

GEOPA-COPA SEMINAR

“GROWING THE FUTURE – ENHANCING THE ATTRACTIVENESS OF THE AGRICULTURE WORK”

22ND OCTOBER 2020

Background

Geopa-Copa, the Employers' Group of Professional Agricultural Organisations in the European Union, is conducting a two-year project titled “Growing the future: Enhancing the attractiveness of the agriculture work.”

The agricultural labour force is composed of farm holders, family workers and non-family workers, from which we could differentiate regular and non-regular non-family workers. Within this framework, the sector has faced a substantial decrease of overall manpower since 2000.

For example, family workers accounted for 4.6 million in 2003 and 2.6 million in 2016. Statistics have shown that regular non-family workers have increased in numbers, but the main conclusion across categories shows a steady 30%-decrease within one decade.

Other variables to take into consideration are ageing farm holders and the underrepresentation of women in the sector, who only account for 30% of EU farm managers. In terms of agricultural education and training, 70.9% of farm managers in the European Union have only practical experience and 22.2% only basic training.

These conditions pose clear challenges for the viability of the agricultural sector in the medium and long-term perspectives.

During 2020 and 2021, Geopa-Copa will conduct a EU funded-project to improve employability in the agricultural sector and contribute to the economic, social and environmental development of rural areas through three main objectives: collecting data on the labour shortage in the agricultural sector; identifying the causes of this labour shortage; and promoting best practices across the EU to overcome the lack of manpower, which was even more prominent during the Covid-19 pandemic. The project will organise 7 Steering Committees meetings and 3 seminars. At present, 3 Steering Committees meetings have been held to define the overall objectives of the project, to present the proposal for a research survey and to conclude preliminary results of the gathered data, respectively. For the first seminar employers will debate the results of the surveys prepared by the researchers from the think tank Centre for European Policy Studies (CEPS), as well as topics centred around “challenges”, “analysis” and “best practices” for the agricultural sector.



With the support of the European Commission – DG Employment, Social Affairs
and Inclusion

Draft Programme

10:30-16:30 – KUDO Platform

10:30 Audio Testing for Participants

11:00 Introductory Words: *Joseph Lechner, Geopa-Copa President*

How to Tackle Current Challenges Affecting Employment in Agriculture

11:15 Labour Shortages in Rural Areas: *Arnd Spahn, EFFAT Political Secretary*

11:30 Safety Culture: *Pat Griffin, Irish Health and Safety Authority Inspector*

11:45 Q&A

How to Take Advantage of Today's and Tomorrow's Opportunities in Agriculture

12:00 Long-life Formation: *Lisa Rustico, CEDEFOP Learning and Employability Expert*

12:15 Attracting the Young: *Jannes Maes, CEJA President*

12:30 Institutional Collaboration: *Joé Rieff, DG Employment Policy Assistant*

12:45 Q&A

13:00 Lunch Break

Understanding the Employers' Perspective in the Agricultural Sector

14:30 Conclusions on the Two Employers' Questionnaires: *Mattia di Salvo, Sara Baiocco and Nina López Uroz, CEPS Economic Policy Unit Researchers*

16:00 Q&A

16:20 Closing Remarks: *Joseph Lechner, Geopa-Copa President*

16:30 End of the Seminar