VIth EURO-MEDITERRANEAN SUMMIT
OF
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCILS AND SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS

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TRAINING IN AGRICULTURE

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FOREWORD

The Euro-Mediterranean Summit of economic and social councils and similar institutions, meeting in Antalya, Turkey, on 4 and 5 November 1999, has included the theme "Training in agriculture" on the agenda for the VIth Euro-Mediterranean Summit to be held in Naples on 2 and 3 November 2000.

The present report was produced by the French Economic and Social Council, in co-operation with the Algerian Economic and Social Council, the Spanish, Greek and Portuguese Economic and Social Councils and the Italian National Economic and Labour Council. It is based on these countries' contributions, which are appended below.

The report postulates that agriculture is a fundamental pillar of contemporary economies and that training is a significant factor for its development. Training in agriculture cannot be considered only in terms of an educational process; it must also be taken as part of a wider socio-economic environment in which complex, worldwide factors interact with each other.

This report should therefore aim at an interface position between training and country-specific policy formulation, the tasks that agriculture must perform and strategic options for the development of agriculture. It must take into account not only the widely divergent contexts in which agricultural training schemes operate, but also the purpose, organisational structures and own resources of these schemes.

The present report makes recommendations, which may be shared by the countries concerned.

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Note to readers. Given the wide range of situations discussed in this report, the term 'agricultural training' will be taken to include initial training at secondary school level or through apprenticeships, as well as continuing vocational training for young people and adults, whether in work or seeking employment.
I. - TYPES OF AGRICULTURE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN BASIN

1. Agricultural economies: identity and diversity

The countries bordering on the Mediterranean Sea share a culture and history which are the foundations of an ancient civilisation. They also share the typical Mediterranean climate, in which water is scarce, and have characteristic flora, landscapes and contours with few large plains. Throughout the Mediterranean region agriculture represents a significant part of each country's economy, yet gives expression to a very wide range of identities and realities.

1.1 Varied agricultural economies

An exhaustive analysis of Mediterranean agricultural economies would indicate their extremely heterogeneous nature, sometimes even within a country, with very old structures existing alongside ultra-modern systems, integrated into the world market. There are also areas in which natural catastrophes, conflicts and social turbulence have meant that economies must be completely rebuilt.

Some countries have a strong agricultural tradition, whereas in recent times the economies of others have been dependent on income from gas and oil in particular. These are now undergoing transformation and are moving towards trade in manufactured goods, in which agriculture has a role to play. Given the diversity of soil types and climates, some countries produce a wide range of animal and vegetable products, while others concentrate on fruit and vegetable production.

The countries in the region aim at self-sufficiency in food production, but it must be noted that, for some countries, dependence on food imports is increasing, where basic products such as cereals, purchased on world markets, are concerned. For those countries that have achieved self-sufficiency and indeed enjoy surpluses, agricultural policies are beginning to focus on potential for value added in areas such as employment, product quality, the environment, spatial planning and agriculture's multifunctional role.

All the countries are subject to climatic vagaries. Water has become a major issue and is the cause for profound concern in large areas which are suffering from unprecedented drought. Faced with limited water resources, population growth is likely to be constrained by agricultural development unless more efficient irrigation techniques and practices (drip irrigation) are adequately implemented.

The statistical data appended to the present document show the diversity of types of agriculture, particularly in terms of percentages of the active population (4 to 20 %), the significance of the agricultural sector in gross domestic product (2 to 13 %) and the size of farms.

.../...
1.2 The importance of agriculture

The types of agriculture practised in the Mediterranean are indeed varied and have some common characteristics, but they remain nevertheless pillars of contemporary economies and their development, in line with that of the industrial and service sectors, can contribute to increasing the wealth of nations. Economic progress must be taken into account, but from a more general perspective, the agricultural sector is at the heart of several important issues:

- **self-sufficiency in food**, to guarantee the stability of a country, its people and its independence;
- **peace** and **social inclusion**, to avoid large-scale migration to cities where full employment is not always possible;
- **health security**, to monitor hygiene and the non-toxicity of products in order to protect the health of the population;
- **spatial planning**, by a mandatory territorial presence, to maintain landscapes open and available for other activities;
- **the environment**, to offer alternatives to fossil fuels and to play a purifying role, when production cycles and conditions are correctly managed.

