

Project AGRI-TRANS: Transparency in agricultural vocational training

European Standards using the example of livestock farming (pig farming)
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National report on general and agricultural vocational training system

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GD Bildung und Kultur

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Questionnaire to the national vocational training system in Rumania (Agritrans Project)

Vocational training systems are organized very differently in each member state of the European Union. Consequently, it is quite difficult to compare specific occupational branches and their training structures. This questionnaire gives an orientation to simplify the discussions during the four regional seminars. It is necessary to list all the essential skills and qualifications needed for animal husbandry, especially in pig breeding, in the frame of the Agritrans project. Also, it is important to identify the workers' proposals to improve training systems. Then this document will gather examples of best practice which shall help to improve the job description in a European perspective.

Importance of agriculture

How relevant is agriculture in your country? (Number of employees, contribution to the GDP, etc.)

After Rumania's membership to the European Union, there developed pressure on the agricultural sector due to the European competition model based upon the market and consumers' demands.

In Rumania, **agriculture is the most important sector of the national economy and outweighs all other economic activities in the rural area.** At present, it is presumed that the agricultural sector is still weakly integrated in the market economy. Some important reasons are the following:

- the structure of agricultural use;
- subsistence farming with low economic output on almost half of all agricultural areas;
- the lack of markets which could support the restructuring and modernization of the agricultural sector;
- the not finalized restructuring and modernization process in food industry.

But, at the same time, there are elements which could change Rumania's agriculture in a profitable and attractive field of activity. These elements are: favorable geographic conditions, fertile soil, skilled labor, the existence of an institutionalized administrative system, the possibility to receive European funds of agriculture and rural development.

The contribution of agriculture, forestry, and fish farming to the national gross income product was **5,68%** in **2007**. In other EU member states this figure lies at 2,1%. (Source: EU's yearly report, January 2008)

Contribution of agriculture, forestry, and fish farming of the national gross income product

GIP	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Total	116.768,7	151.475,0	197.564,8	246.468,8	288.047,8	344.535,5	412.761,5
Agriculture, forestry, hunting	15.612,9	17.301,2	22.835,2	31.030,1	24.277,9	26.898,2	23.454,8
Fishing and fish farming	5,0	6,4	14,0	13,8	13,8	16,1	19,4
% to the GIP	13,4	11,4	11,6	12,6	8,4	7,8	5,68

Source: Anuarul statistic al României 2008 (Statistical Annual Rumania 2008)

The decrease of the importance of agriculture to the GIP is accompanied by the growth of other economic branches, particularly in the service sector which accounts for 50% of the GIP, in the industry and construction sector which account for 24% and 7,4% of the GIP in 2007.

In the whole country almost one third of the employed population works in agriculture. This lies remarkable beyond the average of 5,9% in the 27 EU member states. But there is a tendency that this high share is decreasing. In 2001, 40,9% of the population worked in agricultural sector and in 2007 this decreased to 28,2%.

Which role does pig husbandry play in the national economy?

Importance of pig husbandry in Romania

- Pig husbandry is a traditional activity.
- Pig meat is a very important product as 50% of the consumed meat stems from pigs.
- Pig husbandry delivers raw materials for light industry.
- Pig husbandry delivers resources for the pharmaceutical industry.
- Pig husbandry changes feed.

The ministry of agriculture and rural development registered:

- **81 farms of commercial pig** husbandry. 46 farms of these hold 85% of all pigs and are united in the occupational organization PRCP.
- At the end of 2008, **4,6 million pigs** existed in Rumania. Thereof, 1,6 million pigs were produced in commercial farms. All other pigs are hold by little farms for own consumption.
- The **total production** of meat amounted to 620 000,5 tons, thereof 43% was assigned for own consumption.

Total number of pigs and meat production in the first annual quarter in 2008 in comparison to the same time in 2006 and 2007

Year	Unit	2006	2007	2008	2006	2007
Pigs in total - thereof	Thousand units	5.440	5,767	5.089	-351	-678
State driven sector total	Thousand units	30	24	17	-13	-7
Privat driven sector total	Thousand units	5.410	5.743	5.072	-338	-671
Cooperatives	Thousand units	1.184	1.490	1.354	170	-136
Familyfarms	Thousand units	4.226	4.253	3.718	-508	-535
Sows total - thereof	Thousand units	352	360	300	-52	-60
State driven sector total	Thousand units	3	2	1	-2	-1
Privat driven sector total	Thousand units	349	358	299	-50	-59
Cooperatives	Thousand units	103	126	110	7	-16
Familyfarms	Thousand units	246	232	189	-57	-43
Young pigs total	Thousand units	1418	1.432	1.218	-200	-214
Meat production total	Thousand tons	67,4	82,4	95,1	.28,	13

How many workers work in pig husbandry, how many are employed? Is more labour force needed?

