

AGREEMENT ON VOCATIONAL TRAINING IN THE EUROPEAN CONTRACT CATERING SECTOR

concluded between ECF-IUF and FERCO

Technological developments lead to substantial changes in the contract catering sector. The introduction of new technology and restructuring improved the productivity and competitiveness of companies, but at the same time presented new challenges and requirements for job profiles and for the effectiveness of training programmes.

Adequate training and the attainment of appropriate professional skills by employees are among the most important prerequisites for an improvement in quality and services in contract catering, and thus in the competitiveness, in that sector.

Human resources development should be considered by companies as an investment, and as such, it should occupy a substantial part of their strategic and investment planning. The upgrading and development of employees, through training and through the attainment of professional skills, should be regarded as a priority and should be implemented as an ongoing process.

Employees should pay all necessary attention to training programmes and actively participate therein.

FERCO and the ECF-IUF agree on the advisability of developing joint initiatives at European level in the area of continuous vocational training.

They consider that vocational training activities must include the following principles:

1. Equal treatment must be guaranteed for men and women, for full-time and part-time employees and for all professional categories.
2. All training schemes should simultaneously satisfy two objectives:
 - the adaptation of skills to the development of technology, to the products used, to the services provided and to changes in the organisation of work and in the production process
 - the evolution in qualifications and career opportunities for employees
3. Both the enterprise and the employees or their representatives may propose initiatives on training and on the attainment of additional professional skills. It will be organised with respect to existing national sectoral agreements, regulation and culture.

4. Employees participating in training measures should not be discriminated against or endure any disadvantage, e.g. with regard to salary, guarantee of work place, expenses occurring for the training.
5. Growing demands as regards mobility and the special features of catering arising from the transfer of contracts make it important for the whole contract catering sector to strive for the transferability and recognition outside the enterprise of the skills acquired through the training.
6. Continuous training of high quality should be conducted within companies. Social partners should at company level:
 - produce a regular inventory of existing continuous training measures
 - identify training and skills needs
 - Jointly elaborate appropriate training programmes on the basis of the identified training and skills needs
 - evaluate the effectiveness of the measures taken

FERCO and the ECF-IUF consider that the European level is the appropriate level to examine periodically the evolution of training needs in catering, to exchange experiences, to initiate joint action and, where appropriate, to make joint recommendations.

In this spirit the two organisations have decided to address first and foremost the question of environmental good practice.

In the catering sector this could be looked at from several points of view:

- use and management of water
- use and management of energy
- management of solid, liquid and food waste.

Measures taken in contract catering enterprises in order to improve the environmental protection should also contribute whenever practicable to the improvement of the working environment.

Research into the experiences of enterprises will permit the drafting of recommendations on the content and the format of training schemes in this area.

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For FERCO

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