Depending on its history, its particular determination and its agronomic potential, each country has set its agriculture the task of fulfilling one or several of the above-mentioned objectives.

2. Strategic priorities for agricultural development

Agricultural reform is not possible without strong political objectives, that must be shared by the professionals, and unless due consideration is given to the social and economic consequences of the reforms undertaken. Even before considering what forms training might take, it is fundamental that the state defines the tasks and strategic priorities for its agriculture with the relevant social partners. In this context, the coherence and articulation of certain principles can contribute to optimising agricultural development.

2.1 Advantages and constraints

In view of the fact that markets are increasingly open, it is essential for each country to review its **natural advantages (soil, water, sunlight) and potential production** and aim at meeting its food requirements, by encouraging the most lucrative crops for any given situation (production cost, closeness to markets, quality). Making the best use of these advantages must also make allowances for the constraints arising from **farm organisation, ownership and financing problems and the decrease and ageing of the active population engaged in farming**, together with the **lack of training among farmers** in general. Training systems are determined by these factors.
2.2 Defining public policy

Public support for the agricultural sector can be implemented in very different ways, which vary from state to state and depending on the resources available. Priority areas in which policy intervention seems most effective are, on the one hand, market regulation, particularly with respect to fluctuating production levels, which are subject to climatic factors and, on the other, incentives for production or priority investment. To ensure that policies are successful, it is imperative that they include measures to help the population acquire the necessary skills.

The relationship between training and employment must always be given due consideration by decision-makers and players alike. This relationship is a key to integration and social promotion and a determining factor for economic growth.

2.3 Training and agricultural extension initiatives

The transfer of knowledge is a necessary condition for development. Making the best use of training enhances the rapid transfer of knowledge depending on the area in question. Local agricultural extension and experimental programmes together with direct demonstrations to farmers are also excellent ways of transferring new know-how. If the best possible use is to be made of the concepts of development training and sustainable development, the challenge lies in organising networks capable of reaching out to each farmer and thus disseminating knowledge.

2.4 The need for research

Research is indispensable as it represents investment to introduce innovations and opportunities for progress. Synergy between research, training and agricultural extension schemes can ensure rapid transfer of knowledge and make it possible to verify the usefulness of the proposed inventions. Research should not simply be imposed from the top down, but must also respond to the profession's needs.

Training has to be at the heart of a system that contributes to agricultural development, yet it is only one link in a very complex chain. Programmes can only be truly effective in training young people and adults, if they are carried out in close co-operation with the professional world they seek to serve and with agricultural extension research workers.

Enhancing efficiency is a question of balancing training, development and research. It is important to reach as many economic players as possible in order to fulfil the mission, which involves training farm managers, farming families and farmworkers in the requirements of the market place, but also giving them a sense of civic duty and responsibility and of the contribution they can make to the future of their country.
In order to respond to these questions, the present report focuses on the premises of agricultural training and the factors that can enhance its quality. They take the form of recommendations for sustainable agricultural success, in a changing economic and social environment.

II. - QUALITY AGRICULTURAL TRAINING: PREMISES AND POSITIVE FACTORS

Systems of education and vocational training for agriculture have developed over time from each country's culture and political decisions. There are, however, converging elements which can serve as a basis for proposals and positive factors to improve the quality of agricultural training.

1. The premises of agricultural training

General education, which is the cornerstone of a country's economic and social cohesion and indeed of its international standing, obviously underpins agricultural training, which makes an additional contribution to satisfying a country's needs.

1.1 Training schemes must take account of agricultural policy and sectoral demand

Agricultural training forms part of an interface between policy and the players who have to implement it. Even if training schemes are not tailor-made to fit employment needs exactly, a convergence of views amongst all the players involved does produce synergy. It is important to create impetus and channel the means available towards the same strategic priorities and joint projects. This implies that dialogue and consultation take place with the participation of all the partners concerned: political decision-makers, trainers, trainees and all those involved in the supply of and demand for training.

Although the political authorities' task is to determine legislative and regulatory frameworks and to lay down guidelines and organisational and financial conditions for training, the expression and assimilation of sectoral demand nevertheless constitutes a determining factor. When guidelines have incorporated the sector's requirements, they can become a significant incentive.