- 5450 workers, more labor is needed

Do other employment areas exist in this sector?

- Research
- Teaching at universities
- Entrepreneurship
- Agencies
- Labor market

Is there a need of qualified workers and special skills and qualifications in pig husbandry?

In the sector of pig husbandry is a need of qualified labor, staff with a vocational formation and advanced training. The same high qualification standard is needed for other occupations employed in big husbandry, such as drivers, installers and electricians. In Rumania, there are universities which educate engineers, veterinaries, etc. But there is a lack of school education and vocational training for pig husbandry.

In pig breeding, as in all branches of livestock breeding there is a need of qualified labor. By qualifying workers, they obtain knowledge and practical skills to ensure a high quality in production, the well-being of animals and environmental protection.

After joining the European Union, new technologies and standards in the area of pig husbandry were introduced. Therefore, vocational and educational systems have adapted to the European qualifications frame.

In this context, it is necessary to work out new occupational and vocational training standards, as well as the revision of present standards following the new methodology. The competence units of the revised standards contain the following, according to levels:

- legal regulations regarding health and safety protection as well as in the emergency area;
- knowledge and skills necessary for the application of environment protection norms to reduce risks to the environment and the consumption of natural resources;
- hygienic norms and regulations as technological competencies to ensure biosafety and the implementation of the HACCP concept;
- working conditions.

What are working conditions?

Working conditions depend on the kind of breeding of which exist two different ones in Rumania:

- A **non-professional breeding system** for private family consumption (Farm of 3 fattening pigs);
- A **professional breeding system** (with at least 20 pigs) which fulfills the biosafety conditions and the technological minimum standards, which have veterinary permission. Pigs, meat and all other products can only be sold on the national market.

Commercial pig breeding farms comply with the legislation concerning the pig breeding sector. (economically and financially, occupational legislation regarding wages and other rights which are set in working contracts, health and safety protection, health insurance, equipment, separate locker rooms, dining rooms, etc.)

What is the organization level of workers employed in the sector of pig husbandry?

In all 46 trading companies the employees are represented in a managing board by 1-2 employees who are elected by their colleagues. Otherwise they are represented by trade unions.

What are recommendations by the trade unions to improve working conditions?

Vocational training system

How is the vocational training system organized in Rumania?

In Rumania, the vocational training (**FPI**) is organized under the authority of the ministry of education, whereas the advanced training (**FPC**) is subject to the Ministry of Labor.

Is the training implemented in schools or in companies?

The vocational training envisages a theoretical and a practical part.

- The **theoretical part** of the FPI takes place in schools providing vocational training (former technical schools) and the FPC is realized by in authorized providers and universities.
- The **practical part** takes place in garages of the schools or other providers or at the workplace itself.

How long does it take?

The vocational training of adults is organized in the following areas:

Introduction, qualification, advanced training, specialization, reorientation

Minimal length of training is expressed in training hours for theoretical as well as practical training and is defined by the legislator. Depending on the qualification level apprentices receive qualification certificates.

- 360 hours for qualification level 1;
- 720 hours for qualification level 2;
- 1080 hours for qualification level 3.

The length of training is harmonized with purpose, objectives, contents and implementation strategies. At the beginning of the training, qualifications of trainees are assessed. The same happens during the training via competence certificates. In case it is discovered that the student already has certain skills, the length of his training shortens. But, training duration never falls below 50% of regular training length. At least two thirds of the training time is dedicated to practical activities. The maximum number of students in one training group (except lectures) is 28 participants. This holds for theoretical training as well as for practical training.

Which certificates can be achieved?

If the training takes place in a company, the certificate is only relevant for the special working place. Nationally recognized certificates can only be achieved by attending training with authorized vocational trainers.

What are possibilities of advanced training?

CNFPA (National council for vocational advanced training of adults) is the forum of social dialogue which works out policies and strategies for occupational and vocational training as well as promotes its quality. The permanent vocational training is implemented by special trainers, which are authorized by the CNFPA. At the moment, training programs are conceptualized by the national qualification agency with the support of the social partners in the committee Agriculture, fish breeding and fishing

which is a three-parted organ that is coordinated by the CNFPA. All training conceptualized by this agency can be concluded with a special qualification certificate.

