Hungarian trade union VASAS. Unfortunately, there is no presentation available.

Country report Poland

Stefan Boczek from Metalworkers' Secretariat NSZZ "Solidarnosc" and CNH in Ploch spoke on the situation of the agricultural engineering sector and the problems, his colleagues have to face in Ploch and other sites in Poland.

September 10th 2008

Temporary work and relocation as challenges of national and trans-boarder trade union policy in Europe

Achim Vanselow, since 1993 at the **Institute for Labour and Qualification, University of Duisburg-Essen**, spoke about the challenges of temporary work and relocation for national and trans-boarder trade union policy in Europe. His presentation is available in the download section of the website.

Initiated by his presentation, many participants actively discussed the main problems and possible strategies regarding temporary work, altering flexibility and relocation, which are of importance from a trade union's point of view.

The importance and role of employee networks and trans-boarder networking from perspective of the EMF

Wolf Jäcklein representing the **European Metallworkers' Federation (EMF)**, spoke about the possible support of the EMF as the European umbrella organisation for this network. One of the main tasks of the EMF is to provide support for such a employee network in Europe.

Wolf Jäcklein pointed out that the EU Agri-tech network serves as an example of good practise and shall also be used for future networks in the industry. Currently, there are no means to organise comparable meetings like this conference without an existing European works council. As a matter of fact, there is an urgent need for financial instruments in order to make such meetings possible on an European level.

Topics such as temporary work clearly show that all participants share a common ground of interest. Therefore, we have to search for means for cooperation in order to work together, instead of against each other.

Final discussion: Networking, a joint platform and further work

"Frankfurt Statement" commonly agreed upon by all participants

Wolfgang Nettelstroth presented the final version of the conference statement, which will be translated into all languages of the participants and be made available on the website.