It is worth noting here the effect produced by European regulations, which require that training schemes be included in start-up, environmental and equipment improvement policies. When the allocation of public funding is dependent on skills' requirements, the sustainable success of projects and the incremental improvement of qualification levels are enhanced. Such efforts must be continued by identifying measures that can benefit agriculture.

However, political decisions and training schemes per se can only have limited impact unless the players most directly involved, i.e. farmers and farmworkers, initiate, support and take responsibility for them. It is therefore essential that their requirements are expressed. In this respect, dialogue can only take place when the means are available and when there is at least some organisation by farmers themselves. The social partners have a key role to play.
Statistical data on employment and activities make it easy to understand and express farmers' requirements in terms of qualifications and skills.

Further requirements are that schemes should last over time and be capable of providing feedback, so that changes can be anticipated and prepared, as past experience has shown that models are very quickly challenged. Hands-on training must be lasting in order to facilitate transitions.

1.2 Training schemes must be suitable for various types of farms

Around the Mediterranean basin there are several different types of farms, which vary in size, farming methods and ownership structures. Sometimes large, ultra-modern estates lie right next door to tiny farms. Whether farms use extensive or intensive systems, a very large number of small- and medium-sized concerns individually employ very few salaried or unsalaried workers, whose future will determine the development of agriculture in these countries.

Agricultural training must provide answers to all these questions, including those posed by small and medium-sized farms, where farmers and farmworkers are required to be more self-reliant and to take on a wide range of tasks, which are usually shared out among more workers on larger estates. Furthermore, work is organised in production cycles, which may last for a number of weeks for some market garden produce to several years for livestock. Permanent workers are often backed up by large numbers of seasonal farmhands.

Training schemes must meet the needs of all these players. Taken as a whole, agriculture employs a wide range of skilled workers, who require various different levels of qualification or skills.

1.3 Training schemes in the rural sociological context

Agricultural training should be seen in the sociological context of the rural environment, which has changed apace with rapid urbanisation. Depopulation has seriously affected some areas, whereas others have become peri-urban. The development of agricultural extension and agricultural training schemes means that trainers, in particular, must have a wide overview and knowledge of local traditions and human networks, in order to understand situations properly and facilitate change with the help of local leaders and players. This is equally the case for all the trades that work with farming, whether suppliers, customers or service industries.

1.4 Preparing for agricultural trades

The expectations of families and young people concerned by agricultural education focus on its potential to open the way to jobs in the trades studied. Access to employment must
remain a major preoccupation for governments and economic decision-makers. The range of trades is not strictly limited to agricultural production, but also includes horticulture, forestry, aquaculture and product processing and marketing.

Agricultural training also covers other trades involved in rural development, particularly in services, spatial planning, water management, the environment, veterinary care, agri-tourism and cottage industries. **Widening the scope of agricultural training**, to include diversification, the multifunctional role and multiple activities for farmers must be taken into account. Training covers issues above and beyond the complete production cycle, as some agricultural activities are outsourced when they require significant investment.

At every stage, the workings of production and distribution systems require **knowledge of a product** or of **conditions governing production**. This requirement is becoming increasingly onerous in the light of new expectations concerning health, food safety, quality and traceability.

In order to respond to a wider scope of agricultural training and trades, the design of training schemes must be **extremely reactive**, as it is imperative to anticipate change. To this end, consultative committees of the trades involved, methods to design and update qualifications by producing descriptions of jobs, training courses and their assessment, can be particularly useful. Dialogue among all the partners will give expression to real needs and enable organisation by speciality to meet the needs of the various trades.

1.5   The active role of women

Particular attention should be paid to the specific place occupied by girls and women in training schemes and agricultural activities. Their role is vital in maintaining rural population levels and developing agri-tourism and cottage industry. Women are often the moving force behind improvements to rural living standards and conditions.

1.6   Research: from theory to practice

The position agricultural education occupies on the knowledge ladder means that the results of research can be **rapidly and effectively** put into practice. Although this process may be slower for secondary education and apprenticeships, given their duration, the practical application of research is often immediate where adults are concerned, especially when the farmer or farmworker is completing a training course linked to a specific project.

1.7   Sound basic education is a prerequisite
Schools in rural areas must offer the same opportunities to their students as those enjoyed by young people in the rest of the country. In this respect, strategic development priorities must be defined and choices made about infrastructure.

