



## 1st Transnational Workshop of the European Employee Network Agricultural Machinery

CC.OO Training Centre Juan Muñiz Zapico  
Madrid, 3-4 December 2009



### Overview

Hosted by the Spanish trade unions **Federación de Industria de CC.OO** and **MCA-UGT in Madrid**, trade union and employee representatives from Austria, Belgium, France, Italy, Spain and Germany came together for the first transnational workshop of the European Employee Network Agricultural Machinery which has started its second project phase earlier in 2009. The workshop was chaired by **Wolf Jäcklein** of EMF as the main project coordinator.

Against the current global financial and economic turmoil it was quite natural that the workshop which was attended by 26 participants was dedicated to the topic of "*Crisis, corporate restructuring and possible solutions - what employee representatives suggest*".

At the workshop, which started with a visit of the production site of John Deere Iberica in Getafe trade unions and employee representatives exchanged their experiences and positions on the impact of the current global crisis on agricultural machinery in Europe.



## 1<sup>st</sup> day

The workshop started with a visit of the production site of John Deere Iberica in Getafe, located in the south of Madrid. John Deere Iberica is with over 1.000 employees in Getafe by far the most important company within Spanish agricultural machinery which today employs a total number of 10.000 people. The workshop participants were guided through the various production facilities, briefly introduced into product range, technical procedures and safety standards. **Juan Manuel Aranda**, the president of the John Deere Iberica works council welcomed all participants and presented the current situation of the company in the Spanish agricultural machinery sector, which differs from other sectors in Spain and the agricultural machinery sectors in other EU countries. At the meeting with members of the works council at John Deere, workshop participants introduced themselves and gave an overview on their national sector background, main companies and products as well as the current situation in the economic crisis. Here, it became clear that the entire European agricultural machinery sector was facing serious challenges and struggling from the effects of the economic crisis.

The workshop was officially opened at the CC.OO training centre Juan Muñiz Zapico with a welcome address of **Jésus Ramos**, the director of the centre and **Máximo Blanco** from FM de CC.OO. Jesús Ramos summarised the history of Juan Muñiz Zapico – the person the training centre was named after - and his fight against the Franco dictatorship. After the welcome speeches, **Joachim Stoeber** (IG Metal) outlined the project activities and results of the first project phase as well as new objectives set for the second project phase of the network.

In the first round table discussion of the workshop, the trade union representatives from CGT FO Metaux in France, FIOM CGIL in Italy, CSC Metál and ABVV-Metaal in Belgium, IG Metall in Germany and Pro-Ge (formerly gmtn) in Austria exchanged information on the topic: "Agricultural machinery in the context of the global crisis: current situation and outlook from the perspective of trade unions" and continued the discussion which was initially opened during the company visit in Getafe. The participants reported from different measures to handle the effects of the current financial crisis in their home countries and the general economic situation in their sector. In the case of Austria, the trade union representative **Thomas Grammelhofer** reported that employers favour so-called interruption contracts ("Aussetzungsverträge") according to which employees are dismissed and may possibly be re-hired in the future. He criticised that only employers are main beneficiaries of this measure which is clearly carried out on expense of the workers, who have regularly paid their unemployment insurances contributions. **Francesco Chiello** from FIOM CGIL spoke about the particularly difficult situation in Italy and his trade union's problems in negotiating with their government and in cooperating with other trade unions. Accordingly, there is no longer any cooperation or exchange between the 3 Italian trade unions responsible for agricultural machinery.

It was obvious that almost every speaker referred to similar challenges and problems in the agricultural machinery sector of his home country: a sharp decline in orders, growing pressure on workers and redundancies. One exception is the agri-tech sector of Spain, with John Deere as the market leading company. John Deere Iberica is a significant component supplier for harvesters in the USA and exporting almost 70 % of their produced goods.



## 2<sup>nd</sup> day

The second day of the workshop started with a speech by **Juan Carlos Garcia** of Federación de CC.OO on the situation of agricultural machinery in Spain and trade union positions and demands in order to better react to the effects of the global crisis. While in general the economic situation of the agricultural machinery sector in Spain – in contrast to other industry and service sectors – has been relatively stable in 2009, Juan Carlos also stressed a number of problems with regard to social dialogue and instruments available of in the context of dealing with cutbacks in demands and redundancies. He in particular pointed out that the rights of employees in the context of collective redundancies are threatened at the moment since the employers are demanding a weakened legal framework with only minimum consultation and participation rights in order to increase their flexibility. Beside this assault on the standards of social dialogue and employee involvement at company level which is strongly opposed by the Spanish trade unions, there also are needs to improve the instruments available of reacting to crisis situations and avoiding unemployment according to the Spanish trade unions. Particularly there is a need to reform the Spanish system of “temporary unemployment” as Juan Carlos Garcia explained in this presentation.

