

Quality Agricultural Work Network, Italy

Title of the policy or measure (in English)	Quality Agricultural Work Network
• Country	Italy
• Sectors	Agriculture and fishing
• What groups are targeted by the measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular firms/employers (direct) • Workers (indirect)
• Purpose of measure	Prevention
• Short sentence summarising the measure	In order to better target labour inspections and encourage virtuous behaviour among companies in the sector, the Quality Agricultural Work Network whitelists ¹ companies operating in the agriculture and fishing sector that fulfil their statutory obligations. The initiative was started and is managed by the Social Security Institute (INPS) in cooperation with relevant national authorities.
Background	
• Background context driving the implementation of the measure	<p>The agricultural sector in Italy is highly affected by under-declared and undeclared work practices, with an estimated 30 % of the total labour force employed in this sector not being duly declared. The phenomenon has strong regional differences, affecting southern regions more than northern ones, and involving to a large extent (irregular) migrants. In this sector wages are settled by national collective agreements without a legal threshold for the minimum wage.</p> <p>The Quality Agricultural Work Network responds to the need to tackle undeclared employment and the exploitation of labour in the agriculture sector. To pursue this objective, the Quality Agricultural Work Network categorises agricultural enterprises based on their compliance with labour and social legislation, as well as income tax and value added tax. Thus, those enterprises fulfilling their statutory obligations are “whitelisted”.</p>
• When was the measure implemented? (including start date and end date/ongoing)	June 2016 – ongoing
• Names(s) of authorities/bodies/organisations involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Security Institute (INPS). • Ministry of Labour / National Inspectorate. • Other stakeholders, notably, trade unions and employers’ associations.
• Scope of the measure (a pilot project, nationwide, regional wide)	Nationwide. The Quality Agricultural Work Network was started as a mainstream measure in June 2014 (Law Decree n. 91/2014) and implemented in 2016 (Law 199/2016).
• Type of (policy) measure	Strategy

¹ A standard dictionary definition of this term includes the following; “add to a list of people or things considered trustworthy”

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key objectives of the measure 	<p>General objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tackle undeclared employment and exploitative labour in agriculture and realign wages in the agricultural sector. <p>Specific objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whitelisting companies based on their degree of compliance to the rules (fiscal law, labour law, social security provisions, among others); Improving companies' compliance with labour law, collective agreements, social security and income rules; and Better targeting of inspections in the sector.
<p>Specific measure</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Description of how the measure operates in practice 	<p>Activities carried out include the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A network of virtuous companies which work in compliance with law provisions was established. Companies access the network upon request (https://www.inps.it/nuovoportaleinps/default.aspx?itemdir=46316). According to the law, companies which “have not been convicted for violations of labour law and social legislation, for crimes against public administration, crimes against public safety, crimes against the public economy, industry and commerce, crimes against sentiment for animals, with regard to income tax and value added tax [...]” may join the network. The Institution in charge of the network is the Steering Board “Cabina di Regia” which is chaired by the INPS and composed by representatives of relevant national institutions, namely, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Agricultural and Forestry Policy, the Ministry of Economy, the Labour Inspectorate, the National Tax Agency, the Committee of Autonomous Regions and Provinces, the Confederation of Agriculture, trade unions and other agricultural workers organisations. The Steering Board decides on the requests for registration in the network, pending verification of the fulfillment of the requirements above, and it is responsible for updating the list of members of the network. As of 2016, in line with Law 196, this body is also responsible for conducting periodic monitoring of labour market trends, including assessing undeclared and under-declared work practices. Inspections are carried out mostly on companies not included in the network.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What resources and other relevant organisational aspects are involved? 	<p>-----</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the source(s) of funding? 	<p>National funding</p>

Evaluation and outcome	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the measure achieved its objectives? 	<p>A complete overview of the outcomes of the Quality Agricultural Work Network is not yet available. However the Steering Board is required to produce a regular monitoring report and additional data for evaluating the impact of the Network is expected by mid-2018.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment method (including indicators used to measure its impact), and the outputs and outcomes achieved 	<p>Since the launch of the Quality Agricultural Work Network approximately 3 500 companies have registered. The full list is available at https://www.inps.it/nuovoportaleinps/default.aspx?itemdir=50213 (Aziende ammesse). This is a small number when compared to the total number of agricultural companies in Italy (approx. 1.5 million), but interests and requests to join the network are increasing.</p> <p>The Quality Agricultural Work Network encourages change in employers' behaviour. The Network also expects to foster more ethical consumer behavior as the work of the Network becomes more visible.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are lessons learnt and the key conditions for success? 	<p>The high increase in enterprises showing interest in joining the network shows that incentives for boosting companies' compliance are likely to be an effective tool to prevent undeclared work practices. This is in line with provisions of European policies against undeclared work which stress the importance of complementing punitive measures with incentives and preventive measures. Reasonable steps should be taken to ensure that the establishment of a network of "whitelisted" companies is not exploited by companies, which would result in market distortions.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level of transferability (e.g. other countries/groups/sectors) 	<p>This type of Network could be transferrable to other Member States facing high undeclared work in agriculture, or into other sectors. The practice may be especially useful if applied to sectors commonly more difficult to control, for instance the transport sector, and notably on international transport involving <i>cabotage</i> and posting of workers. Whitelisting may also potentially be applied to facilitate the control over the implementation of the EU Directive 96/71/EC on Posting of Workers and tackling fraudulent use of letterbox companies. This may be done by introducing whitelisting as a form of accreditation to encourage a company's compliance with national and EU regulations but also to raise awareness among workers about employment rights.</p>
Additional information	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contacts 	<p>Mariagrazia Lombardi, Director of Control, legal affairs and disputes, National Labour inspectorate. Telephone: 0646837222 E-mail: mariagrazia.lombardi@ispettorato.gov.it</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Art. 2135 Civil Code Law Decree n. 91/2014 Law 199/2016
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Metadata and key words for online search 	<p>Italy – Cabina di regia rete Lavoro agricolo di qualità</p>