Whatever the entry level to agricultural training, sound general education is an indispensable prerequisite. Young people and adults will have difficulty following agricultural training courses if they have not mastered the basic skills of speaking, reading, writing and arithmetic. The difficulties and backwardness still encountered in some rural zones must be highlighted and governments called on to improve basic schooling for the populations concerned, in order to improve literacy rates, particularly among women.

Agricultural training can develop and complement general education and technical subjects can be a medium for basic apprenticeships. In addition to specific skills and qualifications, farmers, like other categories of workers, must be capable of using more theoretical skills: analysis, comprehension, action, communication, assessment and adaptation. Associating general training schemes with more technological and trade-oriented courses can help to achieve this. In an increasingly changing professional world, effective general education enables workers to remain open to change and facilitates access to jobs and career changes. It is also an indispensable factor for social cohesion among citizens, hence the need to ensure that a country maintains common points of reference for the various components of its educational system.

1.8 Teacher training: a fundamental requirement

Teacher training is a fundamental requirement, both for secondary education and for vocational training. Its aims must be three-fold in giving teachers skills in their specific discipline(s), teaching ability and knowledge of the world of work.

Training must prepare teachers to care for young people, to teach and help them find their way in the agricultural training system and, later, in professional and social life. Finally, it must enable teachers to adapt their knowledge and teaching methods throughout their careers. Particular attention should be paid, both by teachers and trainers, to preparing and making the best of training courses.

1.9 Emphasis on specific disciplines

By virtue of livestock and vegetable production, agriculture is evidently based on the life sciences and is particularly subject to the vagaries of weather. In this respect, water is a crucial factor world-wide, and in particular for the Mediterranean region. It will be a major challenge in the future, in terms of resource management and use, both quantitatively and qualitatively.

The implications of biology and agronomics for agricultural production trades are particularly significant where the respect for and mastery of biological cycles are concerned. Research
work in recent decades on plants, animals, equipment and the climate has resulted in profound changes in the way animal and vegetable production is carried out. Research has also led to an optimisation of the results obtained from methods implemented and can contribute to a reduction of negative environmental impact, by more accurate targeting of treatments, which were previously used systematically.

Looking to the future, research, particularly into genetics, is a source of both hope and apprehension. Assimilation of this research work and its transfer to practical applications require a capacity for observation and knowledge of the mechanisms which govern biological phenomena and their interaction with the environment. This essentially means that the methods used for agricultural training should place emphasis on the capacity for observation and practice, whether for instance, it is a question of integrated pest management, safety, rational use of fertilisers or indeed prevention of health risks among livestock.

Running a farm or a workshop on a farm implies an understanding of complex socio-economic systems and a grasp of numerous, interrelated factors. For this reason, it is important to devise training schemes with a multi-disciplinary approach based on actual working situations. The capacity to assemble and manage diversity is typically characteristic of agricultural trades and goes far beyond understanding techniques, which are nevertheless a basic knowledge component and are subject to extremely rapid change.

It must also be pointed out that agriculture is quick to adopt new applications arising from the new information and communication technologies. Fixed and portable computer systems are now used for technical and economic management purposes, but also to run livestock farming, greenhouses and crops. These tools must be capable of facilitating agricultural tasks as diverse as financial management or waste treatment.

2. Positive factors for quality agricultural training

2.1 Anticipating the development of trades

Whereas current research and economic projections must be considered with due caution, it is, however, evident that training plays a major role in anticipating and preparing agriculture for tomorrow's world. In terms of the economy, choices are made at different levels, so although a company's future will be affected by its own choices and surrounding environment, it will also be subject to decisions taken elsewhere.

World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations, the new direction of the EU's Common Agricultural Policy focused on future enlargement to include Central and Eastern European Countries (CEEC) and the establishment of a Euro-Mediterranean area will have consequences for the development of the Mediterranean economies and, therefore, on employment, including issues of labour migration.
Society has expectations about regular consumer supplies, quality products and guaranteed hygiene, which have given rise to the need for traceability. Access to sufficient sources of good quality water is a major concern. Strong pressure is also being exerted to encourage greater respect for the environment (rational use of fertilisers and plant health products), to protect landscapes, to rethink the use of rural areas and to ensure animal welfare. Developments in genetics and computer science promise new opportunities that will transform traditional trades.