The responsibility for the development of initial vocational training programs and advanced trainings lies by the ministry of labor, represented by the National Council of occupational advanced training of adults, and committees, in which trade unions are also represented. The funding is realized by programs that are coordinated by the ministry of education and the ministry of labor. For the implementation of training programs the special branch of pig husbandry, the ministry of agriculture and rural development is in charge of financing. The implementation of pig husbandry trainings is effected by trainers of the ANCA – OJCA networks on national level and by trainers of the CEFIDEC for the mountainous region.

All authorized trainers are listed in a national register which is regularly updated by the CNFPA. Trainers for advanced trainings, who are not registered by CNFPA, offer a permanent training and make certificates that are authorized by the specific resorts as for example the ministry of agriculture. The development of training standards and qualification standards according to the European qualification frame and the EQF system is a process that is in full implementation. Therefore, the ministry of labor and the ministry of education are monitoring programs as PHARE and FSE POS DRU. Additionally, the process of competence evaluation subject to the Lisbon process continues.

Who is responsible for the development of vocational training?

The vocational training system and its functional linkages and institutional responsibilities:

Responsibilities of the ministry of labor, family and social protection (MMSSF):

- Works out strategies and policies for occupation and vocational training
- Coordinates the system of advanced training
- Ensures the harmonization of the advanced and vocational training with the rights/engagement/performing of a job on the labor market
- Ensures the coherence of the legal frame of trainings for all sectors and areas (specialized database for legislation matters available on the internet for all sectors and branches)

Responsibilities of the National Agency for employment (ANOFM):

- Implementation of policies and strategies for employment and training on local, regional and national level
- Funding vocational training institutions as well as services for information, vocational orientation and counseling for unemployed persons and for the prevention of unemployment

Responsibilities of the Ministry of education and research (MEdC):

- Works out policies for FPI and ensures the harmonization with the need on the labor market
- Coordinates initial training which are carried out in the national education system and the permanent vocational training of teaching staff

Responsibility of social partners:

- Participate in the evaluation of the labor qualifications in specific branches/sectors
- Formulate of proposals and point of views for the development of policies and strategies on the labor market
- Work out and implements vocational training plans on the sector or company level
- Offer information, orientation and counseling on company level

Responsibility of teaching staff for advanced training:

- Works out and implements qualitative training programs which correspond to the needs on the labor market
- Team working with economic actors, national/local agencies and other trainers both at home and abroad

Present legal frame:

The advanced vocational training of employees is regulated in the labor code as well as in the government decree Nr. 129/2000.

The employer has to ensure the participation of his employees to training programs:

- At least once all two years, if he employs at least 21 persons
- At least once all three years, if he employs less than 21 persons

How does the funding plan for the advanced vocational training look like?

Chap. V of decree 129 referring the vocational training:

Art.33 – The training and evaluation of the results of vocational training for adults is financed by the following sources:

- a) Own capital of employers
- b) Budget of unemployment insurance
- c) Donations or other external sources
- d) Fees by persons participating in the trainings

Which role does the European discussion on the vocational training play in Rumania?

The national strategy for permanent vocational training in the period from 2005 to 2010 pursues the implementation of the strategic objective of Lisbon.

The goal is the development of a vocational training system which is transparent and flexible, which increases occupation, which enables workers to adaptation and mobility, and which meets the demands of company's qualified labor needs.

The national strategy for permanent vocational training also pursues the objective to increase participation to life-long learning to 12,5% of the population (age group 25-64 years).

Vocational training system in the sector of animal/pig breeding

What are the conditions to take part into vocational training programs in pig breeding sector?

The following conditions have to be fulfilled:

- There are possibilities for practical training.
- There are laboratories.
- There are qualified trainers and authorized programs.

There are two relevant standards for the development of vocational training measures. These standards are based on the classification of employees (COR) and on the register of qualifications (NC):

- Vocational training standards – SPP
- Employment standards – SO

Vocational training facilities are art and vocational training schools (TVET). The following levels can be reached:

- SPP technician for animal breeding - Level III+
- SPP Worker in the sector of animal breeding - level I
- SPP Animal breeder - level II
- SPP Worker in agriculture and ecological management - level II
- SPP technician in agriculture - level III

How long does the training take?