The presentation of the Spanish trade unions was followed by an overview of the project’s work plan for 2010, main activities and the role of project partners in the context of the European Employee Network which was presented by the main project coordinator **Wolf Jäcklein** of EMF and **Eckhard Voss** of Wilke, Maack and Partner.

In the following discussion workshop participants not only welcomed the continuation and enlargement of the employee network but showed a strong interest in the exchange of experience, information and positions via the interactive platform of the networks website, e.g. by presenting information on single companies, production sites and other relevant information on agricultural machinery in Europe. Apart from that participants also expressed their interest to exchange more information on national industrial relations, working conditions and the different systems of collective bargaining. In this context the preparation and updating of national sector reports by network partners and their integration into the website as well as in a “European Map of Agricultural Machinery” was highly welcomed.

Furthermore, it was suggested by French and Spanish participants to enlarge the focus of our network and cover for example main suppliers of agricultural machinery as well as take into account the relationship between agricultural machinery and its clients, i.e. the farmers. Here, the French colleagues reported about an interesting initiative in their country. With regard to value chain relationships **Alois Schlager** from CNH in Austria informed participants about the plan to prepare a “mini map” of CNH locations, functions and supplier relationships.

In general the workshop participants agreed that as an important value the Employee Network should be regarded as an instrument of lobbying employee interests not only in the European but also in the respective national contexts, e.g. against governments and employers organisations. In this context, it was Pierre Labourdette from FTM-CGT France who stressed that agricultural machinery with around 200,000 employees throughout Europe is quite a significant industry sector within machinery.

Information on the effects of the current economic crisis on individual companies were delivered in the context of a round table session where employee representatives of CNH,



Claas and John Deere presented information on the current economic situation and activities to tackle the crisis within the respective companies. Here, it became clear that there are significant differences not only with regard to the national contexts of tackling crisis situations for example by short-time work schemes but also with regard to the economic situation between different national sites and company parts, e.g. Claas in Germany, France and Hungary as reported by **Heiner Strothjohann** and **Pierre Labourdette**. At the same time, in particular **Alois Schlager** (CNH) and **Kai Blasius** (John Deere Germany and EWC) stressed the demand of working time reduction as a means to avoid redundancies and reduction of staff. Other demands and issues of joint concern raised in the discussion were the need of "equal pay" (with regard to agency workers) which seems to be a particular problem in Germany as well as training and investments in human resources. Here a participant brought it to the point: "The last day of the crisis will be the first day of skilled labour shortage".

Against these common concerns a German participant informed about the history of the network of works councils in the agricultural machinery sector in Germany which also was rooted in joint interests of employees in the context of a worsening of working conditions and assaults of employers on employee rights. In this context the German colleagues developed their own platform and agenda of demands, the so-called "Declaration of Muenster" in 2004 (available on the networks website). Participants agreed that such a joint platform/declaration also would be an important milestone of the European network in particular in the current economic situation.

The workshop was concluded by a presentation of **Joachim Stoeber** (IG Metall) who looked beyond and current economic crisis and the current economic situation of agricultural machinery in the light of major future trends of structural change in the global context. Here, he not only stressed the emerging role of the Chinese market as well as Chinese producers of agricultural machinery but also major trends which will have important effects on the European industry such as climate change, energy as well as global food supply.

Joachim stressed the need for trade unions to address these challenges and develop own visions and positions in this context. Here, he also presented a summary of the "*Memorandum Mechanical Engineering*" which was presented by IG Metall in October 2009. This memorandum was already presented and discussed in the EMF committee on mechanical engineering and will also be circulated within the context of the agricultural machinery network.