In this context of change, countries need not only to prepare future generations of farmers and farmworkers, but also to provide opportunities to those who are active now, to adapt, retrain and exploit their potential. As trades change, so training schemes devoted to production methods must take account of new techniques and new consumer requirements. Training schemes for traditional production methods are now being complemented by the development of activities with new value added such as agri-tourism, cottage industry or the processing and direct sale of produce. Providing services to individuals or enterprises can also generate additional income. As a result, it is crucial to provide training in management and marketing.

The importance of the new information and communication technologies must also be stressed. Their technical aspects are already being applied, but beyond this, they can also provide new methods of personalised and distance learning. For scattered population groups these new opportunities can make access to training easier for a larger target group and with content provision streamlined to actual needs.

For all those working in agricultural trades, whether they be employees, farmers, family workers, permanent or seasonal workers or those with a combination of social profiles, the fact remains that all present and future trades require qualifications, skills and, above all, adaptability at whatever level on the job scale.

2.2 Matching agricultural training schemes to trades

Agricultural training must enable young people wishing to take up an agricultural trade to acquire proper qualifications and provide adults already in work with opportunities to adapt and exploit their potential to the full. Agricultural training and extension schemes, information, research, development and international co-operation must all form part of a comprehensive and coherent approach to the acquisition of knowledge that will allow each individual to develop personal projects and also to participate in collective initiatives and actions. Progress together depends on the motivation of each individual.

Agricultural training schemes must provide general, technological and trade-specific education and, by aiming at lifelong education, comprehensively and coherently integrate initial education with continuing vocational training.
As the main focus of agricultural training is on agricultural production, particular attention must be paid to preparing farm managers and employees. Given the diversity of networks and production methods, training schemes should be devised to meet the needs of the trades studied and be organised in cycles to offer a very wide range of options and specialisation, with different levels of qualification. A certain flexibility is essential, however, to allow for future adaptation and promotion.

In this manner, consideration of activities above and beyond the agricultural production cycle, the response to change characterised by diversification and multiple jobbing, together with the problems of rural areas, and bearing in mind that some issues such as the environment, health security and spatial planning are horizontal, leads to the conclusion that agricultural training schemes must remain extremely open-ended.

Training schemes must be administered under official programmes and be sanctioned by recognised diplomas, certificates or qualifications. This is indispensable, on the one hand, to ensure that they are coherent and in harmony with the country's educational system and, on the other, to facilitate social inclusion and access to jobs. As workers are mobile, it would be worthwhile to instigate measures whereby diplomas, certificates or qualifications could be recognised internationally, whether at government level or on a joint basis between employers and workers.

Information and advisory services are needed to give young people and adults information about trades and training courses, to enable each individual to prepare his/her project and enrol in appropriate courses. Public services have a role to play in this respect, as do trade organisations, which can usefully raise the profile of agricultural trades and their environment.

2.3 Varied educational methods and practices

Points of entry into agricultural careers are becoming increasingly varied. Similarly, lifetime career paths are becoming less linear and homogenous. Mobility and career changes prompt many agricultural workers to enrol in a variety of different training courses in order to adapt to opportunities. A wide range of training must therefore be on offer to meet the needs at different stages in a career path, whether for general education, apprenticeship or continuing vocational training.

A variety of educational methods, which correspond to the profession's needs can, moreover, enhance quality agricultural training. They can mainly be identified in:

- the definition of needs. Support for and participation in training courses will be facilitated by prior consultation of the parties concerned to outline job descriptions, identify changes and devise training courses and programmes with clearly-defined objectives for the mid-term. Consultative committees of the trades involved or forward-planning schemes for training courses can be particularly useful in this respect;
the multi-disciplinary approach. Agricultural production systems, farm management, the interaction of factors and horizontal dimensions such as the environment, quality or networking mean that solutions to everyday or longer term problems need to call on knowledge from several disciplines. Multi-disciplinary education will thus make it easier for students to acquire the appropriate skills or qualifications;

alternation. Preparing agricultural trades requires a continuous two-way alternation between theory and practice, the most successful and widely-recognised form of which is the traditional training course. This type of 'cross-fertilisation' with the profession helps to:

- develop self-reliance, initiative and responsibility;
- nurture professionalism;
- give insight into the workings and natural and sociological environment of the farm or enterprise;
- raise awareness of other countries, by discovering their languages, cultures and agriculture.