The duration of the training depends on the type of training:

- Introduction (a couple of days)
- Advanced training (a couple of days)
- Specialization (depending on the specialization)

Due to the listed standards, responsible institutions can design their own programs of vocational training and evaluation of competences. The programs are developed on the basis of the vocational standards named in the COR, and on the basis of the revised SO:

- SO – Farmer in plant cultures and animal breeding - level I
- SO – Qualified worker in animal breeding - level I
- SO – Animal breeder - level I
- SO – Staff who can run farm equipment in mixed ecological farms - level II

Adaptation by the EU-regulation

- 2008, the ministry of labor, in agreement with social partners, revised the COR to adapt it to the European regulations in all sectors.
- Until now there are no vocational training or employment standards in the pig breeding sector.
- Until now there is no SO for a special qualification in the pig breeding sector.

→ Therefore, all qualification measures in pig breeding refer to the above mentioned means.

Where does the training take place? (public training institutions, training centres, enterprises)

In Romania, qualification classes are organized on the facilities of the trainers or in partnership with local agencies and institutions, as well as in facilities made available by research institutes, town halls and other organizations.

In the ANCA network are 42 OJCA (local departments for agricultural counseling) trainers; 32 OJCA out of these are authorized to provide training according to the CNFPA methodology. They offer 27 advanced training programs.

All OJCA organize courses according to:

- SO – Farmer in plant cultures and animal breeding - level I
- SO – Qualified worker in animal breeding - level I
- SO – Animal breeder - level I
- SO – Staff who can run farm equipment in mixed ecological farms - level II

All levels conclude with a qualification certificate.

12. Which knowledge and skills are provided? Which training methods are applied?

Courses are organized after needs of trainees have been analyzed. Also, courses are harmonized with the qualification level of the FPC programs and the implementation strategy of PNS and PNDR.

The content of the new training programs ensures the following elements:

- It reflects the changes and demands in agriculture.
- It contains results of scientific research.
- It contains training schedules which have been developed by specialists from secondary education, university, alternative educational institutions, research and production.

How is the quality of the training assured? Who is responsible for its monitoring?

Quality in the vocational training is assured by the authorization of all training programs by the CNFPA and its authorization commissions which consist of experts. It goes in accordance with the evaluation methodology to ensure qualified trainers and based on present legislation. In Rumania, the methodology for the evaluation of training programs and trainers is developed by CNFPA and approved by the ministry for labor and the ministry of education. Furthermore, it is implemented in the frame of the regulation norm 129/2000.

At present, the new law on permanent advanced vocational training is in a project phase. It was publically discussed in 2008.

Is there a lack in training possibilities or is there a necessity to improve the training quality?

On national level, the quality in the adduction of the FPC has been identified as insufficient in the following aspects:

- Insufficient institutional capability for the justification, implementation and monitoring of the FPC policies;
- Insufficient implication of social partners could be a crucial barrier for the strengthening of the FPC system. It is necessary to define fixed responsibilities and provide more financial means to committees and other national, regional or local organizations which also include social partners.
- There is only a weak institutional frame for the FPC trainers. The private trainers' network for vocational training is insufficiently developed on national level and does not cover all sectors.
- The authorization system for trainers in vocational trainers emphasizes the control on their admission rather than the results of their teaching.
- There is a lack of financial and human resources in the development and updating of vocational standards.

These barriers in the vocational training system have entailed a weak participation and low investment rates.

Lacks identified in the agricultural sector:

- Insufficient participation of agricultural workers in the FPC in general and insufficient quality of the implementation of FPC.
- Implication of the committees involving the social partners to work out improvement proposals, which concentrates on the following problems:

➤ Legislative frame:

- New legislative instructions to recognize existing skills;
- No limitation to the application to FPC and a flexible approach in the labor code;