In the concluding discussion which was chaired again and introduced by **Wolf Jäcklein** all participants draw resumes and made suggestions with regard to forthcoming project activities and events. Amongst others, the following remarks were made repeatedly:

- The European Employee Network not only is an important initiative of coordination, exchange of information and experience between trade unions and employee representatives throughout Europe but should also be used as an instrument to lobby the interests of around 200,000 employees against employers and public authorities at European as well as national level
- In particular in countries without an institutionalised level of employee representation at company group and sectoral level the network can be able to foster stronger national coordination of interests



- The network also could be able to strengthen and support communication and coordination within multinational companies (with or without an EWC)
- There is a need to develop joint positions and agendas in particular in the context of the current economic situation
- There also is a need to exchange information on working conditions, industrial relations and collective bargaining frameworks and improve the knowledge – here, the network and the website could provide valuable information
- At the same time the quality of the website and the exchange very much depends on the active participation and involvement of project partners – with regard to future workshops and activities, the role of participants and partners should be made clear and concrete tasks should be defined by the project coordinators

With view on further project planning **Wolf Jäcklein** informed the participants that the suggestions and results of the Madrid workshop will be taken into account in the context of the next meeting of the projects' steering group at the EMF in December 2009 as well as in the context of the preparation of the second international workshop which is due to be held in Prague at the end of February 2010 and the final conference of the network in Brussels in June 2010.

All presentations and further information as well as pictures of the workshop are available on the networks' website: <http://netkey40.igmetall.de/homepages/netzwerk-landtechnik-en/eunetwork/workshopmadrid.html>



## Workshop Programme

<b>2<sup>nd</sup> December 2009</b>	
	<b>Arrival and registration of participants</b>
<b>3 December 2009</b>	
until 11:00	<b>Arrival and registration of participants</b>
11:00	<b>Company visit of John Deere Iberica in Getafe</b> - Visit of the company and meeting with the employee representation body
15:45	<b>Coffee</b>
16:00	<b>Welcome addresses</b> by representatives of FM de CC.OO and MCA-UGT
16:45	<b>Session 1:</b> <b>Agricultural machinery in the context of the global crisis: Current situation and outlook from the perspective of trade unions</b> - Presentation by Spanish trade unions - Round table with representatives of metalworkers unions from France (CGT, FO Metaux), Italy (FIOM CGIL), Belgium (CSC Métal, ABVV-Metaal), Austria (gmtn) and Germany (IG Metall)
18:30	End of 1 <sup>st</sup> day
20:00	Joint dinner
<b>4. Dezember 2009</b>	
9:00	- Global economic situation of the sector: <b>Juan Carlos Garcia, CC.OO</b>
9:20	<b>Information on the European Employee Network Agricultural Machinery</b> - Overview of main project activities - The European Map of Agricultural Machinery and the website - Active involvement of partners and company representatives <i>by project coordinators and a representatives of the employee network</i>
09:50	<b>Session 2:</b> <b>Effects of the crisis at company level – Exchange of information and experiences</b> - Presentations by company representatives: CNH (Alois Schlager), Claas (Heiner Strothjohann), John Deere (Juan Manuel Aranda) - Round table with other company representatives
10:30	<b>Coffee break</b>
11:00	<b>Session 3:</b> <b>Conclusions and outlook</b> - Beyond the crisis: Challenges for the sector & trade union action points (Joachim Stöber) - Discussion - Summary of workshop results
13:00	<b>End of the workshop and lunch at the training centre</b>



## List of participants

Country	Name	Company	Trade-Union
AT	Ferdinand Bogenreiter	CNH	Pro-GE
AT	Thomas Grammelhofer	Pro-GE	Pro-GE
AT	Alois Schlager	CNH	GPA
BE	Steve Temmerman	CNH	ABVV
BE	Patrick Vandekerckhove		ABVV
BE	Paul de Schuuter	CCMB	CCMB
BE	Joeri Masschelein	CNH	CCMB
DE	Kai Blasius	John Deere	IG Metall
DE	Michael Hettmer	Kemper	IG Metall
DE	Norbert Schulze	Lemken	IG Metall
DE	Kim Schütze	WMP	
DE	Eckhard Voss	WMP	
DE	Joachim Stöber	IG Metall	IG Metall
DE	Heiner Strotjohann	Claas	IG Metall
ES	Patricia Ruiz	John Deere	MCA-UGT
Es	Juan Manuel Aranda Osoijo	John Deere	FI/CCOO
ES	Pablo Garcia	John Deere	FI/CCOO
ES	Juan Carlos Garcia	Thyssen	FI/CCOO
ES	Pablo Flores	John Deere	FI/CCOO
ES	David Carrasco	John Deere	FI/CCOO
ES	Enrique Feder	John Deere	MCA-UGT
FR	Olivier Guyon	Claas	FTM-CGT
FR	Pierre Labourdette	Claas	FTM-CGT
IT	P. Paolo Calzolari	Argo Tractors	FIOM-CGIL
IT	Francesco Chiello	Argo Tractors	FIOM-CGIL
	Wolf Jäcklein	EMF	