

**EFFAT**

EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE AND TOURISM TRADE UNIONS

## NEWS FROM EFFAT

**For immediate release**

**6 September 2010**

### **Better protection for migrant workers!**

The Conference on “Responsible Management of Seasonal Migration in a Period of Economic Crisis in the Tourism Industry” organised by the Maltese General Workers’ Union, in cooperation with EFFAT, in Malta on 2 and 3 September 2010, brought together representatives from EFFAT trade unions from various EU Member States, Maltese tourism authorities, European Commission and European employers’ association HOTREC.

Many participants reported about problems with seasonal migrant workers in the tourism sector in their countries. Although in most countries equal treatment for equal work is laid down in law, a lack of enforcement has to be stated, and many seasonal migrants are exploited.

Participants agreed with the Maltese Parliamentary Secretary for Tourism, Mario de Marco, who stated clearly that the exploitation of any worker was not to be tolerated and that it was the duty of the EU and Member States to protect workers from abuse and third country workers from being unregulated.

Surveys conducted in Malta on tourist satisfaction showed that in the off-peak season 80% of tourists rated services in Malta as ‘good’ or ‘very good’. During the peak months, this figure dropped to 73%. De Marco concluded that the influx of less trained seasonal workers diluted the quality of services offered. This highlighted the importance of proper training of third country nationals who come to work in the tourism industry in Malta during the peak summer months.

The conference discussed the proposed EU Directive on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals for the purposes of seasonal employment.

Participants underlined the need to take up the issue of migration in the European social dialogue. Social partners should find a joint position and jointly pursue fair treatment of all workers, also to ensure fair competition and avoid social dumping. The principle of equal treatment, i.e. the same regulations as laid down in law and/or collective agreements have to be applied to any worker at a given location, agreed by EFFAT and HOTREC in 2002, has to be universally applied.

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