- Link between laws which regulate initial vocational training and further training possibilities;
 - Maintenance of the FPC's flexibility in the application of a modular system based on competences
- **Responsibilities, organizational and institutional structures**
- Insufficient coordination between the ministry of labor and the ministry of education;
 - Lack of financial means at the CNFPA as national agency for qualification in connection with: committees; the monitoring of the trainers' quality as well as the support for improvements;
 - Missing legislative framework to ensure the monitoring and maintenance of the FPC's quality by external experts of specific branches;
 - Insufficient implication of social partners in the development of FPC;
 - Lack of a legislative frame and funding of committees for the definition and exertion of responsibilities for the development of qualification standards, analysis of training needs etc.;
 - Insufficient administrative capacity of services responsible for vocational information, counseling, and orientation in all sectors;
 - Insufficient quantity and quality regarding the implementation of the FPC.
- **Funding of the FPC**
- Insufficient amounts of funding and deficient structures for their distribution of the FPC.
- **Quality assurance of the FPC**
- Insufficient quality in the implementation of the FPC, including all levels which should back up administration and monitoring of the FPC aimed to ensure good results.
- **Unsatisfactory participation rate due to:**
- coordination lack concerning the recognition of obtained qualification in the formal system and the qualification obtained in the informal system;
 - research and analysis on the demand for training possibilities conducted between 2006-2007 revealed three causes of low participation which are the duration of the training, its costs and the lack of support on the local level
 - employers consider training as costs not as investment
 - workers and employers are not aware of the need for information, counseling and orientation

Which possibilities of permanent learning and training are available? Who participates?

For the agricultural sector there are 115 authorized trainers for FPC registered concerning more than **500 vocational training programs based on vocational standards (SO)** and vocational training (SPP).

The ANCA-OJCA network **lists 32 authorized trainers** of FPC who carry out more than 75 vocational training programs.

Officially, there is no data available on not-authorized trainers who work as trainers in training programs. These non-authorized trainers lead courses of short duration, distance learning courses, e-learning courses or other kinds of training which do not have to be authorized. Attending such courses is certificated but not recognized by national or European system.

Presently, there is a significant shift from the workers interests towards employers' interests to secure the qualification of workers. This happens thanks to the growing importance of the qualified staff as a central economic indicator for competitive companies.

Can you give best practice examples for vocational training in the pig breeding sector? Why are they considered as best practice and where can they be found?

On national level, the quality management group (GNAC), which is composed of specialists of national education institutions (excluding the university level), developed guidelines for efficient institutional practices to secure the quality in the educational and vocational training system.

GNAC is not incorporated but forms an inter-institutional dialogue group that assumes a counseling role and promotes European objectives such as the quality management and evaluation on a system level and on a trainer level.

Besides the goals adopted by the Lisbon strategy and the Copenhagen declaration, the European Commission developed a quality management model to assure that the life-long learning principle is going to be implemented in all member states education systems.

At the present time, GNAC, the ministry of labor and the ministry of education plan to pass a quality management frame which shall contain criteria and methods for the national as well as the trainer level. At the national level, they manage the relevance and consistence of qualifications and on the trainer level, they use self-evaluation as well as external evaluation to, secure the quality of learning programs. The quality management system will allow the trainers to maintain, monitor and improve the training quality.

By combining both methodological frames, the national frame of quality management and the national frame of qualifications, will create a system which promotes permanent improvement of training offers under the implication of interest groups (such as trainees, social partners and others). It allows the development of national policies to facilitate the mobility of qualified people and the recognition of their qualifications and certificates.

What are the workers' demands on training improvements?

- Facilitated access to the FPC;
- Acknowledging the competences of not formally qualified workers employed at the same workplace for more than two years;
- Employers shall allow and facilitate the participation of their workers in evaluation programs to measure their competences.
- Periodical evaluation of competences;
- Establishing a legislative framework to access FPC on the basis of bonuses. In exchange for bonuses workers can buy FPC services. The bonus stands for a fixed value, a percentage of the training costs, and represents an instrument to develop the vocational training market.

Which other aspects should be considered to generate a European discussion on the comparability of vocational training systems?

Make research studies, analysis, and statistics for FPC:

- Develop a system to collect and analyze data regarding FPC (according to the standards and regulations set by the EU and Eurostat);
- Work out a monitoring methodology of the FPC systems that is based on indicators of the EU;
- Develop instruments for the evaluation of offer and demand of vocational training;

- Implementation of research and surveys to find out what participants expect and think of absolved vocational training (Does the training offered on the market fit the expectations and needs of workers and employers? Is its quality and relevance sufficient to the needs?)
- Evaluate the impact of investments in the vocational training system on the workers' performances on their work places;
- Identify the present training needs in the different branches.

Which elements have to be considered by the Agripass?

- **Adaptation of the legislative framework to develop and implement the new vocational training systems based on the European qualifications framework**
- Adaptation of all legislative documents referring to FPC to the European qualifications framework