Although the validity of alternation is widely recognised, its practical application does require preparation and follow-up from teachers and supervisors in the placement companies.

2.4 Training at local level

It is understandable that young people and adults have to travel further afield for specialist or top-level training courses, yet it remains the case that local availability is a decisive factor in giving the greatest number of students access to the widest range of agricultural training opportunities. This is also the case for adult education and agricultural and developmental extension services.

There can be no doubt that organising courses at a very local level enables the greatest number to participate in training activities. This also serves to involve local partners and thus create greater synergy with their environment and local or agricultural projects. Educationally, it helps to define the concepts of spatial planning, sustainable development and the multi-functional approach to agriculture.

In order to overcome the problems posed by the dispersal and ageing of the agricultural population training courses need to be organised locally, which implies that teachers have to travel, that local facilities (town halls, schools, etc.) are used and that convenient timetables for courses are arranged. The new information technologies can be put to good use with distance-learning programmes and Internet access. These technologies make it possible to tailor courses to suit individuals' needs and thus avoid problems arising from travel or absences, which affect women in particular. All potential students can benefit from these alternative solutions.

2.5 Encouraging promotion
Individuals do not make progress in the same way. The widest possible range of training schemes should therefore be made available to allow for a variety of career paths. With this in mind, gateways between the different paths and levels of training should continuously offer new opportunities and so enhance prospects for promotion. They should facilitate progress up the qualification scale required for salaried jobs and/or managerial responsibilities by combining elements of secondary education, apprenticeships and continuing vocational training. Opportunities for promotion, even when a career move to another sector is made, should remain available throughout a person's life.

By the very nature of its organisation, its disciplines involving living beings and its practical trades, agricultural training can also attract young people in difficulty and offer them a way out. Whether this be for vocational or remedial training, it is important to ensure that there are gateways between the various levels of agricultural training and the rest of the country's educational system.

The use of continuous assessment and the division of training courses into modules allow students to compose their own studies and make individual progress towards a diploma or certificate. These methods also make it easier to adapt training courses to local contexts, using examples from local economies for teaching purposes. It is also worth mentioning new procedures such as the recognition of professional experience or joint certification, which are relevant in this regard, as they offer a middle way in an 'all or nothing' system, based on a final, comprehensive examination.

2.6 Strong partnerships

Agricultural and rural development has much to gain from the involvement of the agricultural profession and other local players, particularly associations, in agricultural training. Partnership can take various forms, from devising and organising training arrangements to implementing them in practice.

As far as devising and organising training arrangements are concerned, it is desirable for representatives of professional bodies and trades unions to put their views to the public authorities. Furthermore, their input is essential for the preparation of job descriptions, programme design, the evaluation of training courses and, at a later stage, to ensure that new developments are incorporated into programme updates.

For the implementation of programmes, this partnership should come into play, in particular to organise alternation and work experience or visits to farms and agricultural enterprises. In this way, professionals will be involved in the training process. A commitment to partnership can also take the form of professionals working with the bodies that administer training schemes and thereby create synergy by anchoring projects in the local economy.

2.7 Developing international co-operation
The globalisation of the world's economy is having an impact on daily life and changes to agriculture. The international dimension must be taken into account by citizens and economic players and become an integral part of training schemes. Numerous initiatives for international co-operation have been taken in this respect by the countries around the Mediterranean and should be pursued and developed, in particular, for:

- **youth and teacher exchanges** as part of training courses and for work experience on farms or in enterprises. These should give exposure to different types of farming, but also to other cultures. Particular emphasis needs to be placed on the command of foreign languages;
- **exchanges between the representatives of professional bodies** (agricultural chambers, trade unions, mutual societies, co-operation schemes, etc.);
- **exchanges and the development of synergy with counterpart systems of agricultural extension, training and research programmes** (organisation, programmes, training content, teaching methods, partnership, finance, etc.). Exchanges would be facilitated by the creation of a database including good practice and initiatives, as well as by personal meetings;
- **systemisation of supply and demand in training**, by drawing on the particular skills developed by countries who have undertaken work in this field;
- development of more accurate, homogenised **statistics** on activities, jobs and training courses;
- ways of achieving **recognition of training courses** to take into account worker mobility between countries;
- **promotion or development of co-operation among international organisations**, such as the International Labour Office, UNESCO and the European Union through the MEDA Programme.

### 2.8 Adequate resources and assessment

The resources made available for developing and maintaining the quality of agricultural training schemes, whether they be entirely subsidised by central or decentralised authorities or jointly financed with European or international funds and/or enterprises, must be considered as a priority investment. Attention must be paid to the strategic implications and investment that training in agriculture represents during **budget allocation procedures**, with due emphasis on the synergy and incentives that can be created by joint financing packages, based on a contractual policy and projects shared by several partners. Recognition should be given to both public and private sectors, with equitable arrangements for financial subsidies.

The first priority for the administration of resources should be the training of the teachers themselves. Resources should also be made available to recruit non-teaching staff, to fund equipment and teaching materials and to provide adequate facilities for continuing vocational training. Access to training opportunities will also be dependent on assistance available to young people and families in the form of student grants and to adults as leave of absence for training purposes.

As agricultural training is considered to be a major factor in introducing change and as considerable resources will be allocated to it, it is necessary to make provisions for **supervision** and...
assessment. Above and beyond the rigorous administration of the financial and educational resources made available, an assessment of results and efficiency must also be put in place, on a regular basis and in accordance with the strategic priorities and objectives. Such assessment must be made for all training opportunities and thus continuously facilitate readjustment. In this respect, effective tools must be used to carry out the essential task of monitoring job placements.

CONCLUSION

The development of agriculture remains essential to each country's future and involves numerous interrelated factors, including food supply and safety, economic wealth and spatial planning. Its singular role, which brings together nature, tradition and the latest technologies, militates in favour of agricultural training schemes, in which the orchestration of diverse factors underpins efficiency.

Quality in training can only be achieved by building on basic secondary education in line with the general education system, thereby ensuring better qualifications, adaptability to technical and economic changes that are taking place at an increasingly rapid pace, access to jobs, promotion and social cohesion. Training schemes must meet the needs of the trades and aim at all the players, and not only the elite. Their scope must not be limited to exclusively professional applications, but incorporate training in civic issues. It must also facilitate access to collective responsibilities and the emergence of trade organisations.

While respecting diversity and history, it is to be hoped that each country will examine the ways in which these principles can be applied and that resources for international co-operation are made available.

In a world of change, where techniques and markets are constantly evolving, agricultural training represents a special opportunity for each individual to participate in the knowledge-based society. It should empower men and women, by helping them take control of their own future.

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<th>Training in Agriculture (statistical appendix)</th>
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<td><strong>Gross value added in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sector (% GDP in 1996)</strong></td>
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<td>Spain</td>
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<td>3.5</td>
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<td><strong>Percentages, in 1996, of food produce, live animals, beverages and tobacco in:</strong></td>
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<td>• imports</td>
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<td>• exports</td>
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<td><strong>Agri-food balances in 1997 (agricultural produce and agri-food industry, including tobacco (in billions of ECUs)</strong></td>
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<td>0.5</td>
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<td><strong>Percentage of the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sector (in 1996) in employment</strong></td>
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<td>8.6%</td>
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<td><strong>Family workers (as a % of the total farming workforce)</strong></td>
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<td>70.8%</td>
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<td><strong>Number of farms in 1997 (1000):</strong></td>
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<td>• with less than 5 hectares (1000) (as % of total UAA)</td>
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<td>1,208</td>
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<td>• with more than 50 hectares (1000) (as % of total UAA)</td>
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<td>647.1</td>
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<td>• Farms with more than 100 hectares (as % of total UAA)</td>
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<td>98.8</td>
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<td><strong>Farms specialising in horticulture (1000)</strong></td>
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<td>52.3</td>
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<td><strong>Agricultural workforce (number of persons per 100 ha of UAA)</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Change between 1990 and 1997 (1990 = 100)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age of farm managers (as a % of total farm managers):</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• less than 35 years old</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• or older</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Agriculture dans l’Europe des Quinze", Graph-Agri Europe collection, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.
(1) – Source: CEPII, CHELEM

**Algeria** Percentage of the active population engaged in agriculture: 28.4 % (source: FAO); agriculture as percentage of GDP in 1995: 12.6 % (source: Centre International des Hautes Études Agronomiques Méditerranéennes); percentage of food produce, live animals, beverages and tobacco in imports: 28.56 % and exports: 1.06 % (source: CEPII, CHELEM)